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Title: Challenges, Opportunities and Potentials of Community Based Ecotourism Development in the case of Mount Birhan, East Gojjam, Ethiopia

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Declaration

I would like to declare that the research entitled "*challenges, opportunities and potentials of community based ecotourism development the case of Mount Birhan, East Gojjam, Ethiopia*" submitted to the department of Wildlife and Ecotourism Management, College of Agriculture and Natural Resource,Wolkite University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Bachelor of Science in wildlife and Ecotourism Management. It is original research work done by the individuals mentioned on the previous pages and has not been presented for a degree in any other University, and that all sources of material used for the research have been duly acknowledged.

Name of student _____Signature _____Date_____

Advisor_____Signature_____Date_____

Examiner_____Signature_____Date_____

Acronym

CBET- Community Based Ecotourism

Mt. Birhan Mount Birhan

NGO- Nongovernmental organization

IUCN- International union for the conservation of nature

IES- International ecotourism society

ANRSPDPAA mhara National Regional State Parks Development And Protection Authority

UNESCO United nation Education and Science of Cultural Organization

Gov.t Government

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Abstract

CBET is a very specific form of ecotourism which implies that the community has substantial control of, and involvement in, the ecotourism project and the majority of the benefits remain in the community. Mt. Birhan has very huge amount of natural and cultural resource to develop CBET. The research was focuses on assessing challenges, opportunities and potentials for CBET development. To achieve the objectives primary and secondary data were used by employing qualitative approach for (interview and field observation) and quantitative approach for (both open and ended questions). In the study, 95 Samples were selected by purposive sampling method based on their own expertise, knowledge and job experience from local communities and culture and tourism office on Senan and Bibugn Woredas, and also the Zonal level. The collected data were systematically organized, described, verified, analyzed, and interpreted accordingly. Based on the objective major challenges, opportunities and potentials were identified in the study area. There were some major challenges identified such as Lack of knowledge, over grazing and agricultural expansion, Lack of CBET service, absence of buffer zone, Lack of promotion, conflict of ownership. There were some major opportunities identified such as the commitment of the Gov.t and NGOs, the proximity of DebreMarkos city, collaboration of the stakeholders, differentiate of CBET product, and Suitable Policy and strategies. On the other hand, there were some potentials identified such as fauna and flora species, the four stepped mountain ranges, Abajime natural forest, Molalit cave, water bodies, Agew cab, Monolithic Cave of King Lalibela, Weaving, Traditional metal working, Pottery, Basket working from wicker, festival are cultural CBET resource to develop CBET.

Keywords: *Mt. Birhan, Challenges, Opportunities, potentials and Community-Based Ecotourism*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The term ecotourism appeared first in the 1980s, published definition of ecotourism which capture more comprehensively the dimension of sustainable development and community involvement, local benefits and conservation of the environment than earlier definition (Fennell, 2008). Ethiopia is the land of multiple tourist attractions and with a visitor friendly people who are conscious of its historical, cultural and natural heritages; it was this recognition of a great potential, the tourism industry has been started in 1960's in the country (Ayalew, 2009). The country also has a wide variety of wildlife habitats ranging from alpine moor lands, to lowland savannahs with extensive wetlands. Having evolved in relative ecological isolation from the rest of the African mainland, Ethiopia contains approximately 40% of all land above 2,500m in altitude (EWCA, 2013).Ethiopia's wildlife is one of the richest and most diversified in Africa with several of its protected areas and wetlands. Out of the total wildlife resources, more than 320 mammals (39 endemic), 918 birds (19 endemic), 240 reptiles (16 endemic), 71 amphibians (30 endemic) and 172 fishes (38 endemic) species are recorded in Ethiopia (Vreugdenhil, 2012).

In and around Mt. Birhanthere are tourism potentials such as the stunning landscapes like Aba Jime forests, AratMekerakir, Molalit cave, Lake Bahire Giyorgies in line with unique biodiversity resources which include plant, wild animal, and bird species(Abebaw, 2002). Currently, 41 bird species are found in Afro tropical highland biome of Mt. Birhan including endemic Abyssinian Long claw (Macronyxflavicollis). Some of the bird species are endemic for Ethiopia such as Abyssinian Long claw, Wattled Ibis, Thick-billed Raven, White-collared Pigeon, and Black-winged Lovebird. There are also 16 animal species found in Mt.Birhan; such as Leopard (Pantherapardus), Golden/Common Jackal (Canisaureus), Common Bush Back (Tragelaphusscriptus), Abyssinia Colobus, Common Duiker, Spotted Hyena (Crocutacrocuta), Anubis Baboon (Papio Anubis), Bush Pig(Potamochoerusporcus), and Common Duiker (Sylvicapragrimmia).The area is also home for many afro alpine and sub- afro alpine plant species.There are 85 plant species found in thearea.Particularly,Kosheshila(Acanthussennii),Korch(Erythrinabrucei),Gimy(Euryopspinifoliu s), Ashengidye (Kniphofiafoliosa), and Gibra (Lobelia rhynchopetalum) are endemic for Ethiopia. A headof these, the rural communities of Mt. Birhan and their surroundings have colorful cultural values which include both tangible and intangible cultural heritages like living

styles, traditional systems, artifacts, built environment, social structure, architecture, paintings, and other historical values like historical buildings, palace, battle fields, story, and oral tradition (Abebaw, 2002).The best cultural tourist sites are Merto Le Mariyam monastery, DebreWorq monastery and DimaGiyorgies monastery, and WashaGiyorgiesFilfil church and, T/Haymanot palace and broken bridge.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Community based ecotourism is a form of ecotourism that emphasizes the central involvement and empowerment of communities to utilize natural, cultural and historicassets for tourism (BIMP, 2010).CBET is designed and operated with due consideration given to ecological and social sustainability. It must be economically viableand socially inclusive, to offer educational opportunities for hosts, visitors and spread thebenefits of tourism widely among communities. However,the global nature of tourism can engender many problems for communities' earnings toretain control over the tourism industry at the local levelOndicho, 2012). More often, local people neither have the business skills and connections nor the political and economic power to competewith transnational tour companies (Ondicho, 2012). The controversial issue of community-based ecotourism is a level of participation. There isincreasing recognition of the need to involve communities in general. However, there is considerable disagreement about exactly who should participate and to what extent.

Mt. Birhan has many potential tourism resources that can be used as a destinationfor many local and foreign tourists like just other known sites of the country (Getaneh, 2012). Among thepotential resources, the existence of attractive landscapes, the four stepped mountains (AratMekeraker in Amharic), Molalit cave, Abajima natural forest and many endemic and common biological diversity such as Gimyi,Nechate,Jibara (Giant Lobelia) and Common Golden Jackal (*Canisaureus),* climate, rivers, lake, caves, and mountains and valleys, cool temperate(Wurch in Amharic) are the few situation of the area. Therefore, Mt. Birhan can contribute so much to the ecotourism development of the country like that of Semienand Bale Mountains (Getaneh, 2012). Furthermore, Mt. Birhanisalso endowed with cultural attractions such as traditional activitiesand religious festivals but it is underutilized. However, currently Mt. Birhan natural resources are high degree of exploitation from time to time by many problems which includes: - Over gazing, agricultural expansion, Lack ofCBET service and facilities, conflict of owner ship, absence of buffer zone, lack of knowledge about CBET concept…etc.

These are the major problems that affect the conservation of the area. Due to lack of intervention by local government, lack of joint operations among government, NGOS, and local communities, lack of promotion…etc. As a resultthere should be another alternative means to rehabilitate these resources and that could be optional source of income for the community. Ecotourism can solve this problem since the area has natural, cultural and historical based potentials of tourism resource todevelopCBET (Sintayehu, 2013).So far some studies have been conductedbutthey do not detail understood the main problems and also more focused on others values. Due to at that time some problems do not overlap. Even though, currently the challenges of Mt. Birhan increase from time to time at an alarming rate. Therefore,the researcher is to fill this gap to conduct the study on the major challenges, opportunities and potentials of developing CBET at the study area.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General objective

The general objective of the study is to identify the challenges, opportunities and potentials for community based ecotourism development in Mt.Birhan conservation area.

1.3.2 Specific objective the study

The specific objective of the study would be focused on

- To identify the challenges for the development ofCBET in Mt. Birhan community conservation area.
- To identify the opportunities for the development of CBET in Mt. Birhan community conservation area.
- To identify the potentials for the development of CBET in Mt. Birhan community conservation area.

1.4. Research Questions

Based on the research objectives the following research questions were list out

- ✓ What are the challenges for the development of CBET in Mt. Birhancommunity conservation area?
- ✓ What are the opportunities for the development of CBET in Mt. Birhan community conservation area?
- ✓ What are the main potentials for the development ofCBETin Mt. Birhan community conservation area?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The study will be a central purpose to identify the major challenges, opportunities and potentials and also toassign appropriate direction of the policy makers to the future strategies and policies for developing CBET in the study area. The study provides input to the policy makers and other stakeholders that need information to solve the problems and to make appropriate solution to mitigate the challenges and also to know the value of the resources. It will be used to increase the awareness of the stakeholders and users about the crucial functions and services of these ecosystems. Broadly speaking the beneficiaries of the result of this study can be classified in to two groups. The stakeholders in and around Mt. Birhan are the first who will benefit from the result of the study, because to mitigating the challenges occurring on the study area and restoring their natural resources, mainly, fauna and flora species and creating an enabling environment in the region improves the livelihood of the societies. Secondly, the benefit of the study goes to the country at large by reducing challenges for other conservation areas and achieving sustainable development via sustainable environmental management. The study may also use as starting point or reference material for those who interest to make further study.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was limited on Mt. Birhan community conservation area and focused on challenges, opportunity and potentials of CBET, and also the data was collected from January up to, the end of June, 2019, due to time limitation, financial constraint, and difficulties to collect and write dates in the study area.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

The research was conducted in Mt.Birhan community conservation area. However, some limitation happened during field survey. Therefore, the researcher believed that the limitation of the study would be mainly time limitation, financial constraint, lack of adequate and accurate data, lack of full materials. But the researcher could havemanaged these challenges by using different techniques such as by searched financial and material sponsors, information centered of the study area.

1.8. Organization of the Study

The research was focused on challenges, opportunities and potentials of CBET development on theconservation area. This study has comprises of five chapters: -chapter one consists of the background of the study, it includes statement of the problem, research question, objective of the study (general and specific objective), significance of the study, scope of the study and limitation of the study. Chapter two consists of literature review whereas the third chapter contains methodology of the study, the fourth chapter wouldbe result and discussion of the study and chapter five wouldbe cover conclusion, and recommendation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Concepts and Definition of Ecotourism

Ecotourism is a relatively new idea and has emerged in the late 1980s that has dramatically captured the attention of many people from a variety of backgrounds (Koeman, 1998). The International Ecotourism Society (2010) has described Ecotourism as responsible travel to natural areas that protect the environment and enhance the welfare of local communities. Moreover, the World Conservation union (IUCN, 2001) defined the term ecotourism as an environmentally accountable travel and visitation to natural places, to experience and admire nature (and any related cultural features, both ancient and contemporary) which encourage conservation, and which invariably also have a minimal visitor impact and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local peoples, leading to their regional sustainability enhancement.

Community-based ecotourism (CBE), on the other hand, is a very specific form of ecotourism which implies that the community has substantial control of, and involvement in, the ecotourism project and the majority of the benefits remain in the community(Denman, 2001). It has thus emerged as a valuable tool for poverty alleviation, wildlife conservation and the delivery of responsible and sustainable tourism offerings (Denman, 2001). Ecotourism has become the fastest growing sector of the tourism industry growing three times faster than the industry as a whole (TIES, 2008 as cited in (Ambelu, 2011).

The term Community- based ecotourism takes the social dimension a stage further. Community- based ecotourism, defined by world conservation union as "environmentally, responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas and local communities in order to enjoy, study, appreciate nature and any accompanying cultural features- tangible and intangible heritage both post and present that promotes conservation, has low visitor impact and provides for beneficially active socio- economic involvement of local populations" (IUCN, 2001).

2.1.1. Categories of Community- Based Ecotourism

The advertising and marketing perspectives of ecotourism is linked to tourist behavior like bird watching, wildlife photography, walks through forests, and the exploration of remote natural areas. Often the argument for this type of tourism is based on its being a non-International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) defined it as: environmentally

responsible travel to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature that promote conservation, have a low visitor impact and provide for beneficially active socioeconomic involvement of local people (Ngece, 2002). The third one is close working relationship between the local community and the tourism industry provides the necessary mechanisms to support conservation efforts. Here, local communities, natural resource managers, tour operators and other stakeholders are necessary components for CBET development. The goal of development is to attract visitors to natural areas and use the revenue to fund local conservation and community livelihood developments and integrates both protection of nature and provision of local socio-cultural and economic benefits (Stewart, 1994).

2.1.2. Principles of Community- Based Ecotourism

Until recent times many businesses and governments promoted ecotourism without understanding the most governing principles and guidelines. But establishing and setting internationally and nationally accepted principles and guidelines became objectivities of different stakeholders to be engaged in ecotourism development in 1990s. Hence, following the stakeholders' meeting held in 1991,the International Ecotourism Society (IES) has developed a set of principles which are embraced by the growing involvement of NGOs, private sector businesses, governments, academia and local communities (Wood 2011). Specific guidelines and principles have been developed to meet the sustainability of ecotourism development. According to Wood (2011), the followings are, therefore, among the agreed up on principles and guidelines set to effectuate ecotourism development including CBET such as:-

- Educate the traveler on the importance of conservation
- Stress the importance of responsible business, which works cooperatively with local authority and peoples to meet local need and deliver conservation benefits.
- Emphasizes the need of regional tourism zoning and for visitor management plans designs for either regions or natural areas that are slated to become eco destination.
- Direct revenues to the conservation and management of natural and protected area
- Emphasis use of environmental and social base line studies and long term monitoring programs to assess and minimize impacts.
- Strive to maximize economic benefit for the host country, local business and community, particularly people living in and adjacent to natural and protected area.

- Seek to ensure that tourism development does not exceed the social and environmental limit of acceptable change as determined by researchers with cooperation with local residents.
- Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people
- Rely on infrastructure that has been developed in harmony with the environment, minimizing use of fossils fuels, conserving local plant wild life and blending with natural and cultural environment.
- Support international human rights and labor agreements.

2.1.3. Benefits of Community-Based Ecotourism

CBET helps improve standard of living for example through increased disposable income of individuals. Besides these, here is an underlying concept of development of CBET which is empowerment of local people. In particular, the concept of empowerment of host communities can be divided into four different categories: Economic, psychological, social and political. In economic terms, ecotourism generates long-term benefits that are distributed equitably within the host communities and can be used for the constant improvement of the community's infrastructure. Moreover, ecotourism can contribute to the psychological empowerment of the local people by enhancing their sense of self-esteem and by cultivating pride for their cultural and natural heritage. This happens because ecotourism reveals to the public the value of host community in terms of natural beauty or cultural uniqueness. In addition, ecotourism may strengthen social bonds within the community by promoting cooperation among its members. Finally, ecotourism brings about political empowerment, since it creates a forum for the expression of peoples' voices concerning issues of local development(Scheyvens, 1999).

2.2. Stakeholders in Community Based Ecotourism Development

CBET is a multi-sect oral tourism activity that requires different partners of various interests to involve. Some may be more important than the others. Whoever more important, however, the success of CBET is highly determined by the strong integration among those stakeholders. The key stakeholders in CBET development include park administrators, local communities, government officials, NGOs, funders, academics and private sector. In this section, the role of these stakeholders in CBET development is presented (Drumm and Moore, 2005).

A. Administrators of the Park and Protected Areas

As aforementioned, the prime settings of CBET development are pristine, exotic, remote and natural areas easily prone to threats and damages. Thus, developing CBET practices in such areas requires precarious measures most often taken and implemented by the administration of parks and protected areas (Drumm and Moore, 2005).

B. Local Communities

Brandon (1996), states that there is an increasing recognition of the need of local Community's participation in planning developing and managing CBET activities. Nonetheless, the degree of participation and who exactly participates remains a challenging issue. It is mostly underpinned that ecotourism gives the local people more opportunities to participate effectively in development activities, empowering them to mobilize their own capacities to become a social actor rather than the passive subjects (Brandon, 1996).

C.Government

Drumm and Moore (2005) stated that the institutional framework, the available human capital and tourism policy are crucial to determine the success of CBET. CBET, as an alternative to sustainable development, demands clear laws, legislations and regulation formulated and enforced by the government. It also demands the prevalence of effective institutional framework tends to effectuate CBET development from the emerging ecotourism businesses.According to Drumm and Moore (2005), the specific responsibilities of the government in CBET development include: Creating linkage and integration between ecotourism projects and other related,Projects take place in the ecotourism destinations, provision of technical assistance through the established government departments, Undertaking of market research and promoting ecotourism products and destinations through tourism bureau, providing direct financial support, formulation and enforcement of policies which allow for the flexible development of ecotourism enterprises, licensing and registering of activities related to ecotourism.

D. Non- Governmental Organizations NGOs

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are valuable partners in the process of CBET development (Drumm and Moore, 2005). They provide technical and financial 16assistances.

NGOs' involvements in ecotourism development revolve around two focal areas. These are protection of biodiversity and environment resources; and ensuring sustainable development for the local communities. Hence, they can develop a myriad of programs such as research, training, community development, protected area management and target conservation initiatives (Drumm and Moore, 2005).

E. Academics

Academics such as universities and research centersare another group that plays a secondary valuable role in the planning, developing, managing and examining the overall effects of CBET development (Drumm and Moore, 2005). It is this group that helps to frame the issues of ecotourism including CBET and raise questions whether ecotourism meets its stated goals or not. Thus, researchers and academic institutions greatly contribute for CBET development by diagnostically evaluating the economic, environmental and social implications of CBET development (Drumm and Moore, 2005).

F. Funders

According to the United Nations Environment Programme(UNEP, 2002), the financial constrains to cope up with natural resources conservation and community development are believed to be sponsored and funded by bilateral and multilateral donor agencies such as World Bank, IMF and World Wildlife Fund (WWF). These can fund the development of CBET through loan or grants. These contributions are often of critical values for parks and protected areas conservations and sustainable CBET development (Drumm and Moore, 2005).

2.3. Challenges of Community Based Ecotourism Development

The development of CBET occurs not without some challenges. In this section, the major challenges on the development of CBET are presented.

2.3.1. Heterogeneous Nature and Interests of Stakeholders

As presented in Section several stakeholders are involved in CBET development. Nonetheless, due to the differences in interest and aim among them, the stakeholders are far from remaining homogenous. Each group of stakeholders has its own particular values and objective its own culture indeed. The heterogeneous nature of stakeholders, therefore, implies for various issues

with a complex mosaic of stakeholder interests that must be addressed carefully to practice CBET sustainably (Honey and Rome,2000).

2.3.2. Low Community Involvement

Involving the community is a critically important and complex subject for successful CBET. CBET requires an understanding, and where possible a strengthening, of the legal rights and responsibilities of the community over land, resources and development. This should apply in particular to the tenure of community held lands and to rights over tourism, conservation and other uses on these lands, enabling the community to influence activity and earn income from tourism. It should also apply to participation in land use planning and development control over private property. It is important to remember that ecotourism is a business, as well as community led initiatives, private enterprise and investment should be encouraged where appropriate, within a structure which enables the community to benefit, and have decision making power over the level and nature of tourism in its area (WWF, 2001).

2.3.3. Lack of Infrastructure

The existence of ecotourism potentials offers great opportunity for the development of CBET. But those opportunities are constrained by resource limitations such as water supplies, roads, airports and widespread electricity. The loss of access(Biers, 2014) to a number of natural resources is as a major obstacle hindering the progress of CBET. Physical infrastructure is an important factor in a tourism industry in order to develop potential attractions. But if there are poor road conditions around attraction sites, it will harm the competitive position of these attractions in relation to other attractions which are more developed. Hence, even though road development, a tourism component, poor road construction can have a negative impact on tourism development (Silva and McDill,2004).

2.3.4. Capacity Building Problems

The other challenge of CBET development is capacity building in local communities and other interest groups who should be capable with knowledge, money and skills. Generally, capacity building in ecotourism development in many developing countries run by different NGOs, and is very short and entirely fund dependent. In order to be able to run the programme on a long-term and autonomous basis, it should be local and community based (Hari, 2010).

The other most common problem on CBET development is lack of broad based policies (lack of sect oral integration) which integrate tourism in general and community development and ecotourism is often a challenge to the success of CBET in developing countries (Foucat, 2002).

2.4. Opportunities of Community Based Ecotourism Development

2.4. 1. Scio-cultural, economic and environmental opportunity

The development of CBET can create different socio- cultural, economic and environmental opportunity for the locals (weaver, 1996) described as: "Ecotourism is the option perhaps most frequently touted for its potential. It has been described with the power to sustain rural livelihoods, catalyze new development, renew cultural pride, and empowers local peoples and protects biodiversity. "According to Drumm and Moore (2005), the mere presence of a protected area alone is not enough for CBET development. That is, the development of CBET requires the presence of many features and conditions, such as physical features, cultural features, the level of local economic development, the collaboration of stakeholders and the presence of suitable policy and legislation. In this section, the potentials and necessary conditions or the development of CBET are presented.

2.4.2. Presence of Physical Features

The land surface of the earth is composed of a variety of landforms which we can be broadly grouped into four categories: mountains (areas of elevated, rugged terrain), more gently sloping hill lands, elevated plateaus and lowland plains. Within each landform category there are features resulting from natural forces and variations in the underlying rock. Volcanoes, crater lakes and calderas, lava formations, geysers and hot springs, are geothermal features caused by disturbances from deep within the earth's' crust. Even in areas where volcanic activity ceased long ago, springs rich in minerals have in turn given rise to the type of health resort known as a spa. Another important group of features is 19 found in karst limestone areas, where surface streams have 'disappeared' underground to carve out impressive caves, sinkholes and gorges (Brain and cooper, 2005).

2.4.3. Presence of Cultural Feature

Tourists are interested in the differences between their country of origin and the peoples of the countries they visit, as expressed in terms of art and, music, traditional dance folklore and festivals, local food, architecture , pageants, traditional agricultural structure, local handicrafts, regional dress culture, historical events and people, heritage appeals, architectural variety,

artistic activities and lifestyle generally. The existence of those varieties of cultural features become great opportunity for community based ecotourism development (Brain and cooper, 2005).

2.4.4. Level of Economic Development

According to Stephen (2009), a society's level of economic development is a major determinant of the magnitude of tourist demand because the economy influences so many critical, and interrelated, factors.

2.4.5. Collaborations of Stakeholders

For CBET to be properly developed local and international stakeholders dependent on government (particularly ministry of tourism and environment) to develop policy thatwill develop protect and manage natural areas (Wood, 2002). To deliver and sustain the CBET venture over the long term, communities can develop partnership and network with relevant organization to extend outreach and create supportive environment.

2.4.6. Presence of Suitable Policy and Legislation

So ecotourism needs to be guided by very holistic policy for its effective practice to achieve real sustainable ecotourism that can be a more beneficial to local communities, safeguard to natural and cultural environments, and advantageous to tourists and other stakeholders (Fennel According to Carlson (2001), ecotourism including CBET is the fastest growing sub sector of the tourism industry and Dowling, 2003).

2.5. Community Based Ecotourism Development in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a country which is endowed with the vast array of ecotourism resources including cultural, historical, and archaeological and natural resources which are ideal for the development of sustainable ecotourism ventures (Sisay, 2004). There are some encouraging community-based ecotourism initiatives in Ethiopia such as Adoba -Dodola, which is financially and technically supported by the German Agency of Technical Cooperation or GTZ (now GIZ) on the northern slopes of the Bale Mountains in Oromia National Regional State and a pilot ecotourism project on Semen Mountains National Park (Sisay,2004). In addition, there are some Community Based Tourism initiatives in other parts of the country such as Wonchi Crater Lake (in Ambo, Oromia Region), Adwa (Tigray region) and Mekit in north Wollo (Amhara region). The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has initiated what is termed the Climate-Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) initiative to protect the country from the adverse effects of climate

change and to help build a green economy that will help the country realize its ambition of reaching middle income status before 2025 (mofed, 2013) Hence, CBET could be one of the best choices to ensure a green economy as well as to realize the second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP).

2.6. Challenges of Community Based Ecotourism Development in Ethiopia

2.6.1. Conflict of interest over resource usage and ownership problems

Conflict of interest among different stakeholders who live around valuable ecotourism resources were one of the frequently stated constraints for CBET development. For instance, (Biers, 2014)in his study about the challenges and opportunities for CBET in Lake Zengena, Amhara region revealed that there was a serious ownership problem between the church communities and the government, particularly the BanjaWoreda Culture and Tourism Office. Similarly (Ketema, 2015)also found that there was a conflict of interest on the ownership of Won chi Crater Lake which is situated in Oromia Regional State, in central Ethiopia.

2.6.2. Lack of cooperation among stakeholders

Lack of stakeholders' integration is one of the repeatedly mentioned challenges for CBET development in different parts of Ethiopia and also globally. For example, Ambelu (2011) stated that a lack of cooperation and a solid formal relationship between the community tourism enterprises and other stakeholders was identified as a 'bottleneck' in the study area which conceivably emanated from a lack of capacity and the failure to legally register community tourism enterprises and also a deficiency of support from government offices.

2.6.3. Lack of awareness and limited participation

It is obvious that CBET development encourages a local community's participation and they also benefit in sharing in activities, and also enhance their understanding about the natural and cultural resource conservation initiatives. Nevertheless, most of ecotourism destinations in Ethiopia are not in line with the principles of community-based ecotourism. For instance, according to (Alemayehu, 2011) most of the local people in his study area had no awareness about either ecotourism or CBET, and they did not participate at any stage in park management decisions.

2.6.4. Lack of basic ecotourism infrastructure and facilities

Basic ecotourism facilities such as accommodation, transportation, health services and other support facilities are essential to enhance the satisfaction of eco tourists and to maximize the

length of stay of tourists to any area. However, the findings of this review indicated that most of the ecotourism destinations in Ethiopia are devoid of these facilities and services. For instance, Ketema (2015) stated that there is a dire absence of well-designed trekking passes, parking facilities, camping sites and effective land use planning alongside the lake. Ketema has also mentioned that there is a lack of transportation and comfortable roads, and there are no Eco lodges and catering facilities around the lake. Similarly, (Eshetie, 2012)also stated that a lack of basic facilities such as electricity, an effective road network to and from BorenaSayint National Park and health stations, are other major problems encountered. Bires (2014) in his study of Lake Zengana in Amhara Regional state, revealed a shortage of sufficient potable water, a lack of electricity, toilets and other important facilities that tourists require to make their trips memorable.

2.6.5. Lack of trained manpower

Tourism professionals play significant roles in the development of ecotourism since they are capable of planning and organizing ecotourism initiatives or activities effectively, which will in turn help increase the satisfaction of eco-tourists in the destinations. However, most of the findings from the reviewed empirical studies suggest that the ecotourism destinations have been challenged due to a great shortage of tourism/ecotourism professionals. For instance, Alemayehu (2011) has pointed out that there is no ecotourism expert or consultant who is in charge of ecotourism or community-based ecotourism activities in Awash National Park.

2.6.6. Inadequate financial allocation

Conservation of wildlife and park management is an expensive task, and lack of adequate financial resources for such activities is one of the most profound difficulties facing park managers (Berhanu, 2013).

2.7. Opportunities for Ecotourism Development in Ethiopia

2.7.1. Abundance of potential tourism resources

Most of the researchers who conducted their study in different parts of Ethiopia revealed the existence of abundant cultural, historical and natural tourism resources as an opportunity to develop CBET development in Ethiopia (Ambelu, 2011; Alemayehu, 2011; Berhanu,2013; Aynalem, 2013; Bires, 2014; Ketema, 2015; Eshete,2012;Asfaw, 2014).

2.7.2. Proximity to Honey Pot areas and major highways

Alemayehu (2011) in his study mentioned the proximity of Awash National Park to Addis Ababa and to the paleo-anthropological and geological tourist destinations deep in the rift valley of the Afar region, as an advantage for CBET development in Awash Park. Furthermore, the proximity to the honey pot attractions, such as the historic route in northern Ethiopia which includes Lalibela, BahirDarand Gondar, was also identified as a potential strategic opportunity for the access to the market (Bires, 2014; Aynalem, 2013; Ambelu, 2011).

2.8. Potential of community-based Ecotourism Resources in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is endowed with unique cultural heritages and attractive natural resources that attract tourists (MoCT, 2006).The country has several parks and reserves to shelter its flora and fauna which can be visited to sight see these animals and explore their natural havens. Ecotourism represents an approach to tourism that emphasizes on environmental and cultural preservation. It highlights opportunities for tourists and other visitors to experience aspects of the country's ecology and natural endowments as well as unique features of its archaeology, history and culture .Ecotourism is responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people (Ethiopia has immense Ecotourism resources including both Natural and Cultural attractions (TIES, 2015). The following category specifies the major highlights of the potential Ecotourism potentials in Ethiopia (MoCT, 2006). Ethiopia has so many attractive mountains like The Bale and Semien Mountains, mountains in wag and lasta, Choke Mountain in east Gojjam, Northeastern Tirai the Irob region, Chilalo Mountains in Arsi, Ziquala peaks and Fantalle in Awash national park. These places are best suitable for individual trekkers, hiking parties and for professional climbers Ethiopia's lakes have varied features of great interests to Eco tourists: These includes: birds, wildlife, vegetation, colorful ethnic groups, historic churches and monasteries, unusual geologic features and much more. Extensive and nice looking Ethiopia's national parks, like Nechsar, Mago,Omo, Awash…etc are spectacular places for Eco tourists to watch the real African big wild life and enjoy the breathtaking surrounding landscapes. The underground caverns and rock arts of Sof Omer in Bale, Legagoda at the vicinity of Dire dawa, Shebe found at a short distance from Dila town are places to admire the works of nature, rock paintings and carvings of people and animals. Battle sites like Adowa and Maqdala and places of significant political events like BoruMeda, Entoto, and Ankoberare most interesting sites for history loving Eco tourists.

2.9. Conceptual Framework of Community Based Ecotourism

Based on the literature reviewed in the preceding sections of this chapter, a conceptual framework is developed. The conceptual framework of CBET is which describes about the challenges and opportunities for the development of CBET.

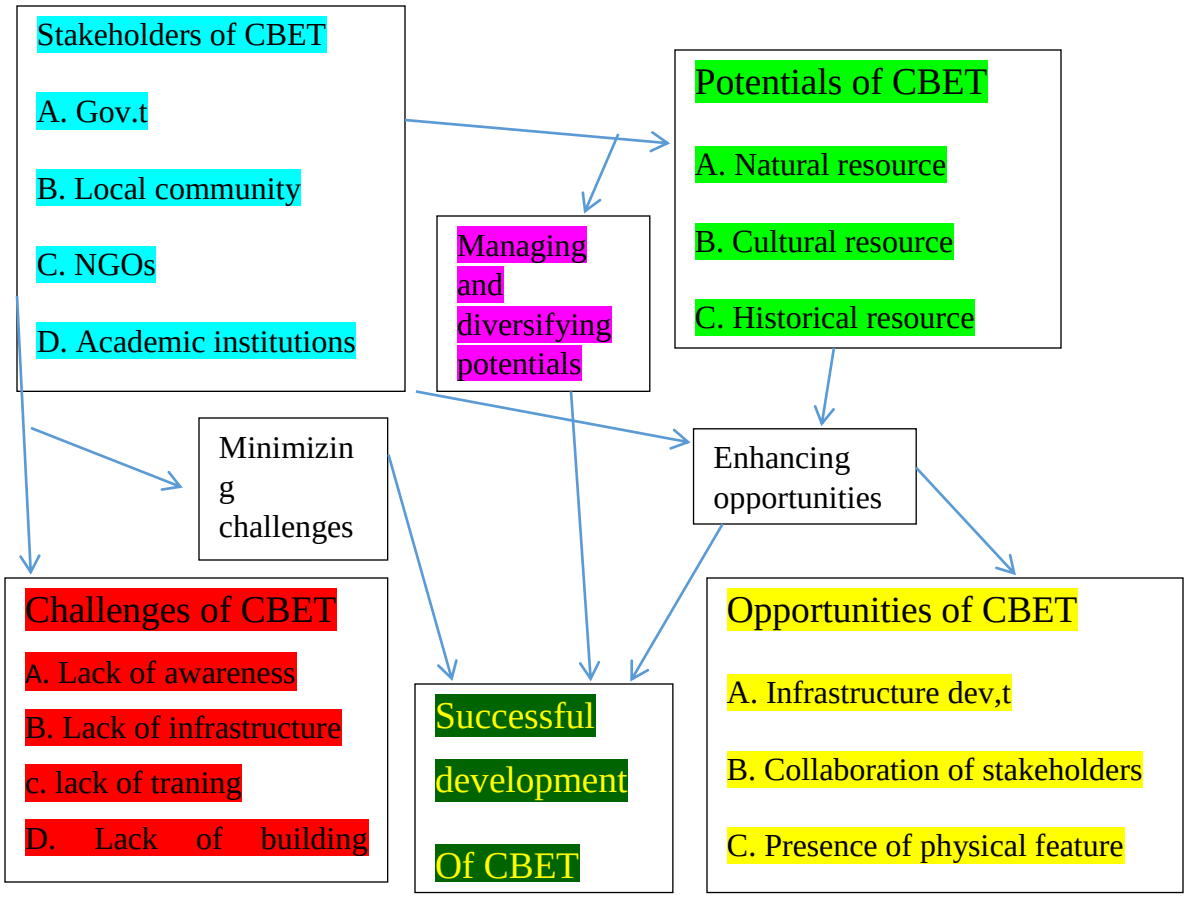


Figure 1conceptual framework for a successful development of CBET development:

Source: own work, 2019

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Description of the Study Area

3.1.1. Location of the study area

Site Description

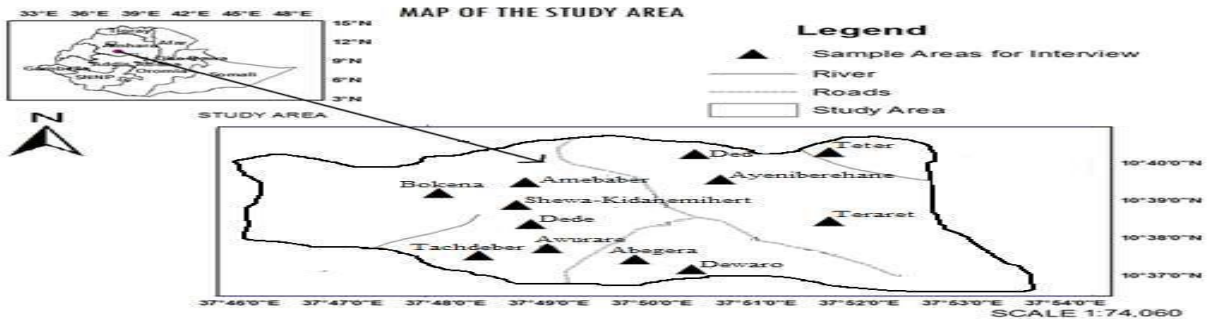


Figure 2 map of the study area (source: Aseres, 2015).

Geographically, Mt. Birhan is found in the highland of East Gojjam in northern part of Ethiopia. The area is found 333 km far from the capital city of Addis Ababa and 38 km far from the Zone capital of Deb re Markos and 11 km from the woreda town of Robe Gebeya. The catchment area of Mt. Birhan covers nine woredas. The mountain lies between 100 420´N latitude and 3720 52´E longitude. The central peak is located at 10°42’ N and 37°50’ E; the whole mountain area extends over 10°41' to 10°44' N and 37°50' to 37°53'E and covers an area of about 15000 km2 (Belay, 2013). Mt. Birhan is the water tower of the Upper Blue Nile river system in Ethiopia. It is the source of more than 23 rivers and 273 small springs which are the main tributaries of Upper Blue Nile (Teferi, 2010).

3.1.2. Topography

Mt. Birhan has different topographical features ranging from 2800 to 4015masl, thehighest peak of the area found in SenanWoreda particularly infilifilmeda around aratmekerakir with elevation of 4100m. Mt. Birhan is generally characterized by rough topography which includes plateau, deep incised valleys, escarpments, plains, and gorges (sintayehu, 2013)

3.1.3. Climate

Climatically, Mt. Birhan region is found within six climatic zones. These are; Upper Kola, Lower WeynaDega, Upper WeynaDega, Lower Dega, Upper Dega and Wurch (Belay S. *et.al*, 2013). The average temperature is between 0oc to 30oc and gets 200 to 2200 mm rainfall. The

maximum temperature is recorded from January to April. Whereas the maximum rainfall May to august.

3.2. Research Design

The researcher was used descriptive research design because it is more useful to explore, accurate and reliable data to describe the current opportunities,challenges and potentials of CBET development in the study area. According to (Kothari, 2004) a descriptive study design, which is concerned with narration of facts and characteristics concerning individuals, group or situation, is most often employed in social science research regarding approaches. Quantitative approach used to gather information from questionnaires that can be quantified infrequency and percentage. Qualitative approach was used to gather information from, interview, observation and questionnaire to open ended questions.

3.3. Source of data

The researcher was used both primary and secondary data. The primary data collected from field observation, interview and questionnaires, while the secondary data collected from both published and unpublished documents, book, journals and website …etc.

3.4. Data Collection Instrument

The researcher used the following research instrument for primary datasuch as:-

A. Interview

Interviews conducted by preparing check lists as a question to interviewer in order to respondents' ideas. Tourism experts from culture and tourism at Senan and BibugnWoredas and zonal level by purposive sampling technique are interview to forward their ideas, opinion feelings and knowledge regarding the challenges and opportunities of CBET in the study area.

B. **Field observation**

The researcher was used note taking photo camera to record important information .Observation is the main instrument of data collection applied during the visitation of the study area, to observation the challenges, opportunities and potentials.

C. **Questionnaire**:

The researcher both open and close-ended questionnaires designed and distributed for the local communities to gather reliable and accurate data.

3.5 Target Population of the Study

The target populations for the study were local communities of the senan and Bibugnworedas from four kebeles, tourism experts from culture and tourism offices at SenanandBibugnWoredas and Zonal level.

3.6. Method and Sample Size

The researcher was used purposive sampling method for local communities, and culture and tourism on Senan and BibugnWoredas and Zonal level. The researcher was selected four kebeles these are Wonberkdusyohans, Dedeyesus, ShewaKedanemeret and Telesamo. However, it is difficult to conduct interview and questionnaire for all of people residents at four kebeles due to time limitation and financial constraint65 respondentswere selected for open and close ended questionnaire. 30 respondents from tourism experts from culture and tourism on Senan and BibugnWoredas, and Zonal level for interview by semi structured.

Table 1 Sample size of the respondents

No	Name of kebeles	Total population	Sample size of respondents
1	Wonberkdusyohans	6,987	20
2	DedEyesus	6,575	15
3	ShewaKedanemeret	6,642	15
4	Telesamo	6,893	15

3.7. Method of data analysis

The collected data from different sources were analyzed by using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In analyzing the data collected through questionnaire, descriptivestatistics were employed. Then, the analyzed datawas tabulated and chart presented in theform of frequency and percentage. Qualitative data obtained from field observation andinterviewwere analyzed and interpreted through thematic and description method. Some relevant pictures are illustrated in Chapter four and appendix.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This part deals with the analysis and interpretation of data collected on challenges, opportunities and potentials of CBET development in the study area. The returned questionnaire, interview and personal observation result were analyzed and discussed.

4.1. Demographic profiles of the respondents

This section sex, age, education profile and occupation of the samples were clearly discussed.The demographic profile of the respondents below in the table the gender distribution of the respondents were quite comparable with 56% were male respondents and 44% were female respondents. The dominant age groups of the respondents were 21 to 35 years 52% followed by 35 to 50 years 48%. According to the educational level below the table 36% of the respondents were at elementary and high school level, other respondents 40% and 24% were diploma and degree and master level respectively. According to job occupation as below the table indicates 37% of the respondents were students, 45% are government employees and the remaining 18% of the respondents were self-employee.

Table 4.1 Demographic profiles of the respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	**Variable**	Frequency	Percentage
Sex			**Educational level**		
Male	53	56%	Elementary and high school	34	36%
Female	42	44%	Diploma and Degree	38	40%
Total	95	100%	Master	23	24%
			Total	95	100%
Age			**Job occupation**		
21-35	49	52%	Students	35	37%
35-50	46	48%	Government employees	43	45%
50 and above	-	-	Self-employees	17	18%
Total	95	100%	**Total**	95	100%

Source: own survey, 2019

4.2. Challenges of community based eco- tourism development in the study area

According to below the table 4.2 show that the respondent's awareness and understanding of somewhat less. The respondent's response are 77% of them are not known and understand the concept of CBET and the rest 23% are known and understand the concept of CBET. Among the respondents of the majority number is very low awareness. The result supported by (Alemayehu, 2011) most of the local people in his study area had no awareness about either ecotourism or CBET, and they did not participate at any stage in park management decisions.

Table 4.2Knowledge of the respondents about community-based ecotourism.

Description	Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Do you know about CBET	Yes	15	23%
	No	50	77%

Source:ownsurvey, 2019

As below the chart shows that the respondent's mentioned the challenges of CBET development. 24% are Lack of knowledge in local community about the CBET concepts and ideas.20% of respondents mentioned over grazing and agricultural expansion.18% of respondents mentioned Lake of community-based ecotourism service. 14% of respondents mentioned absence of buffer zone. 13% of respondent's responded that lack of promotion. 11% of respondents also mentioned conflict of owner ship problem. In addition to this other challenge also mentioned by the respondents, like Lack of adequate finance, poaching, human settlement, and tree cutting also hindered the development of CBET in the area.

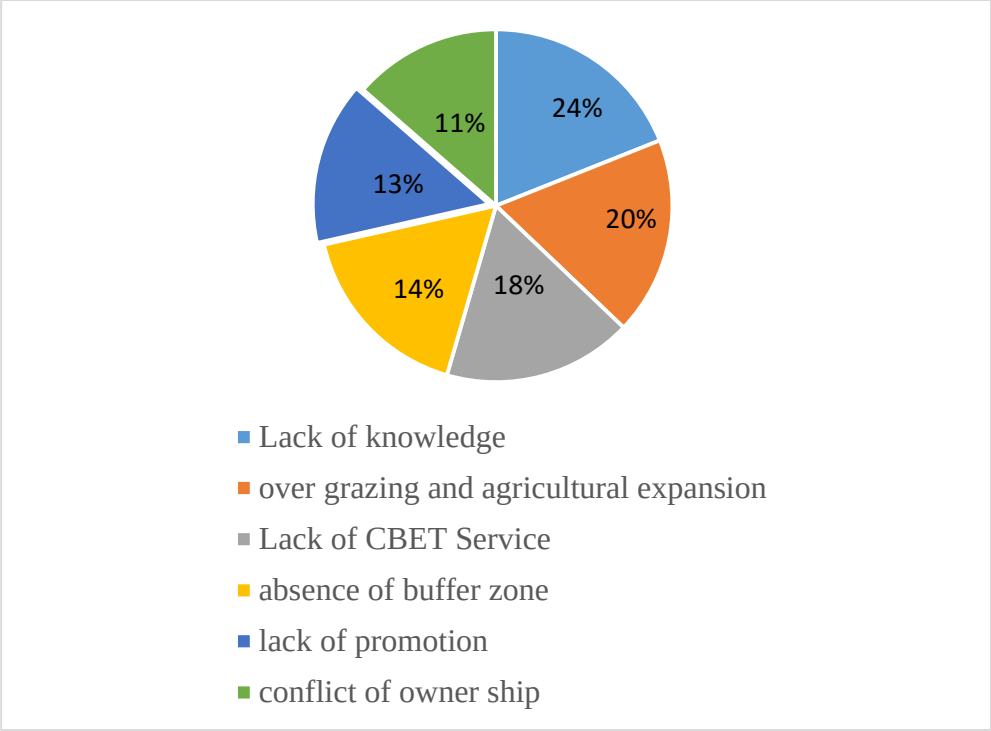


Figure 3 challenges of CBET: Source: *own* survey, 2019

According to interview the response of the respondents Mt. Birhan resource was by many problems, so that the respondents for warred major problems. Such as:

4.2.1. Lack of knowledge

According to the respondentmentioned95% of low level ofknowledgein local community about the CBET concepts and ideas.The qualitative data analyzed from interviews showed that the level of communityknowledgefor conservation is very low. Most of the respondents said that the local community of Mt. Birhan region is not ready for accepting both the CBET activity and conservation program.This result was agreed with (meseret, 2015) Lack of knowledge about tourism and resistance towards the development was the main manifestation of the community during the starting time of CBET development. Even though the problem is not solved fully up to now, the community starting to acquire some knowledge about tourism due to the tourism practices in the CBET sites. Development works in the area. In general, the overall results of this study identified knowledge as a critical obstacle of CBET. Similarly, Ketema (2015) also found that there was a conflict of interest on the ownership of Wonchi Crater Lake which is situated in Oromia Regional State, in central Ethiopia.

4.2.2. Over grazing and agricultural expansion

According to the questioner and interviewed91% of respondents mentioned over grazing and agricultural expansion are the 2nd major problems in the study area. Today, the number of population in the study area is fastly expanding time to time an alarming rate. As a result of this, the demand of over grazing and agricultural farming land is increasing so, many fauna and flora species were lost.The result was agreement with (EBTF, 2008) In Ethiopia Overgrazing results in decreased soil cover, increased erosion, decreased quality and productivity of range resources, reduction or elimination of the natural regeneration of woody species and preferred forage species, bush encroachment in some areas and loss of biodiversity. Awash, Abijata-Shala and Nechsar national parks, encroachment and grazing forced many wildlife species out of the park due to increased competition for forage (Hillman, 1991).



Figure 4challenges of Mt. Birhan, Source:*own*survey, 2019

4.2.3. Lack of community based ecotourism service development

According to the questioner and interviewed87% of respondents mentioned Lake of CBET serviceis the 3rd major problem in the study area.There is a serious problem of low in number, type, and quality of CBET service development. The CBET service liketelecommunication, transportation, guiding and interpretation services, accommodation establishment destination facilities and services, and public and institutional supplies are very low and limited in number. Lack of air transport from Addis Ababa to DebreMarkos is the major problem. This result supported by Ketema (2015) stated that there is a dire absence of well-designed trekking passes, parking facilities, camping sites and effective land use planning alongside the lake. Ketema has

also mentioned that there is a lack of transportation and comfortable roads, and there are no Eco lodges and catering facilities around the lake. Similarly, (Eshetie, 2012)also stated that a lack of basic facilities such as electricity, an effective road network to and from BorenaSayint National Park and health stations, are other major problems encountered.



Figure 5**Inadequate road construction, source: own survey, 2019**

4.2.4. Absence of buffer zone

According to the questioner and interviewed 85% of respondents mentioned absence of buffer zone.Through field observation Mt. Birhanhasnot clear separation between conservation and surrounded environment and surrounded with a degraded environment and the livelihood of local communities is solely dependent on traditional farming activities and rearing of animals. Such economic activities are mainly dependent on exploitation of natural resources. Due to scarcity of cultivable land and grazing land outside the conservation, the buffer zone up to the edge of the is used either for farming activity or grazing land which is a threat for its sustainability.The result was agreement with(Eshetie, 2012)the presence of buffer zone around protected areas is vital for the sustainable conservation of natural resources.

4.2.5. Lack of promotion

According to the questioner and interviewed 75% of respondents responded that lack of promotion is one of the major challenges in the study area. As discussed in the potential of nature and culture based there are a lot of natural and cultural resources but are not promoted, and benefited the community as expected. Unless there sources are well promoted there will be no tourist hence no CBET development. So promoting of the area is necessary if CBET development is needed. Promotion is an integral component of destination growth and development. While product development is associated with the creation of attractions or experiences, promotion plays a key role in communicating the value and appeal of the products that would be consumers (WWF, 2001)**.** Often, assumptions made about the marketability ofa particular location or experience has been unrealistic and not based on research. As result, promotional activities have been misdirected. A problem has been the lack of CBET knowledge

not only among local communities themselves but also among tourism suppliers and supporting agencies (WWF, 2001).

4.2.6. Conflict of Ownership Problems

68% of respondents also mentioned owner ship problem. In Mt. Birhan it was Conflict betweenlocal communities and government in 2010 E.C. Due to resource usage and ownership problems. Government has totally blocked the conservation without awareness creation, agreement local communities, clear definition of goal and objective for the communities so that communities created the conflict. Who live around valuable ecotourism resources were one of the frequently stated constraints for CBET development. The result supported by Bires (2014) in his study about the challenges and opportunities for community based ecotourism in Lake Zengena, Amhara region revealed that there was a serious ownership problem between the church communities and the government, particularly the BanjaWoreda Culture and Tourism Office. Similarly, Ketema (2015) also found that there was a conflict of interest on the ownership of Wonchi Crater Lake which is situated in Oromia Regional State, in central Ethiopia.

4.3.Opportunity of community based eco- tourism development in the conservation area of Mt. Birhan

According to below the table most of the local communities/respondents 85% are used resources from the conservation area of Mt. Birhan. Whereas the remaining 15% of respondents are not used the resource. So that the response of the respondents are used different type of resources such as Water resource, cutting of Chima or Guassa grass resource, charcoal and fire wood resource, greasing resource are used.

Table 1.3 Information about resource use of local community from Mt. Birhan for livelihood

Description	Option	Frequency	Percentage
Do you use resources from the Mt.Birhan conservation are your livelihood?	Yes	81	85%
	No	14	15%

Source:own survey, 2019

As below the chart shows that 26% of respondents mentioned the commitment of the Government and NGOs. 23%of respondent's mentioned the proximity of Debre Markos, Bahir Dar and Add Ababa city. 20% of respondent's mentioned collaboration of the stakeholders on the conservation area.17% of respondents mentioned differentiates of community based ecotourism resource, activities and services. 14% of the respondents mentioned the presence of suitable policy and legislation.

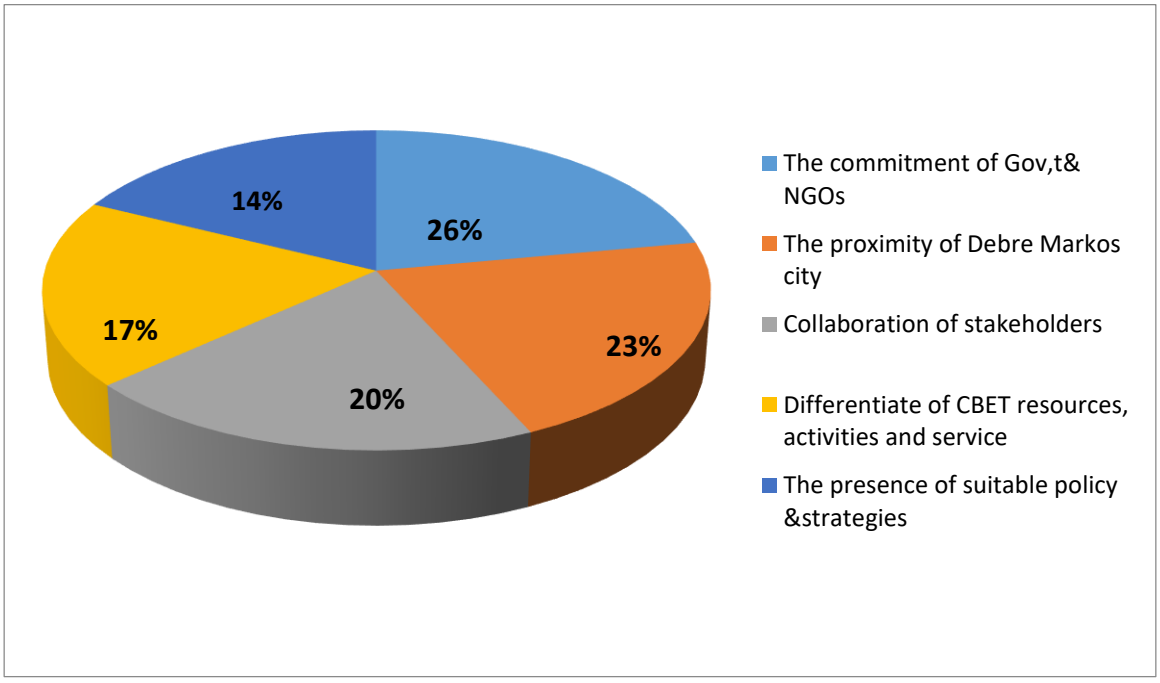


Figure 6 opportunities of CBET Source: own survey, 2019

According to the interviewed the respondents said that Mt. Birhan has different opportunities to develop CBET. Therefore the respondents have identified the major CBET opportunities for warred as follow.

4.3.1. The Commitment of the Government and NGOs

According to the questioner and interviewed 91% of respondents that mentioned the Commitment of the Government and NGOs to develop CBET. therefore high number of respondents responded Mt. Birhan is said to be the water tower of the Nile basin countries, it gets due attention from many governmental and nongovernmental institutions. Those institutions from the Nile basin countries bring their endeavor for the restoration of the area to ensure the ecological balance of the Nile basin countries. Additionally, the area seeks the attention of many

national and international conservation bodies to rejuvenate its endangered ecosystem. As discussed under Chapter 2, the role of the government in CBET is crucial. The government's commitment towards the development of CBET would be manifested with proclamations of tourism policy, issue of conducive rules and regulations and budget allocation, to mention some. In this regard, (Drumm and Moore, 2005) pointed out thespecific responsibilities of government in CBET development.As far as the target study site is concerned, the government has given due attention sincethe conservation of ecosystem.

4.3.2. The proximity of Debre Markos city

According to the questioner and interviewed 87%of respondent's mentioned the proximity of Debre Markos, city.Mt. Birhanis located at a distance of 38km, from Debre Markos. There is an asphalt road that leads to Debre MarkosfromBahir Dar; as observed during field survey, about 38km rough gravel road from DebreMarkos to Mt. Birhan. The result was agreement with by Alemayehu (2011) in his study, mentioned the proximity of Awash National Park to Addis Ababa and to the paleo-anthropological and geological tourist destinations deep in the rift valley of the Afar region, as an advantage for CBET development in Awash Park. Furthermore, the proximity to the honey pot attractions, such as the historic route in northern Ethiopia which includes Lalibela, Bahir Dar and Gondar, was also identified as a potential strategic opportunity for the access to the market (Bires, 2014; Aynalem, 2013; Ambelu, 2011).

4.3.3. Collaboration of the stakeholders

83% of respondent's mentioned collaboration of the stakeholders on the conservation area. The respondents responded some stakeholders have been being attached themselves in the area to protect the biological and physical resources of the area to realize the objective of sustainability. According to the interviewed the respondents said some collaboration are listed such as Organization for Rehabilitation and Development in Amhara (ORDA), UNESCO, European Commission, has working for the rehabilitation of the area to develop ecotourism enterprises other projects owned by NGOs are highly involved (culture and tourism experts, 2019). Thoroughly, all this voluntary actions of many organizations and private individuals have a big deal of creating awareness of the area across many people who are living within and outside the area. This could be a foundation time to develop CBET. The result was agreement with (Wood, 2002)For CBET to be properly developed local and international stakeholders dependent on government (particularly ministry of tourism and environment) to develop policy that will

develop protect and manage natural areas. To deliver and sustain the CBET venture over the long term, communities can develop partnership and network with relevant organization to extend outreach and create supportive environment.

4.3.4. Differentiate of community based ecotourism resource, activities and services

78% of respondentsmentioneddifferentiateof community based ecotourism resource, activities and services.The fundamental opportunity of Mt. Birhan for CBET development is its very huge CBET potentials which include unique fauna and flora species, the presence of mountain chains,Caves, forest lovely and spectacular landscapes, tangible and intangible cultural values of the area are crucial to develop CBET, and all the sites are easily accessed to visitors. According to the interviewed the respondents said that some CBET activities are carried outsuchas camping,bird watching andphototour.The selection criteria of a particular site for CBET are the availability of unique scenery, cultural and historical values, and accessibility of the sites (Kauffmann, 2008).

4.3.5. Presence of Suitable Policy and Legislation

73% of the respondents that responded with Presence of Suitable Policy and Legislation is an opportunity to develop CBET. The regional and zonal culture and tourism experts that are responsible for policy formulation, should prepare alternative policies and outline plans and evaluate how well each fulfills the development ofCBETobjectives, optimize economic gains, minimize environmental and socio-cultural impacts, all in accordance with country's general development policy in Mt. Birhan. Therefore in the process of making CBET policy, the regional and zonal culture and tourism experts have a critical role in formulatingpolicies for ecotourism in Mt. Birhan. The result was supported by (Carlson, 2001) ecotourism including CBET is the fastest growing subsector of the tourism industry. So ecotourism needs to be guided by very holistic policy for its effective practice to achieve real sustainable ecotourism that can be a more beneficial to local communities, safeguard to natural and cultural environments, and advantageous to tourists and other stakeholders (Fennel and Dowling, 2003). Superficial ecotourism policy is very harmful to the all phenomena on which ecotourism is based.

4.4. Potentials of community based eco- tourism development in the conservation area of Mt. Birhan.

According to the table below show that the respondents said that about its potential for CBET development, 97%Natural attractions, 87% cultural attractions and 30% Historical attractions. Therefore, conclude from the responded most of the potential resources found in Mt. Birhan are natural and cultural attractions. This show the area has high potential to develop by involving the concerned bodies' especially local communities who are risk takers and beneficiaries of local phenomena. The result was agree with Negash*et* (2011) natural attraction landscape includes mountains area, rivers, caves, natural woodland, fauna and flora species, wetland… etc. and wildlife includes biodiversity, land based mammals, flora, birds, and insects etc.

Table4.4 Potential of Mt. Birhan for CBET development

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Natural attractions	63	97
Cultural attractions	57	87
Historical attractions	20	30

Source: own survey, 2019

4.4.1. Nature basedecotourism resource: -Scenery (landscape, cave, Mountain chine,Abajime natural forest, Fauna, Flora and water bodies)

According to environmental observation, documentary source and interviewed the respondents the nature based resource of Mt. Birhan geographical features includes land forms, water basin, gorges, cliffs, native biological diversity fauna and flora, and other spectacular views are an opportunities to develop CBET. Mt. Birhan is aLittle bit similar with Guna, Simien, Bale,MenzeGuwassa and Arsi Mountains. It is the second highestPeak in Amhara region next to RasDashen(East Gojjamculture and tourism bureau documentary source, 2019).

4.4.1.1. Molalit Cave

According to observation, the documentary source and interviewed Molalit cave is found next to FilfilMeda just in the south of EnatWabire in Bebugnworeda. The cave has an estimated height of 150 m (Culture and Tourism Bureau Documentary source, 2019). The unique feature of the cave serving as human shelter since 1902 in the form of succession and the cave inherited by the

last child.Based on the oral tradition, once upon a time a woman has migrated to this cave to protect her cattle from epidemic disease. After that the cave became a permanent house.Currently, the fourth grandchild, AtoLikenawAdeme and his wife ChekolechMolla Together with their children are living in the cave as a permanent residential house.



Figure 7Molalit cave, Source:own*survey*, 2019

4.4.1.2. The four stepped mountain chains (AratMekerakir)

According to observation, the documentary source and interviewed AratMekerakir is the other spectacular landscape is found in the south of SenanWoredain the south west of the mountain. The four stepped mountain ranges are connected southWest to North-West in all directions. Based on the local language the name AratMekerakir is given for each hill because of the number of the mountain chains is four.The first mountain range is EnatAmbawhich means a mother hill due to its big size fromall of the hills. At the top of the hill, there are interesting land features, plant and animalspecies, and in the bottom of the hill, there is a church named ' AratMekerakirMedhanialem. The second hill is GemsiAmbawhich means a fractioned hill. The third hill is called QulilAmbawhich means a hill with the shape of a dining tool called Qulil.The fourth hill is LematAmbawhich means a hill with the shape of traditional feast presenting tool called "Lemat". The other attractive view is found between TetterandWabire which is termed as FilfilMeda(EaestGojjam zone Culture and Tourism Bureau Documentary source, 2019).



*Figure 8*AratMekrakir, source:*own*survey, 2019

4.4.1.3. AbaJime natural forest

According to the observation and interviewed this forest far 8 km fromSenanWoreda, there is a dense forestnamedabaJimeforest. Asta*(*Ericaarborea)isthedominantplantspecies.Kosheshila*(*Acanthussennii*)*,Nechate(Helichrysum citrispinum*)*,Gibara*(*Lobeliarhynchopetalum)andAmilia(Hypericumrevolutum)plant species are also found. In addition the forest is the habitat for manyanimal species such as Bush Pig Potamochoerusporcus*}*, Leopard *(*Pantherapardus*)* andSpotted Hyena*(*Crocutacrocuta*).*The forest by itself and animal species it contains canattractvistorsso it is possible to the opportunities develop community based ecotourism(East Gojjam Zone culture and tourism bureau documentary source, 2019).

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Figure 9 Aba Jime forest orAsta(Erica arborea) and Kosheshila(Acanthus Sennii) source: ***own*** survey, 2019

4.4.1.4 Bird species

According tothe observation, the documentary source andinterviewddata obtained from culture and tourism offices respondents the mountain has marvelous scenery and diversified flora. Mt. Birhan is a home of different mammals, amphibians and birds. More than 15 mammals and over 40 different birds have been identified. There are 49 bird species found in Afro tropical highland biome. Amhara culture and tourism, and parks development bureau (2012) studied and showed that there are 41 birdspecies in Mt. Birhan. Some of the bird species which are foundin the area are; Abyssinian Long claw *(*Macronyxjlavicollis*),* WattledIbis*(*Bostrychiacaruncula), Thick White-collared Pigeon *(*Colwnvbaalbitorques), and Black-winged Lovebird (Agapornistaranta*).*

Because of the presence of many bird species in Mt. Birhan, there is a potential to attract bird watcher. Therefore these bird species are an opportunities to develop CBET (EaestGojjam Zone culture and tourism bureau documentary source, 2019).

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Figure 10Endemic Birds in Mt. Birhan, source: *own* survey, 2019

4.4.1.5. Mammal species

According to the observation, documentary source and interviewed data obtained from culture and tourism offices respondents Mt. Birhan has large and small animals. Commonly, there are 16 animal species which are found in the area are; Leopard *(*Pantherapardus*),* Golden/Common Jackal *(*Canisaureus),Common Bush Back (Tragelaphusscriptus*),*Abyssinian black and white colobus(Colombusguereza),Serval cat (Leptailerusserval),CommonDuiker(Abyssinia colobus), Spotted Hyena *(*Crocutacrocuta), Anubis Baboon (Papioanubis*),* Bush Pig*(*Potamochoerusporcus*),* and Common Duiker *(*Sylvicapragrimmia)arefound.Thismammalspecies found in Mt. Birhan that could be tourist attractions and opportunities to develop CBET(EaestGojjam Zone culture and tourism bureau documentary source, 2019).

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Figure 11Endemic mammals in Mt. Birhan, source: ownsurvey, 2019

4.4.1.6.Plant species

According to the documentary source and observation and interviewed data from the respondents Mt. Birhan is the home of many afro alpine and sub afro alpine plant species. Thereare 85 plant species found in the area.Particularly,Gibra (Giant Lobelia),Asta (Erica arborea),Kosso(Hageniaianabyssinica),Guassa(Festucaspp),Amja, Kosheshila (Acanthus sennii*)*, Korch*(*Elythrinabrucei),enkoko(Embeliaschimperi),Gimy (Euryopspinifolius) andAshengidye (KniphofiaJoliosa*)* are some of them. This plant species used as source of food and shelter for bird and animal species(EaestGojjam Zone culture and tourism bureau documentary source, 2019).

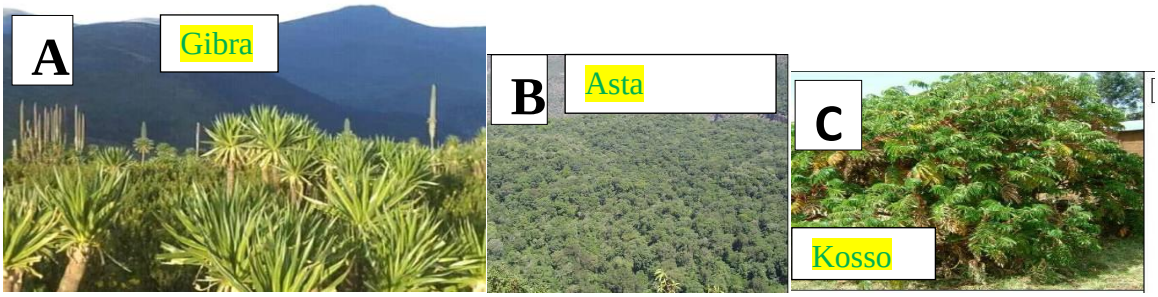


Figure 12Endemic plant species, Source:ownsurvey, 2019

A.Gibra(Gaint Lobelia) B. Asta (Erica arborea) C. Kosso (Hageniaianabyssinica)

4.4.1.7. **Water bodies**

According to the observation and interviewed data from the respondents Mt. Birhanis known to be the water tower of Nile. It is the source of more than 23major Rivers and 273 small streams flowing to Blue Nile Abayas major tributaries.Among the major rivers Chemoga, Temecha, Gedeb, Tijan, Tefe, Teme, Azewari, Sede,InatMuga, GilgelMuga, Zimbl, Komed, Oromo Meshageriya, TilikuAbeya, TinishuAbeya, Ayabab, and Gudela are of some of them. These riversdetermine the life ofMillions people and animals living within and outside of the mountain chains. The rivershave great potential for CBET especially for nature based tourismactivities such as swimming, boating, hiking, and fishing and agricultural development(EaestGojjam Zone culture and tourism bureau documentary source, 2019).

4.4.2. Culture Based Tourism Resources of in Mt. Birhan

The researcher showed and interviewed the data from the respondents Mt. Birhan has many cultural tourism resources.In Mt. Birhan the local communities lead life in their own

style.Communities' living style such as wearing (for males: shorts/butanta, towels on head, dula/big stick, short hair, gabyiwhite color used as blanket. For females: shibshibolikedres,dere/nick jewelry, alebo/legjewelry,nekesatliketato .Eating culture (most of the time husband and wife eat together and feed each other but children eat alone or themselves together). If this culture is well developed and promoted as it is different from visitors' cultures, it is likely to attract many tourists.

According to the observation and interviewedCultural tourism resources are divided in to two based on Tangible and Intangible cultural tourism resources which are listed below in the table.

Table 4.5Tangible and Intangible cultural tourism resources.

No	Tangible cultural tourism resources	Intangible cultural tourism resources
1	Monolithic Cave of King Lalibela	Wedding ceremony
2	Agew Cab (made from stone)	Eqube and edire
3	Weaving	Local music, dance, fukera and shilella
4	Traditionalmetal working	Mahber/senbete
5	Pottery	Debo/working together
6	Basket working from wicker	Religious festival

Source:ownsurvey, 2019

4.4.2.1. Tangible cultural tourism resources

4.4.2.1.1. Monolithic Cave of King Lalibela

According to observation and interviewed Monolithic cave of king Lalibela found in Mt. Birhan around The four stepped mountain chains (AratMekerakir) particularly near to Enatamba at south east direction and the crest of hamusitTown.Thismonolithic cave the name indicated that king Lalibela before going to Lasta he was started to build church. But at that time created disagreement between them and also king Lalibela materials taken by local people. So he

stooped the monolithic cave and he went to Lasta and he built rock hewn church of Lalibela in our country(EaestGojjam Zone Culture and Tourism Bureau Documentary source, 2019).

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Figure 13Monolithic Cave of King Lalibela, source:own survey, 2019

4.4.2.1.2. Agew Cab (made from stone)

This attraction found in Mt. Birhan near to Enatamba an ancient time this destination built by Agew people they protected from war. At that time the local people are well known by war. Currently this attraction used as a fence to protect the Medihanialem church near to Enatamba.



Figure 14Agew Cab, Source:*own*survey, 2019

4.4.2.2. Intangible cultural tourism resources

4.4.2.2.1. Religious Festivals

There are interesting religious festivals in Mt Birhanwhich are celebrated one or two times per a year. Nigisebal/festivity toremember the saint at churches festival is some of them.Manydomesticpilgrimagevisitors flow to these religious places to celebrate these festivals. If well promoted and facilities established and developed,itcan attract not only domestic but also foreign tourists. As below the figure indicated that religious celebration in AratMekrakermedhanialem church near to EnatAmba. This religious festival celebrates every year in October 27E.Chereofmanydomesticpilgrimagevisitors flow to this religious place to celebrate this festivity.



Figure 15 Religious celebration in AratMekrakermedhanialem church (near EnatAmba), source: (EaestGojjam Zone culture and tourism, 2019).

4.5. The role of local communities in the CBET conservation area of Mt. Birhan

According to interviewed the respondents for warred some response based on the role of local communities such as:

The local communities have some role for the conservation area. So, the role of communities is conserve, manage, maintain and protect the conservation area.Local communities have working to gather and participate by planting, hiking, tracing and give the horse for transportation service and involved by decision making to solve the problem, sharing indigenous knowledge and give the information for the stake holders.

4.6. The role of government in the CBET conservation area of Mt. Birhan

According to interviewed the respondents the main role of government has manage the conservation area, support some materials for the communities, Occasional; created awareness about the value the resource for the local communities.The other roles of government have created link or contact among local communities and other stakeholders.

5.CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. CONCLUSION

Mt. Birhan has high potential in natural and culturalresourcesto developing CBET. It is also has adequate animal, plant and bird species, as result it could be protected area or park that is high likely to develop CBET. However, the natural resources are loss from time to time at an alarming rate by human anthropogenic factors. Based on the objective major challenges, opportunities and potentials identified.There were somemajorchallenges identified in this study such asLack of knowledge,over grazing and agricultural expansion,lack of community based ecotourism service,absence of buffer zone,lack of promotion, conflict of ownership.There were major opportunities identified in this study such asthe Commitment of the Gov.t and NGOs,the proximity of DebreMarkos, city,collaboration of the stakeholders on the conservation area, differentiate of CBET resource, activities and services,presence of Suitable Policy and Legislation.On the other hand, there were somepotentials identified in this study such as fauna and flora species, the four stepped mountain ranges, abajime forest, Molalit cave, water bodies, Agew cab, Monolithic Cave of King Lalibela, Weaving**,** Traditional metal working, Pottery, Basket working from wicker, festival are cultural CBET resource to develop community based ecotourism.

5.2. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the major findings of the study and conclusions drawn, to enhance the conservation area,support the involvement of stakeholders, the ecotourism development opportunities and minimizing the challenges the following possible recommendations have been forwarded.

- 24% of respondents have said that there is Lack of knowledge about CBET and one of the 1st major challenges to develop CBET. It needs Community awareness and capacity building is important for a successful CBET development. That is, awareness creation

and capacity building will play a great role to increase the participation of local communities in CBET development. Hence, Zone culture and tourism experts and environmental administrator should do an utmost effort to enhance the awareness level of the communities in Mt. Birhan (e.g., provision of environmental education) as well as to build their capacities by providing trainings on establishing CBET enterprises.

- 20% of respondents have said that there is lack of CBET service and one of the 3rdmain challenges to develop CBET in Mt. Birhan. Hereof Zonal government bodies like Zonal culture and tourism experts integrate with infrastructuralofficersshould be fulfill the CBET service the development of basicservice like road, telecommunication, electricity, hospital service, facilities like clean drinking water and accommodation service are essential for tourists in Mt.Birhan.
- Lack of promotion is one of the challenges in this study area. Hence, concerned government bodies (i.e. Culture and Tourism Bureau at regional, Zonal and Woreda level) should make maximum efforts to promote the CBET resources of the Mt. Birhan using different promotional tools like magazine, newspaper, electronic media, brusher…etc.
- Over grazing and agricultural expansion is the 2nd major challenge to develop CBET in Mt. Birhan. So, Zonal agriculture and land administratorsshouldbemanaging by formulation of land use planning. Andthe local authorities should have to give appropriate attention through traditional rule and regulation for Mt. Birhan, one of the major potential resources for tourist attraction. Those individuals who deforest, degrade and deplete the natural resource should be properly controlled.
- The absence of buffer zone is other major challenge in the study area to develop CBET, So that Amhara National Regional State Parks Development and Protection Authority should be set clear buffer zone or boundary among local communities and conservation.
- The conflict of owner ship is the other main challenge in the study area and the result showed that currently conflict of owner ship problem happened, So Zonal administrator and, culture and tourism manager should be solve this problem by give local empowerment, owner ship right and clear set guaranty of assurance for the local communities.

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APPENDIXES

WOLKITE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCE

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND ECO TOURISM MANAGEMENT

Dear respondents

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess the challenges and opportunities for community based ecotourism development in case of Mt. Birhan community conservation area .To achieve this goal your genuine response is important and essential. Kindly request you read all the questions and give your response clearly. Issue you that will be used for the research purpose.

Note:-

- You do not need to write your name
- Response to the closed-ended questions by putting ()
- Write short and clear explanation for the open-ended once

Appendix I: Questionnaires

Questionnaire for local communities

Part I. Background information (Please feel on which you belonging to)

1. Gender male fema

2. Age 18-30 >45

3. Educational status elementary high school college University

4. Occupation student government employee's self-employee

Specify……

5. Do you know about community based ecotourism?

Yes or No

6. Do you use resources from the Mt. Birhan conservation area for your livelihood? Yes or No

7. Based on question number six (6) if you say yes for what types of resources? Firewood, grazing land other specify……

8. Do you benefited from the Mt. Birhan conservation area?

Yes or No

9. Based on question number seven(8) if your answer is yes how do you benefited from the conservation area?.....
....

10. If your answer is no on the above question number eight (8) why you are not benefited from the conservation
area?.....
.....
.....

11. How do you see the potential of Mt. Birhan to develop community based eco-tourism?

A. excellent B. very good C. good D. poor

12. Thereis unique biodiversity (fauna and flora species).

Mt. Birhan has d/t species like birds, Animals and plants that make it potential to be protected area. These species are?

A. adequate B.in adequate

C. moderate D. cannot be park at all

13. Which can empower local community in ecotourism activities?

Benefit sharing B. decision making C. Training D. involving in planning E. all can be answers F list if you know any more

14. What are the major challenges of community-based ecotourism development in Mt. Birhan

A. Lack of knowledge about CBET B. Lack of CBET service

C. Lack of adequate finance D. Lack ofpromotion E. Absence of buffer zone
F. Agricultural expansion and over grazing G. Conflict of owner ship problem H. all

If you have another idea, comments you can write at the provided space.

……
……

15. What are the opportunities for community based ecotourism development in the conservation area of Mt. Birhan?

A. Proximity of DebreMarkose city B. Diversify CBET products

C. The commitment of Gov.t and NGOsD. Collaboration of stakeholders E. The presence of suitable policy and strategies G. High priority of government bodies for conservation H. an education and awareness program. All

16. What are the challenges to develop community based ecotourism in the conservation area?.....
.....
.....

17. What are the opportunities to develop community based ecotourism in the conservation area?.....
.....

18. What are the potentials to develop community based ecotourism in the conservation area?.....

.....

Appendix II

Interview for culture and tourism experts at Senan and BibugnWoredas and Zonal level

WOLKITE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF Agriculture and Natural Resource

DEPARTMENT OF Wildlife and Eco tourism MANAGEMENT

Dear respondents

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess the challenges opportunities and potentials for community based ecotourism development in case of Mt. Briahn community conservation area .To achieve this goal your genuine response is important and essential. Kindly request you read all the questions and give your response clearly. Issue you that will be used for the research purpose.

Note:-

You do not need to write your name

1. What are the challenges to develop community based ecotourism in the conservation area?.....

.....

2. What are the opportunities to develop community based ecotourism in the conservation area?.....

.....

3. What are the potentials to develop community based ecotourism in the conservation area?.....

.....

4. What are the major ecotourism activities carried out in Mt. Birhan?

.....

.....

5. What are the roles of local community in the CBET conservation area of Mt. Birhan?.....

.....

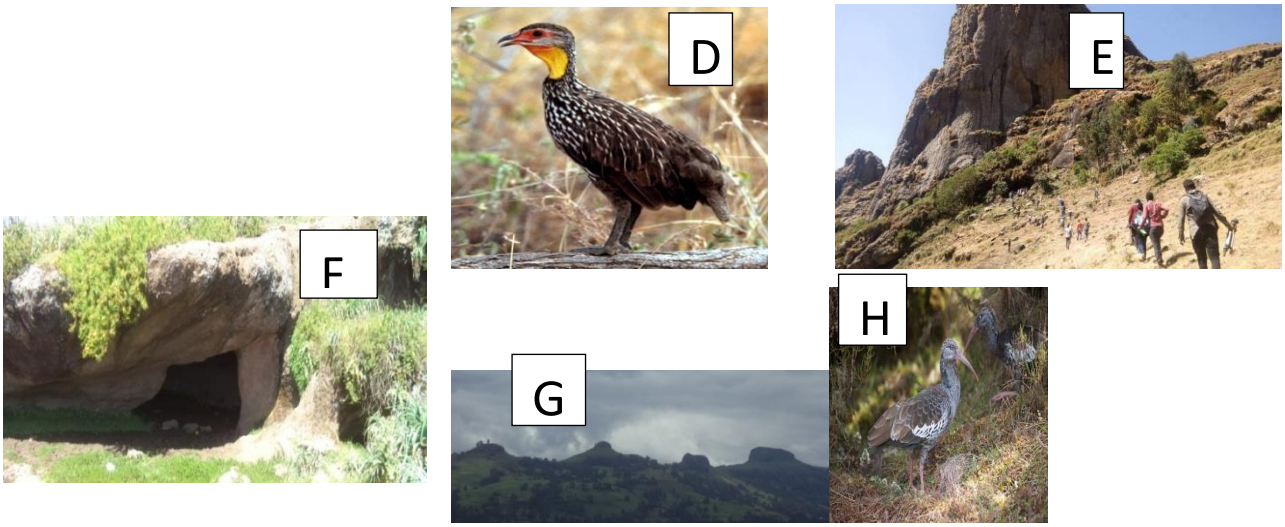
6. What are the roles of government in the CBET conservation area of Mt. Birhan?.....

.....

7. What benefits can the local community can get from Mt. Birhan if ecotourism developed?

Appendix III various pictures from field survey, 2019





A. Human settlement B. Inadequate road C. Over Grazing D. Harwood francolin

E. MolalitcaveF. Monolithic cave G.AratMekerakir H. Watt led ibis

AppendixIV List oftable form field survey, 2019

Table Major challenges in the study area

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Degree
Lack of knowledge	23	24	1
over grazing and Agricultural expansion	19	20	2
Lake of CBET service	17	18	3
Conflict of interest	13	13	6
Absence of buffer zone	12	14	4
Lack of promotion	11	11	5

Source**:** own survey, 2019

Table Opportunities of CBET in the study area

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Degree
The commitment of Gov.t and NGOs	25	26	1st
Differentiate CBET product	16	17	2nd
The presence of stakeholders	19	20	3rd
The presence of suitable policy &strategies	13	14	4th
The proximity of DebreMarkos city	22	23	5th

Source: own survey, 2019