

Notification No: **576/2025**

Date of Award: **13-02-2025**

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Topic of Research: ***Impacts of Climate Change on Nature-based Tourism in the Indian Himalayas***

Findings

This study highlights the importance of addressing climate change's impacts on nature-based tourism (NBT) in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR). Climate change affects nature-based tourism, visitors' seasonality, and destination choice, indicating the need for effective strategies to protect sustainability and resilience. Most respondents are familiar with climate change, and human activities are considered responsible for its effects. Climate change hampers the imperative natural tourism resources for the Indian Himalayas and other world mountain ranges, affecting tourism seasonality and destination choices.

Climate change attributes, such as aesthetic, thermal, and physical, significantly influence NBT, explaining more than 55% of the variance in NBT. Increased climate change would result in a more significant deterioration of the nature-based tourism resource base in the Indian Himalayan Region. A positive linear relationship between climate change and tourism seasonality is found, with physical, aesthetic, and thermal variables influencing the length and quality of the tourism season.

Climate plays a vital role in determining a tourist destination choice, with "Climate/Expected Weather" being the most essential factor. Visitors prioritise places with more predictable and stable climatic conditions, and climate/expected weather has the highest mean score, indicating its importance in determining a tourist destination in the Indian Himalayan region.

Climate change poses significant challenges to the IHR, requiring alternative tourism and associated activities such as agri, cultural, astro, highway or moto, religious, spiritual and wellbeing, yoga and wellness retreats, and climate education trails. These activities can diversify the region's offerings, generate more stable employment opportunities, and increase financial resilience. Innovation and adaptation are also crucial in addressing climate change issues, such as fostering responsible tourism behaviours and using renewable energy sources. Collaborations between private stakeholders, government agencies, and local communities can balance tourism development with environmental conservation. Technology, collaboration, and policy support are essential for promoting climate-resilient infrastructure, disaster preparedness, and sustainable tourism practices. This holistic approach can help achieve sustainable tourism development in the IHR and navigate climate change's adverse impacts.