

Assessing nature of visitors flow and revenue generation at the Central Zoo of Nepal

Tek Jung Mahat, Madan Koirala

Abstract — The only zoo of Nepal, Central Zoo, receives over 800,000 visitors annually. Economic valuation of the zoo was conducted to identify contributions made by the zoo to the economy as well as environmental awareness level of the visitor. The relevant information was collected using questionnaire survey, key informant interview, direct observation, direct count and focus group discussion. Several economic tools, including travel cost method, were employed for analysis. The study shows that a higher proportion of school children and adolescents visit the zoo in comparison to other age groups and professions. Brahmin, Chhetri and Newar were the dominant visiting caste-groups. Access to economical public transports such as buses, tempos and minibuses has facilitated arrivals of high proportion of visitors with relatively low income to the zoo. Most of the visitors are Nepalese and expatriates. The educational level of the visitors and their affiliation with environment related organizations are not significant determinants of the number and nature of their visits. It was found that there is an inverse relationship between the travel cost and the number of zoo visits. The per capita economic value of the zoo was estimated at US \$ 3.15. The study recommends that a) the environmental hygiene inside the zoo be improved, b) the satisfaction level of the visitors be assessed, and c) fund raising sources be identified to expand zoo services as well as its territorial area.

Index Terms — Economic valuation, Nepal, payment of environmental services, travel cost method, zoo.



Tek Jung Mahat: MSc Degree in Environmental Science from the Tribhuvan University Nepal with specialisation in environmental economic and mountain environment management and a PG Degree in 'Mountain environment and Global Change' from the University of Torino, Italy. Freelance environment expert working in Nepal in thematic areas like economic valuation, knowledge management, environmental education, NRM and biodiversity conservation and environmental journalism. Additionally he teaches environmental science to graduate level at Tribhuvan University (TU), Nepal.

Madan Koirala Prof. PhD in environmental science from JNU, India and an MSc in Ecology from TU, Nepal. He is teaching at TU for last 20 years and has already headed the Central Department of Environmental Science, TU