

# An Evaluation of Economic Prospects and Constraints of the Sundarbans - A Rising Tourist Spot in Khulna

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## Abstract

Sundarban is the largest mangrove forest of the earth which covers almost 10000 square kilometers (3,900 sq. mi) in the Northern Bay of Bengal of which 6017 km<sup>2</sup> (2323 sq ml) extended through the Khulna division of Bangladesh. Mangrove forests are extremely prolific and diverse ecosystems, providing a comprehensive array of direct ecosystem facilities for inhabitants. Dhaka & Kolkata is the most crowded cities in the world and Sundarban helps the people who lived in those cities from the different natural calamities like cyclone, strong disaster, and their worst effects. Bangladesh is a country where nature has exposed all its beauties. The aesthetic beauty of mountains, a unique ecosystem of the Sundarbans, the amity of mountains and clouds, bright shade of green trees and forests, the vastness of the sea, the world's longest sea beach, archaeological sites, religious places, ample tea gardens have brought the great potential for Bangladesh in the world tourism industry. Though the Sundarbans is one of the three world heritage sites in Bangladesh, it badly lacks proper tourist facilities. Proficient supervision of the tourist economy at any destination not only contributes to the visitors' experience augmentation but supplements the opportunities available also and guards the atmosphere whilst safeguarding the interest of the host municipal and businesses functioning within it. The main purpose of this study was to find out how to develop the tourism economy in the Sundarbans effectively. Using a comparison with a high-quality visitor's gladness can be confirmed and the impact of tourism on Sundarbans' atmosphere and to its host municipal can be accomplished. The study found, two main reasons are liable not to fostering the tourism economy in Bangladesh. The first one is the lack of resource constraints and the second is inadequate initiatives from the government to uplift (particularly infrastructural facilities) tourism in the country to make it known to prospective visitors in the world. The study recommends public and private investments and initiatives to foster the potential of the Sundarbans.

**Keywords:** Sundarbans, World Heritage, Tourism Economy, Tourism Products, Growth Trend of Tourism, Public and Private Sector Initiatives Towards Tourism.

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## 1. Introduction

In the modern world, one of the world's foremost developing industries is tourism. Bangladeshi economy can be enriched through economic development which is influenced significantly by the development of tourism. In South Asia and South East Asia, most of the neighboring countries already have been fruitfully functioning their tourism industry. In Bangladesh, both government and private sector has taken some initiative to expand our tourist areas and services while it has a huge prospect for the tourism industry.

On worldwide, tourism frequently spreads and exceeds the appropriate perimeter of development with the little announcement, planning, or reply from related stakeholders. If tourism is not appropriately planned and accomplished, it can damage the destination's environment, can create artistic and collective struggle, and alienate the societies that host tourism (UNWTO, 2007; Byrd, 2007; Choi and Sirakaya, 2006). However, in recent years, policymakers have begun to advocate sustainable destination planning for tourism with a set of management approaches.

Sustainable tourism (ST) is known as the new approach of tourism management which can assist to confirm that tourism is not environmentally destructive, contributes to the maintenance and local municipal development, and delivers prospects for enhanced protection and sustainable development (environmentally, socially, and economically). ST development accomplishes the impacts of tourism on the destination's atmosphere, economy, and municipal and sustains and enhances the destination's resources for the present and future necessities of both tourists and societies that host them (UNWTO, 2007; p. 12).

In Bangladesh, tourism will confirm to receive more revenue than right now, if resources are competently used via target-oriented market positioning. BPC has come up with a study, which once again established the immense prospect of the country's tourism. The study Called 'Bangladesh Tourism Vision 2020' forecasts those tourist arrivals to Bangladesh likely to exceed 1.30 million by 2020.

The Sundarbans forest, located in the south-western part of Bangladesh head-to-head to the coastline of the Bay of Bengal is the world largest mangrove forest that shields an area of 601,700ha (Forest Department (FD), Bangladesh, 2018). There are three wildlife sanctuaries in the Sundarbans: Sundarbans West (71,502ha), Sundarbans East (31,226ha) and Sundarbans South (36,970ha), all were designated as protected areas by the IUCN

in 1996 under the criteria Ib (Protected planet, 2018). Moreover, UNESCO has declared these three sanctuaries (total 139,698ha) as a world heritage site in 1997 under the criteria IX and X.

The UNESCO's rationalization for entitling Sundarbans as a world heritage the site was "one of the largest enduring areas of mangroves in the world, which supports an extraordinary biodiversity with an extensive range of flora and fauna, including the Bengal Tiger and provides a significant example of on-going ecological processes (monsoon rains, flooding, delta formation, tidal influence, and plant colonization)" (UNESCO, 2018).

The Sundarbans is full of rich flora (334 plant, 165 algae, and 13 orchid species) and fauna (59 reptiles, 08 amphibians, 210 white fishes, 24 shrimps, 14 crabs, 43 mollusks, and 49 mammal's species including the largest population (400-450) of the Royal Bengal tigers (*Panthera tigris Tigris*) in the world) (UNESCO, 2018). Moreover, it protects the human settlements in south- western Bangladesh against cyclone and tidal surges (Begum, 2015). The Eastern and northern part of Sundarbans is surrounded by 5 administrative districts: Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Pirojpur, and Borguna which include 10 Upozilas (sub-districts), 152 Unions, and 1,303 villages. The overall inhabitants of the whole area are about 3.5 million people (BIDS, 2010). The western part of the jungle is mutual between India and Bangladesh, with separate controlling authorities. The southern part of the forest is attached to the shoreline of the Bay of Bengal. Sundarbans is full of natural resources and provides livelihood to approximately 300,000 people who work as fishermen, wood-cutters, honey gatherer, leaves (for roofing), and grass (formatting) gatherer living at the surrounding villages (Islam, 2016).

From the 1997, Sundarban became one of the most visited tourist destination in Bangladesh when it gains a huge popularity as a tourist spot for both the local tourist and foreign as well. After that, it became enlisted as a top heritage site in the world. Among the Sundarbans is one of the uppermost tourist destinations in Bangladesh. Since 1997, it on the go to advance immense popularity as a tourist destination for both domestic tourist and foreign as well after it procured as the world heritage site. In 2007, its reputation has amplified even further, after it passed the first round of the New Seven Natural Miracles of the World race and achieved the place within Top 28 finalists out of the 440<sup>th</sup> challenging destinations (New 7 Wonders of Nature, 2018; The Daily Star, 2011).

Sundarban has the prospect to appeal a huge number of people and be a cause of earning through national and international tourism prospects that may ultimately progress the livelihood of surrounding human inhabitants (Das & Bandyopadhyay, 2013; Iqbal et al., 2010). The Bangladesh government has exposed concentration in expanding potential prospects associated with the Sundarbans. It is essential to note that it is conceivable for mangrove conservation to be harmonious with tourism if well-planned. Economic and political incentives can be taken through appropriate management and strategic tourism which can convey supplementary benefits to local societies and provincial economies (Haque & Aich 2014).

## 2. Rationale of the Study

In The Modern Economic system, most of the raising economic countries earn their vital portion of export revenue from tourism. The strong tourism industry is a blessing for the country. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the most economic phenomenon is the unexpected development of the tourism industry for the last 50 years (Amin, 2006). The degree of travel and tourism's connection to the inclusive global economy and its potential for enabling sustainable development are flattering more manifest for government organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and related industries (UNEP, 2002).

Tourism was believed by the LDCs, as the 'Cinderella wand' used for obtaining the considerably wanted foreign exchange (Brown, 1998) for dealing with their breakable and weakening economies, characterized by inadequate finance and expertise, which in turn makes them dependent on universal aid (Briedenhann and Wickens 2004; Dieke, 2003). For Bangladesh, the tourism industry is becoming an emerging issue for the both public and private sector and they are trying to establish themselves by proving their eligibility for accomplishing a profitable business as well as developing marketing activities (Akteruzzaman & Ishtiaque 2001 p.107). Bangladesh is one of the most beautiful and historical places in the world. It has a huge prospect to explore its tourism industry. Even it can easily appeal to a large number of local and foreign tourists for its exceptional features and earn a large number of foreign exchanges through tourism marketing. Bangladesh already has taken a position as a fast emerging appealing tourist spot on the global map. Bangladesh is a country of millennium cultural heritage with diverse attractions and bountiful nature where millions of friendly people add an extra advantage to make it ahead.

Despite having numerous facilities and opportunities, Bangladesh has failed to utilize even its 10 percent of tourism potentials due to lack of using modern technology, government & private sector initiatives, tourism sector could not flourish in the recent decade. The main barrier to upgrading this sector is not having the updated websites and marketing to circulate our heritage sites to the foreign delegates. We need to take pragmatic steps including upgrading our websites to attract international tourist flow to our country. Most of the countries that are in the leading position in the world tourism industry have their websites in different languages. Cambodia uses 8 languages in their tourism websites whereas Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia uses 12 languages but we are using the only English language on our websites. We need extensive training facilities, more government budget and a long term feasible policy to boost up our tourism and hospitality industry to collect huge profit from our tourist sites

which has tremendous potentials.

To attract foreign direct investment in this industry, Bangladesh did not have taken any steps by developing road communications, air communications, constructing motels & hotels, and renovate old and historical places, monuments and protects mangroves and green areas as well. Bangladesh can have more than 20 lacks of foreign tourists within the next couple of years by lifting the visa restrictions on European citizens and as well as the USA and other western countries' citizens. To get the enormous benefit of tourism, our government needs to shed its "policy of reciprocity" regarding the issuance of visas to foreign nationals. ((Hasan, 2006). From the above discussions and reviews, it is clear to conclude that our tourism industry has been confined due to lack of different reasons along with government initiatives and as a result, we are losing a huge income opportunity, foreign direct investment from this sector and could not create employment opportunities as a whole. Nowadays, some Bangladeshi researchers have done some research on different issues of Bangladeshi tourism like tourism management and expansion, complications and scenarios of our tourism industry and how could we flourish this industry, and which techniques or steps should be taken by the government and private organizations as well. For instance, studies done and reports and newsletter published by (Siddique (2006). Problems and prospects of Bangladesh tourism have been focused on and highlighted by Akteruzzaman & Ishtiaque (2001) Hasan (2000).

### 3. Objective of the Study

The foremost consideration of this study is to critically identify and present the economic status of Sundarban and prospects in Bangladesh's economy as well by building it the supreme tourist spot. To have an appropriate impression about this concern the study comprises the subsequent facets as follows:

- a. To discuss the historical background of Sundarban as a tourist Spot as of Bangladesh and its nearer possible tourism products;
- b. To analyse the present position as well as the performance of the tourism industry of Bangladesh in general.
- c. To evaluate the ultimate economic value of Sundarban and its nearest immigrants who are highly and directly involved with the ups and downs of Sundarban.
- d. To appraise the expansion initiatives and investment opportunities for developing tourism infrastructure with international competitiveness;
- e. To categorize various restrictions and challenges of Sundarban to develop as a modern tourist spot of the tourism industry in Bangladesh and as a final point to recommend some pragmatic and truthful policy actions for meaningful tourism development in Bangladesh.

### 4. Methodology of the Study

Mainly secondary sources of information have been used to construct this article. Information reviewed from different books, journals, magazines, and periodicals along with a lot of tourism- related websites from different countries has been reviewed for getting updated information. Several national and international research works also have been reviewed to carry on this research.

### 5. The Socio-Economic Landscape

The conservation and management efforts in the Sundarbans are primarily focused on the protection of biodiversity and the habitat of animals and plants. Still, Bangladesh does not have focused on the economic importance of the forest and for the people who lived nearby. The people of the Sundarbans seem it is the main source of their fuel, food, medicine, and as well as building materials. Most importantly, In Bangladesh, Sundarban delivers employment opportunities for over 35000 people in different ways like jelly (Fishermen), Mouals (honey gatherers), Bawalis (Woodcutters), and shrimp fry, crab, nipa-leaf, and thatching grass collectors (Tamang, 1993). In very recent, brackish water shrimp farming has also become popular, and also tourism get preferences. The natural perils attached with the fickleness of land and water is a continual source of anxiety and vulnerability for the immigrants around the Sundarbans. The perishable ecology of the area, the threat of natural adversities, environmental degradation, drinking water shortage due to augmented salinity, and inadequate infrastructure expansion in the peripheral areas restrictive livelihood options are the core reason for this out movement.

### 6. The Sundarbans Mangrove and Its Role in National Economy

The Sundarbans are the world's biggest mangrove forest, situated between India–Bangladesh borders. These are positioned at the northern coastline of the Bay of Bengal and the Bangladesh portion of the Sundarbans lies between 89°00' and 89°55'E and 21°30'–22°30'N (Fig. 1). It is acknowledged as one of the most diverse and fecund ecosystems in the world (Borrell et al. 2016). Apart from being a distinctive ecosystem, Sundarbans deliver extensive security to coastal inhabitants from cyclones, tidal flooding, erosion, and other natural tragedies (Das and Vincent 2009; Payo et al. 2016). For instance, in the case of contemporary cyclones Sidr (November 17, 2007) and Aila (May 25, 2009), Sundar-bans performed as a protective blockade for the coastal populations (Islam 2013;

Bhowmik and Cabral 2013). This forest comprises 200 islands, detached by 400 inter-linked tidal rivers and canals (Banglapedia 2010). According to the recent valuation, the zone of the Sundarbans in Bangladesh is 599,330 ha; which comprises about 62% (Rahman et al. 1979) and the rest of the area (426,300 ha) is in the West Bengal region of India (Sanyal 1983). It is a territory for diverse floral and faunal species. In Sundarbans, nearly 334 species of plant, 35 legumes, and 50 species of mangrove, 19 sedges, 18 euphorbias, and 29 blades of grass were acknowledged by Chaffey et al. (1995). Among them, the most noteworthy and economically vital plants are; Sundari (*Heritiera fomes*), Goran (*Ceriops decandra*), Garjan (*Rhizophora mucronata*), Gewa (*Excoecaria agallocha*), Golpata (*Nypa fruticans*), Keora (*Sonneratia apetala*), Passur (*Xylocarpus mekongensis*), Baen (*Avicennia officinalis*), Chanda lota (*Dalbergia can- denatensish*), Amur (*Amoora cucullata*), Dhundul (*Xylocarpus granatum*), and Nol-hash (*Eriochloa procera*). However, Sundari is deliberated as threatened, due to the incidence of top dying disease (Rahman et al. 2003; Sarwar 2015). Bangladesh's portion of Sundarbans is recognized to have 45, 42, 46 and 36% mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibian species separately, amongst the entire wildlife species of Sundarbans including West Bengal (India) part (Table 1). The Sundarbans is host to about 50 species of mammals, 320 species of birds, 53 species of reptiles, 11 species of amphibians, 177 species of fish, and 873 species of invertebrates (Table 1). However, 10 species of mammals, 11 species of birds, 16 species of reptiles, and 1 species of amphibians are identified as endangered in Sundarbans (Khan 2013). Some of the endangered species are Royal Bengal Tiger (*Panthera tigers*), Jungle cat (*Felis chaus*), Rock python (*Python molurus*), Estuarine crocodile (*Crocodilus porosus*), Irrawaddy dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*), Northern river terrapins (*Batagur baska*), King crabs (Horse shoe), and Green frog (*Euphylyctis exadactylus*) (Sarker 1993).

Taxonomic group	World's species <sup>f</sup>	Species in sub-continent <sup>f</sup>	West Bengal (India) Sundarbans <sup>a</sup>	Bangladesh Sundarbans
Protozoa	31,250	2577	106	175 <sup>b</sup>
Porifera	4562	500	Invertebrates	Invertebrates 873 <sup>c</sup>
Cnidaria	9916	842	species 1104	
Ctenophora	100	12		
Rotifera	2500	330		
Gastrotricha	3000	100		
Platyhelminthes	17,500	1622		
Nematoda	30,000	2850		
Mollusca	66,535	5072		
Echinodermata	6000	765		
Arthropoda	987,949	68,389		Shrimps 24 <sup>d</sup> Crabs 7 <sup>d</sup>
Fish	21,723	2546	481	177 <sup>e</sup>
Amphibians	5150	248	–	8 <sup>e</sup> /11 <sup>c</sup>
Reptiles	5817	460	55	50 <sup>e</sup> /53 <sup>a</sup>
Birds	9026	1232	248	261 <sup>f</sup> /320 <sup>a</sup>
Mammals	4629	397	58	50 <sup>f</sup>

Table-1: Comparison of wildlife species in Bangladesh Sundarbans with West Bengal (India) and around the world.

Financial year	Shrimp (no.)	Crab (t)	Honey (t)	Snails (t)	Bees wax (t)
1999–2000	–	–	555.20	6089.80	138.90
2000–2001	–	–	346.50	6007.90	86.60
2001–2002	3,436,940	364.20	234.10	3250.30	61.90
2002–2003	9,828,200	1384.0	279.60	774.60	64.20
2003–2004	54,900	2144.0	337.80	1531.00	84.44
2004–2005	–	2924.0	396.20	2362.90	98.92
2005–2006	–	2998.0	321.80	3230.30	80.00
2006–2007	–	2135.0	599.40	203.60	141.50
2007–2008	569,560	4014.84	374.00	134.60	93.51
2008–2009	1,175,020	3625.19	304.22	01.10	68.02
2009–2010	434,200	15,397.37	175.65	00.30	69.69
2010–2011	73,200	3106.93	361.50	1028.90	81.29
2011–2012	–	1301.56	165.45	1036.58	41.74
2012–2013	–	–	186.32	1032.21	40.25

Table-2: Products and services produced from the Sundarbans from 1999–2000 to 2012–2013.

Sources: Das (2013), Khan (2013), BFD, DoF (2014)

Various economic, social and environmental welfares are functioned by the Mangrove forests. These forests deliver livelihood for native people through fishing, honey and wax gathering, tourism, wood and non-wood harvests (Islam and Islam 2011). Table 2 provides the information about shrimp, crab, honey, snails, and bee wax

manufacture since the fiscal years 1999–2000 to 2012–2013 from Sundarbans. Sundarbans mangrove forest also meets the demand of wood for fuel, furniture, house posts, boats, bridges, construction, and other things for household purposes. In 2003–2004 the estimated wood production by the Forest Department was 433,000 t (Hoq 2008). Table 3 delivers the list of economically vital trees and their uses, which have a great part in the national economy of Bangladesh. Former research presented that, only Sundari and Gewa trees of Sundarbans cover 40 and 21 m<sup>3</sup>/ha/year, respectively, with an economic value equivalent to 125 and 23 US\$/m<sup>3</sup> respectively (Uddin et al. 2013). The revenue returns from the forest are nonstop increasing, due to growth in the tourists and visitors which heightened by almost 25 times in 2012–2013 in comparison to 2000–2001.

Family	Scientific name	Type of plant	Main uses
Avicenniaceae	<i>Avicennia officinalis</i>	Tree	Fuel wood, anchor
Combretaceae	<i>Lumnitzera racemosa</i>	Small tree	Fuel wood, posts
Euphorbiaceae	<i>Excoecaria agallocha</i>	Tree	Matchsticks and raw material for newsprint
Leguminosae	<i>Cynometra ramiflora</i>	Small tree	Fuel wood, charcoal
Malvaceae	<i>Xylocarpus mekongensis</i>	Tree	Furniture, bridges, house
Meliaceae	<i>Xylocarpus granatum</i>	Small tree	Fuel wood
Palmae	<i>Nypa fruticans</i>	Recumbent Palm with under-ground stem	Thatching for houses
Rhizophoraceae	<i>Phoenix paludosa</i>	Thorny palm	Post and rafters for huts
Rhizophoraceae	<i>Bruguiera spp.</i>	Tree	Furniture, bridge and house construction
Rhizophoraceae	<i>Ceriops decandra</i>	Shrub or small tree	Fuel wood, house posts, charcoal
Arecaceae	<i>Nypa fruticans</i>	Palm	Hose construction, biofuel, medicinal use
Sonneratiaceae	<i>Sonneratia apetala</i>	Tree	Packing boxes, paneling
Sterculiaceae	<i>Heritiera fomes</i>	Tree	House construction, hard boards

Table-3 Economically important plant species of the Sundarbans and their uses.

Sources: Rahman et al. (2010), Khan (2013), Aziz and Paul (2015)

Total revenue income from the forest products of Sundarbans is mentioned in Table 4. The increase of revenue collection from US\$ 717,409 in 2008–2009 to US\$ 879,181 in the 2012–2013 fiscal year is shown.

Type of forest Produces (unit)	2008–2009		2012–2013	
	Amount	Revenue (BDT)	Amount	Revenue (BDT)
<i>Excoecaria agallocha</i> (1/m <sup>3</sup> )	613	779,626	252	1,254,319
<i>Ceriops decandra</i> (no.)	88,708	363,628	66,578	379,290
<i>Nypa fruticans</i> (t)	37,534	4,620,713	31,761.6	8,275,050
Fishes (t)	4524.5	21,331,210	3484.5	13,569,648
Grass (t)	493	10,853	1101	29,837
<i>Phoenix paludosa</i> (t)	60	42,846	73.02	105,899
Honey (t)	110	608,520	233	1,747,422
Mollusk shell (t)	1349	40,987	182.714	32,888
Wax (t)	22.81	228,195	58.93	589,315
Crab (t)	1318.5	3,743,765	1253.80	4,901,712
Tourists (no.)	183,600	4,419,960	150,037	19,873,725
Wood (1/m <sup>3</sup> )	522.60	8,452,509	293	2,220,170
Fuel wood (1/m <sup>3</sup> )	850	557,209	453	8,39,173
Miscellaneous	–	10,040,444	–	13,878,556
Total	–	48,202,163 or US\$ 717,409	–	67,697,004 or US\$ 879,181

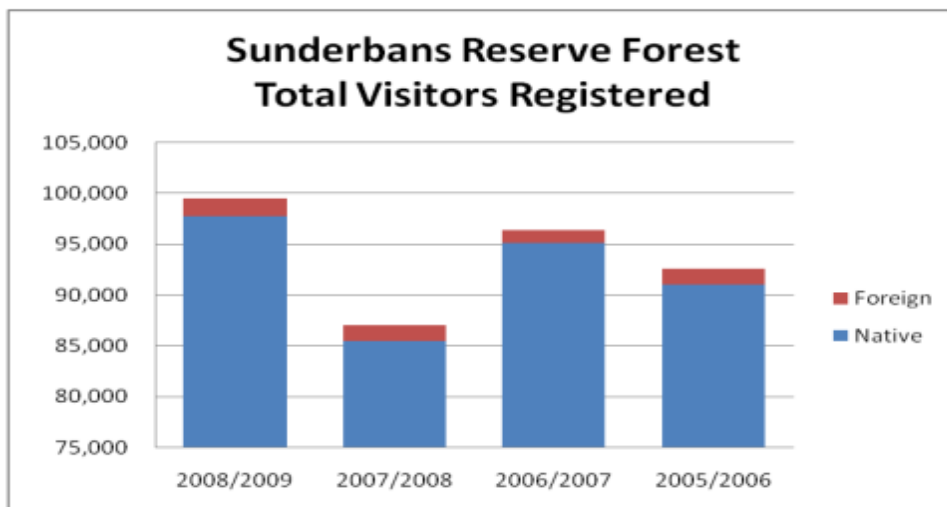
Table-4: Forest products and revenue earned during 2008–2009 and 2012–2013 from the Bangladesh part of Sundarbans. Sources: Aziz (2013), Department of Forest (2014), Aziz and Paul (2015).

### 7. Tourism in Sundarban

The tourism segment has advanced successfully in Sundarbans, with the upsurge of visitors from 50,000 to 300,000 from the years 2002 to 2016 (Khanom and Buckley 2017). The foremost attraction for tourists of Sundarbans are Royal Bengal Tiger and spotted deer. Though tourism has a substantial role in the indigenous and national economy of Bangladesh, it has unfavorable effects on Sundarbans due to habitat demolition, noise effluence, poor sanitation, waste dumping, and contamination (Khanom et al. 2011). Due to a lack of ecotourism and proper nursing, Sundarban's ecology is affected day by day (Das and Bandyopadhyay 2013).

### 8. Visitation Data for the Sundarbans Reserve Forest

According to the forest department's records, every year almost a total number of 1,00,000 visitors visit Sundarban Reserve Forest. At least 2% of these number is foreign visitors in a year. Administration of tourism in the Sundarbans Reserve Forest is therefore mostly a matter of handling visitors from Bangladesh. From the SWOT analysis from the data of the forest department both in Khulna and Karamjal, we can see some inconsistency in visitors over the last 5 years.

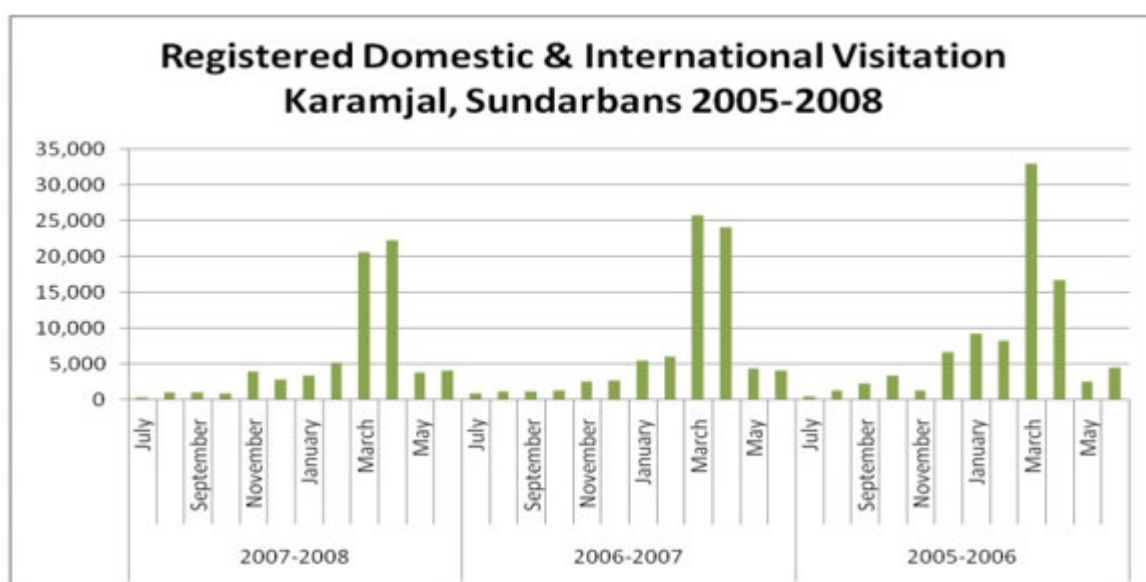
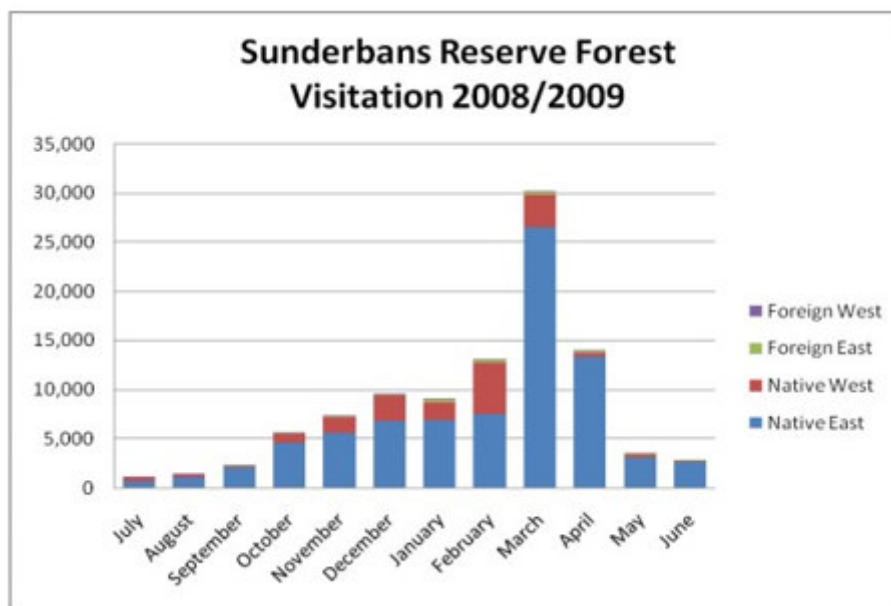


	2008/2009	2007/2008	2006/2007	2005/2006
<b>Native</b>	97,721	85,473	95,102	91,039
<b>Foreign</b>	1,745	1,540	1,257	1,581
<b>Total</b>	<b>99,466</b>	<b>87,013</b>	<b>96,359</b>	<b>92,620</b>

The figure shows the statistics of total visitors visited the Sundarbans during 2005 to 2009 . Source: IPAC, 2009.

Bangladesh is graded as 127th out of 130 countries in the Tourism Competitiveness Report by the World Economic Forum, just 3 from the bottom- with only Burundi, Lesotho, and Chad ranked lower. There is every signal that more could be done to augment the economic welfares of tourism to the country and positively to the Sundarbans Reserve Forest. Peak season is in March, with 30% of the visitors coming in this one month. The high season is February-April, and the shoulder season is October-February.

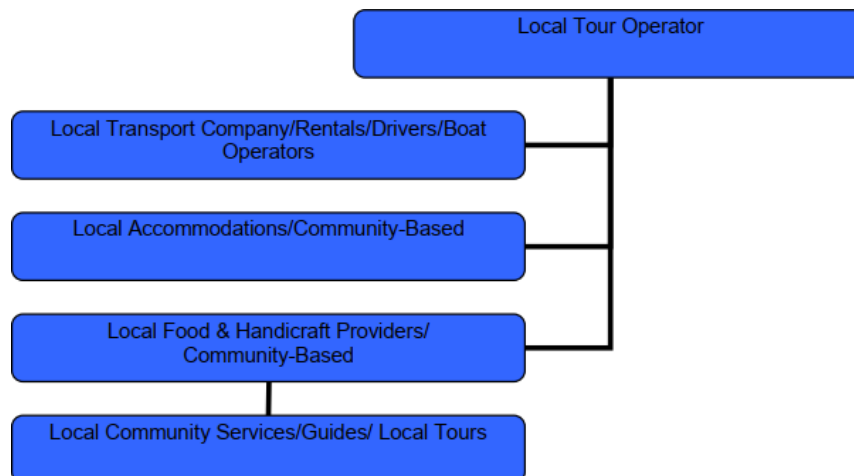
The maximum visited site in the park is Karamjal, in the Eastern Sundarbans, with 81% of total visitors to the reserve visiting this one area.



	<b>Domestic</b>	<b>International</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2007-2008</b>	69,630	600	<b>70,230</b>
<b>2006-2007</b>	79,576	563	<b>80,139</b>
<b>2005-2006</b>	89,676	779	<b>90,455</b>

### 9. Swot Analysis on Sundarban to Become as a Tourist Place

**9.1 Information Accessibility on the Sundarbans:** Tourism information is playing a vital role for a tourist place because without proper information accessibility a tourist will not be up to date about what can be available for a tourist in that place. A tourist should have access to exact information and the ability to require to make an informed decision on their travel experience.



**Figure: Supply chain for tourism in the destination country**

### Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses for Information Accessibility

Strengths	Weaknesses
Khulna tour operator offices	Parjatan Corporation information in Dhaka & Mongla
Hotel tour desks in Dhaka	Lack of quality information on Sundarbans on tour operator websites
Trained guides employed by specialist tour operators accompanying visitors on overnight boats into the reserve	Khulna hotel information on Sundarbans
	Khulna Sundarbans Forest Information Center
	Lack of guides for day tours in Mongla

#### Summary of Opportunities

- Updated websites for specialist tour operators with Dhaka offices
- Exalted Visitor Center in Khulna by small cost in Sundarbans Forest Information Center
- Smooth day tour services from Mongla with expert guiding
- Advanced information systems from hotels in Khulna

### 9.2 Boat Transportation

#### Summary of Strengths & Weaknesses for Boat Transportation

Strengths	Weaknesses
Availability of boats in Mongla	Inadequate safety equipment on day tour vessels
Cordiality of boat captains	Lack of well presented system for hiring boats
Existence of Jaly and Shampan boat association	Lack of availability of trained guides

#### Summary of Opportunities

- Develop programs for day tour ship operators through existing associations to formalize boat, guide training, safety procedures and booking arrangements for customer service

#### Summary of Threats

- The chances of a boat accident are relatively high.
- There are inadequate safety mechanisms
- Inadequate life-saving, safety vests or first aid kits of the day-tour boats.



### 9.3 Visitors Management: Summary of Strengths & Weaknesses for Visitor Management

Strengths	Weaknesses
Guards & security present	No well structured areas for picnics
Noise ordinance enforcement according to officials, but not thoroughly checked by researchers due to timing of visit	Poor rest room facilities
	Poor waste management
	Dangerous jetties
	No visitor management planning
	No reinvestment of fees into site

#### Summary of Opportunities

- Update the existing proposals or plans for the development of visitor management plans for the core visitor sites, including kaorakata of koyra, katka and karamjal by appointing practically experienced experts.
- Collaborate with the private sector to ensure more suitable facilities by public/private management systems for development, revenue generation, and updating sites.

#### Summary of Threats

- The gradual downfall of visitor sites due to tourism impacts
- Real possibility of accidents due to poor visitor facilities
- Due to lack of visitor management and available information or guidance, the incognizant visitors try to annihilate the sites.

### 10. Tourism Marketing in Sundarban: the Constraints

Although Sundarban has the potential to flourish as a very projected tourist destination, the following complications are crucial for the expansion for instigating the marketing plan for tourism in Sundarban:

- Absence of financial backing from the government.
- Low rate of literate people/ insufficient education system.
- Absence of training institute connected to tourism.
- Lack of efficient infrastructure facilities.
- Absence of market information.
- Lack of interaction with the market.
- Lack of proper tourism policy.
- Lack of Safety & Security.

### 11. Recommendations

To develop tourism marketing and make a place established as a tourist place, management education is vital by which some sales people can be trained and they can promote the tourism product properly to the right place both in regional and global perspectives. An effective and predictive working network should be introduced between the public and private sector is a must. Local people should comprise with them. For easy access to information, a tourist information Centre can be introduced all over the country from where tourists can be updated about their ultimate destination, transportation, and residing place as well as other necessary information. Tribal shopping centers for the local and foreign tourists should be recognized at every tourist place. For additional research in tourism, a research center should be open by the Bangladesh Tourism Corporation. Good governance that is connected to government collaboration and dealing with a business utilizing regulatory affairs is somewhat difficult for the supportable tourism development in Bangladesh.

At the beginning of the new tourism business, the simplest and one-stop authorization system can inspire private entrepreneurs to capitalize in this sector. Entrepreneurs must not have to take authorizations from several diverse ministries and departments. To convey info to the foreign tourist through online, or website and information technology is compulsory to study about new tourist spots. To update the personnel involved with tourism is necessary to conduct training and different updated courses at regular intermissions. Security is an additional significant aspect of the expansion of the tourism industry.

There are some recommendations for the expansion of beloved Sundarban which must be guaranteed are the following:

- To save the environment of the Sundarbans and the wildlife
- To establish a policy for promoting the Sundarbans
- To establish an environment-friendly water vehicle route in the forest and to establish the sign and light

- of signal in the forest
- To fix the limit for each of the ship
  - To ensure the availability of pure drinking water
  - To provide medical services for the tourist's ships
  - To confirm the openness of the tourist guide
  - To involve local people in saving the forest.

## 12. Conclusion

Tourism is the developing industry in the world. Bangladesh has many prospects to appeal to foreign tourists especially Sundarban, as well as improvement internally. But this possibility can be transformed into reality through dynamic marketing of tourism products and services. The existence and development of the tourism industry will be contingent to a huge extent marketing style. Countries are challenging each other to market their destinations. So immediately effective and updated marketing plan should be implemented for the accomplishment of Bangladesh tourism. The government must have to have some distinct strategies, additional budget, investment, and amiable care for the most significant tourist spot of Bangladesh. The Sundarbans which is globally acknowledged as a heritage site for many years can be an easy getaway for the economic enlargement of Bangladesh. Tourism sector comprises fascinations, accommodation mediators, transportation, public sector & policy, and destination. The most significant things to improve for the Sundarbans are one airport in Khulna or Bagherhat, floating resorts and hospitals, stop Rampal power station, 4 (four) lane road, decent marketing in all over the world and needed more spirited and experienced workers who will love to work for their country. Besides all of these, political stability is most important for the development process. To make it conclude, the government should be affectionate enough and strict to make sure the expansion of the Sundarbans with the suggested planning and proposals from the tourism experts.

Following measures are essential for the expansion of tourism sector in Bangladesh:

- a. Up-to-date the current tourism policies in Bangladesh associate with the world tourism market.
- b. Tourism spots and related institutes should be operated by the private sector.
- c. Tourism-associated disciplines like tourism and hotel management should be started at all universities in Bangladesh.
- d. Infrastructures related to the tourism sector should be constructed and maintained. The rail connection between all the tourist places is mandatory.
- e. Political stability should be preserved to appeal the foreign tourist.
- f. Government should take the movements about the safety system at the tourist place.

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