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COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCE

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND ECOTOURISM MANAGEMENT

Senior research project on

Ecotourism potential and challenges in Dera Woreda, North Shewa Zone, Ethiopia.

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ABREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

ETC	Ethiopian Tourism Commission
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
DWCT	Dera Woreda Culture and Tourism office
IUCN	International Union for Conservation Nature
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
IES	International Ecotourism Society
UNESCO	United Nation Education, Culture and Science Organization
UNEP	United Nation Environmental Program
UNWTO	United Nation World Tourism Organization
USD	United State Dollar
WTO	World Tourism Organization

ABSTRACT

This research was conducted in Oromia Regional State, North Shoa Zone Dera woreda with the aim of identifying the potential and main challenges of ecotourism in the study area. Three Kebeles having different potential and actual ecotourism sites were purposively selected. Both the qualitative and quantitative methods were applied in collecting and analyzing the data. Selected 3 Kebeles from these 5 respondents were selected non random sampling method. In addition to Key Informant Interview, Focus Group Discussion and review of secondary sources were made. This work attempted to reveal the presence of potential and actual tourism and ecotourism sites in the study area, and the main challenges of ecotourism and the possible solutions of this challenges which's/ecotourism in the areas are found to the absence of due attention towards the sector by the stakeholders. The findings of the study indicated that, the majority of (100%) tourism and cultural office want to take part in decision making process of tourism in their local area. In general, tourism and cultural office want to see decisions about tourism development in their area made by consulting cultural and tourism office representative. Cultural and tourism office acknowledge that tourism provides employment opportunities, encourages a variety of cultural activities and meeting tourists promotes cross cultural exchange. Therefore, the researcher recommended that, the government organizations should provide trainings; advice and loans so that cultural and tourism office can participate in tourism development hinder the expansion and development of ecotourism identified. Hence, the major obstacle of tour.

Key Words: *Ecotourism, challenges and opportunities.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries that provide services and sales of goods for visitors who came from outside of the destination area for a period of more than 24 hours and less than one year (Chris Cooper et.al, 1990). It is strategically important industry that is directly linked to the long term prosperity of a country. According to World Tourism Organization (2005), tourism is an activity of human beings moving and staying in places outside their permanent residence and environment for recreation, business and trade purposes. Now a day, tourism is increasingly becoming an important economic sector in many developing countries (UNCTAD, 2007). The industries were one of the major sources of foreign exchange earnings and the most viable and sustainable economic development option. It contributes 11 percent of the world GNP (UNWTO, 2005).

If tourism were a country, it would have the second largest economy, surpassed only by the United States (TIES 2006). This statement pictures tourism's economic impact on the global economy. And according to UNWTO, a constantly (since the 1950"s) growing tourism industry is soaring towards no ends. More than 980 million international tourist arrivals in 2011 are expected to reach 1.6 billion by the year 2020 (UNWTO 2012). However, Africa's share (77 million tourists) will not compete with Europe (717 million), East Asia (397 million) and the Americas (282 million), but it will get in line with the Middle East and South Asia scuffling for the fourth position (UNWTO 2011). But the predicted African annual economic growth rate for tourism of approximately 5.5% is higher than the growth rate for other private businesses and appears to be one of the few economic sectors able to guide a number of developing countries to higher levels of prosperity and for some to leave behind their least developed country status" (TIES 2006). "There is no doubt that tourism, frequently referred to as „the world's largest industry", is big business. By the end of the 20th century, international tourism alone was annually generating well over US$450 billion, whilst total global tourism activity (international and domestic) has been estimated to be worth some US$3.5 trillion. Moreover, it is anticipated that these figures growth industry and current expectations of an annual increase of about 4% in

international tourist arrivals and spending suggests that, by 2020, international tourism will be generating up to US$2 trillion a year"(R.Sharpley and David J. Telfer, 2002).

Ecotourism is a new concept in tourism, which was originally sparked off by the idea of making harmonious co-existence with nature a reality once again. As defined by the Ecotourism Society, it is the responsible travel to natural areas, which conserves the environment and sustains the wellbeing of local people. Today, ecotourism is one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism industry. Its potential for growth is virtually unlimited. Any tourism program which is nature – based, ecologically sustainable, where education and interpretation is a major concept and where local people are benefited can be called ecotourism. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) define ecotourism as: "responsible travel that conserves the environment and sustains the well - being of local people". Clearly, at a time when traditional conservation through enforced protection of natural areas was being questioned for its effectiveness and social impacts, strategies such as ecotourism offered considerable potential for integrating conservation with development.

In the words of Black and Crabtree (2007), ecotourism is "a force within the industry that, in its very essence, aims to minimize tourism's negative impacts whilst maximizing tourism's positive impacts". Whilst smaller in scale than external effects such as energy prices and terrorism, ecotourism represents a relatively large internal intervention in the global tourism industry, and one which has now been continued for an extended period. This provides analytical opportunities from the perspectives of tourism policy and tourism entrepreneurship. In addition, any framework for analyzing progress in ecotourism may also be relevant to measuring the sustainability of tourism more broadly, which is still a contested area of research (Bram well & Lane, 2008; Gosling, Hall, Lane, & Weaver, 2008; G'ossling, Hall, & Weaver, 2009).

Ethiopia has a long way to go to benefit from tourism. For instance, according to WTO (2002), the share of Ethiopia from tourism sector was just less than a miniscule. A total of 156,327 international tourists visited Ethiopia and accounted for 77 million USD in revenue, with 5% growth rate compared to 2001. In 2005, international tourist visiting Ethiopia showed considerable growth although not up to expectations. The projected international tourist arrival was 227,398; while income generated from these tourists earned 135 million USD. Unto the Present, Ethiopia's share from the international tourist's income is very petite. In 2008, Ethiopia

received only about 157 million USD. That amounts to less than two tenths of the 2008 total international tourist arrivals world-wide. But, in the last three consecutive years, tourists‟ arrival is growing at an average rate of 7% per year (Ethiopian Tourism Commission).

As cater (1993) presuppose that, the demand of consumers for „remote‟, „natural‟ and „exotic‟ environments have created a rise in ecotourism enterprises, especially in developing countries like Ethiopia. Of concern is the fact that it is precisely these more remote, less developed tourism areas that eco-tourists seek which are most sensitive to cultural rupture and environmental depression. Hereunder the researcher tries to assess the potential Challenges of ecotourism development in Dera area and the significance of ecotourism for the locality and the country at large. The study area; Dera is found in the northern part of Ethiopia in Oromia regional state in the north Shoa zone.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Dera woreda is homes for many natural, historical and cultural resources. But those potentials are not well promoted, conserved and unknown due to management strategies, lack of infrastructural development, accommodation (tourist facilities) and effective involvement of stakeholders and NGOs. Those problems are initiated me to conduct this research in the area.

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As to the researcher understanding, even though many researches are conducted in many Woreda of the zone and the region there was not any research which was conducted so far in the tourism sector under this topic in the study area (Dera Woreda). Therefore, this research is expected to contribute much for government organization, NGOs, policy makers and implementers to understand the gaps and to take actions to improve the situation. The research is also expected to help to contribute for the concerned stakeholders, especially to Dera woreda administration, Oromia region culture and tourism bureau) to understand issues related to major problems in the development of tourism industry. Finally, the research expected to serve as a source or reference material for conducting further research in the field

1.4. OBJECTIVES

1.4.1. General objective

- The general objective of the study is ecotourism potential and challenges in Dera woreda.

1.4.2 .Specific objectives

- To identify major ecotourism potential in the study area
- To identify major challenges which hinder ecotourism development in the study area?
- To identify the opportunities of Ecotourism development in the study area.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTION

- ✓ What are the major ecotourism potential in the study area?
- ✓ What are the main obstacles or challenges for the ecotourism development?
- ✓ What are the major opportunities for ecotourism development?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Historical development of ecotourism

Though there is no clear point when, where and how does ecotourism started, but for the sake of this paper let us go through some of the historical event regarding ecotourism. The origin of nature based travel goes back many centuries. Herodotus in his extensive travels visited amongst other places, the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea, Egypt and Italy. His work reveals he was interested in geography and natural environment not only history. Others such as Aristotle also travelled extensively and studied nature. In later times, Marco polo and other explorers left vivid accounts of the new lands they „discovered.“ More recently explorers such as James Cook and Charles Darwin travelled to remote lands describing the natural and cultural world of these new places (RobynBushel, 2001) and James Bruce travelled to Ethiopia searching the source of Blue Nile in the 17th century, this can be considered as ecotourism; due to nature of the travel, it was nature based.

Ecotourism movement was first inaugurated in Latin America and Africa as a response to the ecosystem destruction. For instance, Ecotourism in Latin America became viewed as potential alternative to the destructive industries such as logging, oil drilling, mining, and other natural resource extractive industries (HoneyMartha, 1999) Even though the concept's background can be traced to the movements in both Latin America and Africa, the situations in Africa were different from that of Latin America. Ecotourism first became popular in East Africa as an alternative to a failed system of a protectionist philosophy of wildlife management that separated local people from national parks. This philosophy came about as a reaction to the rampant elephant and rhino poaching. Thus, scientists and park officials argued that the only to protect these and other wildlife species was to give those living near the national parks a financial incentive in the parks, wildlife conservation, and tourism (Honey, 1999).

A variety of terms have been introduced to describe the same phenomenon which may be referred to as nature travel, nature-orientated tourism, nature tourism, nature based tourism, sustainable tourism, alternative tourism and special (DimitriosDiamantis, 1999)argues that the majority of ecotourism definitions lie between the passive position and the active position towards the high responsibility pole on the continuum. He further suggested that the desired state

is to move from the minimum passive position towards a higher or active pole of the continuum. The active pole mainly emphasizes the actions of protecting the environment and the behavioral intentions of Eco tourists, whereas the passive position concentrates solely on ecotourism development, not enhancing the antagonistic impacts or the Eco tourists‟ need to be satisfied. Others like Wall (1994) define ecotourism based on three criteria; the characteristics of the destinations; the motivations of its participants; and the organizational characteristics of the ecotourism trip. There is a lack of consensus in the literature regarding the etymology of the term ecotourism. A number of factors have been cited to explain the reasons why a single, agreed definition has remained elusive, and is predicted to remain so. It is suggested that ecotourism attempts to „describe an activity, set forth a philosophy, and while at the same time espouse a model of development‟, and it is this multipurpose nature of the concept that prevents the adoption of a common definition. Thus, Ecotourism is often used interchangeably with other terms such as nature tourism, sustainable tourism, green tourism, responsible tourism and even soft tourism. Ecotourism is tourism and recreation that is both nature-based and sustainable (KregLindberg, BrianFurze, MarilynStaff, and RosemaryBlack, (1997). Three features of this definition merit further discussion.

First, the definition clarifies the descriptive and the prescriptive components of the ecotourism concept. The nature component is descriptive or positive in the sense that it simply describes the activity location and associated consumer motivations. The sustainable component is prescriptive or normative in the sense that it reflects what people want the activity to be. An important point is that sustainability incorporates environmental, experiential, socio-cultural, and economic dimensions.

Second, this basic conceptual definition incorporates more complex definitions. For example, some definitions focus on minimizing negative environmental and cultural impacts while maximizing positive economic impacts. Such a focus is a means to the end of achieving sustainability. Likewise, the definitional focus on environmental education tends to reflect a desire to satisfy tourists or to use education to reduce negative environmental impacts. In the former case, it is a means to the end of achieving a sustainable experience. In the latter, it is also means to the end of sustainability. Because most components of ecotourism definitions either focus on the goal of sustainability or on means to achieve that goal, it is practical to use the

simple conceptual definition of ecotourism being sustainable nature-based tourism and recreation. Third, and related to the second feature, by focusing on ends (the desired condition of sustainability), this definition forces critical evaluation of what constitutes ecotourism. For example, is sport hunting ecotourism? Many observers feel that hunting is not ecotourism, but under this definition it would be if it met the sustainability criterion. Having the importance of sustainability within the ecotourism definition, a fundamental question is "what is sustainability?" in simplified terms, tourism sustainability is postulated to result from a positive overall balance in environmental, experiential, socio-cultural and economic impacts (experiential used to describe the effect of visitors on each other and socio-cultural impact is to describe the effect of visitors on local residents). Thus, tourism activities that generate more positive net benefit would be more sustainable, in general, than tourism activities that generate fewer positive net benefits. Ecotourism as we all know is a vague word which became a buzzword since its origin from the 1980s, 1990s to present. And some other definitions are listed below given by different scholars (though the definition given is written in different scholars differently, let us see the 1991 definition provided by the ICUN cited in(Hoof,2006) "Ecotourism is environmentally responsible travelling and visitation to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas". Ecotourism is "Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the wellbeing of local people" (TIES, 1990). The definition above is viewed in light of experiential and „educational factors of the protected natural areas". Here ecotourism is claimed as a multi-dimensional philosophical concept, which is a component of eco-development and requires planning based on strict guidelines and regulations that will enhance the sustainable operation.

Ashley (2006) further suggested that ecotourists profile characteristics attest an awareness and knowledge about the natural environment and cultural aspects, in such a way „that will convert him or her into somebody keenly involved in conservation issues". He drew comparisons between mass tourists and eco-tourists over the nature-based utilization. Both groups are keen to go to the natural areas but the mass tourists has a more passive role with nature, participating in activities which do not relate to the true concern over nature or ecology such as water sports, jogging, and biking. Whereas, eco-tourists are attracted to a natural area and have a more active

role through a no consumptive use of wild-life and natural resources, through activities such as nature photography, botanical studies, and observing wildlife (D. Diamantis, 1999). An official international definition was adopted during the UN International Year of Ecotourism in 2002 (UNEP and WTO, 2002). The major components, as analyzed by Buckley (1994) do not seem to have changed: nature-based production, minimal-impact managements, environmental education, and contribution to conservation. An alternative but congruent analytical concept suggested by Buckley (2003) namely geo-tourism with a positive triple bottom line, seems to have received little attention.

An analysis of ecotourism literature by Weaver and Lawton (2007) indicated that debates over definition have remained a significant theme. Ecotourism means more than just spending time in and appreciating an ecosystem. For example, if you took a romp through the Amazon Rainforest it would be a great vacation, but would not necessarily be considered ecotourism. That's because ecotourism requires active tourists who make it a goal conserve natural environments and improve the overall wellbeing of an ecosystem's flora, fauna and people. You can take a swim in the some of the world's Ocean or sea, but don't call it ecotourism unless you're actively making a difference while doing so. Whether a word needs a precise definition depends on the context in which it is used. If the term „ecotourism" is used for marketing, for example, it does not need to be defined at all, as long as it persuades people to buy products. There are, however, several circumstances where a precise definition becomes important.

2.2 PRINCIPLES OF ECOTOURISM

Several categories of tourism, which base on the natural aspects, are tried to compare and contrasted or even used interchangeably with ecotourism. Ecotourism is different from these categories main due to the major principles listed below. Accordingly TIES put forward the following based on the results of stakeholder meetings since 1991, which are being embraced by a growing constituency of NGO"s, private sector businesses, governments, academia and local communities. These are:

- Minimize the negative impacts on nature and culture that can damage a destination.
- Educate the traveler on the importance of conservation

- Stress the importance of responsible business, which works cooperatively with local authorities and people to meet local needs and deliver conservation benefits
- Direct revenues to the conservation and management of natural and protected areas
- Emphasize the need for regional tourism zoning and for visitor management plans designed for either regions or natural areas that are slated to become eco-destinations.
- Emphasize use of environmental and social base-line studies, as well as long-term monitoring programs, to assess and minimize impacts
- Strive to maximize economic benefit for the host country, local business and communities, particularly peoples living in and adjacent to natural and protected areas
- Seek to ensure that tourism development does not exceed the social and environmental limits of acceptable change as determined by researchers in cooperation with local residents
- Rely on infrastructure that has been developed in harmony with the environment, minimizing use of fossil fuels, conserving local plants and wildlife, and blending with the natural and cultural environment (cited in Gezacho, 2011)

2.3 .ECOTOURISM CHALLENGES

According to (Jackie Odudoh, 2013) Associations Kenyan tour operator, said that safety and security, lack of adequate resources and infrastructure, Poor image and perception of Africa-political instability, limited connectivity, high operating costs -fuel prices and limited and expensive air access are the most challenges of Kenyan tourism industry. (TeshaleBiazen, 2010), also support that the above problems and based on his research political uncertainty or disruption of infrastructure has a major influence of the tourism sector. Essential wages in the tourism sector tend to be low in comparison to others sectors (although agriculture in many cases is an exceptional).This mostly happen as this sector income is seasonal and lost confidence of many professional experts with high salary. In return such kind of insecurity may discourage people to join this institution or to stay in for long period of time. (Bull, 1995) or employment problem is one of the bottleneck of Ethiopian tourism. According to (Gezachew Andarege, 2013) ,on his finding of the study mentioned that lack.

2.4. ECOTOURISM IN ETHIOPIA

According to (Ayalew, 2009) in past periods, merchants played a considerable role for the introduction of religions to Ethiopia, which contributed a lot for evolution of Ecotourism. The author proved that the Portuguese's missionaries and other European came to Ethiopia as easier visitors when they made explorations to the sources of Blue Nile, ETC (2000) affirmed that Ethiopia has an enormous potential as a tourism destination with rich collection of historic and natural sites that distinguishes it from most of its neighbors. The commission added that Ethiopia has unique natural and cultural historic tourism assets. Mulugeta (2010) assured this fact that United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognizes seven world heritage sites in Ethiopia (Axum's obelisks, the monolithic church of Lalibela, the Castel of Gondar's, the Valley of Hadar where the skeleton of Lucy was discovered, Tiya"s caved standing stones, and the Semen Mountains). According to (Muluget, 2010) (Ayalew, 2009) participatory tourism is the future of Ethiopia.

2.5 ECOTOURISM IN OROMIA REGION

According to Oromia Culture and Ecotourism Bureau (2014) Oromia region is a region where of the study slices included in this study located having a total area of 364.219 km^2. Oromia is supposed to be one of the largest region states in Ethiopia. This large land mass of the region comprises of a diversified geographical characteristics range from high attitude mountain chains that contained verities of the fauna(wild animal) and flora(plant species), high plate all with intensive agricultural cultivation , savanna planes , barren hill, semi Arid low land and Arid steppes , rift valley depression hills , gorgers, river valleys , national park , bale mountain national park , langano lake, Zeway lake, Abjata shalla national park, Senkelle sanctuary, yabelo park, waterfalls, Sofa Omar cave, Dereshek Hussen shrine, Tulu Dimtu mountain diverse culture and Abba Gada system. Some of the major potential attraction on the region includes beautiful lands cape scenery, national sanctuary and other wild life conservation area like parks, water bodies, caves, volcanic creators and other natural wonders. The Bureau added that the region's endowments in different species of birds, pleasant climate, beautiful cenery and hospitable people. Nevertheless, Gera is considered the most outstanding Ecotourism potential of the region.

3. METHDOLOGY

3.1. Description of the study area

Dera is one of the woreda in the North Shewa, Oromia region of Ethiopia. It is named after the former of kingdom of Dera, whose territory was approximately the same as the modern woreda. Part of North Shoa zone, Dera is borderd on the north by the Abay river which separates it from the Amhara Region, on the southwest by Abote on the south by Degem, on the northeast by Wegidi and on the east by Merhabete Mida Oromo and Shebel Berenta on the west by Wara Jarso woreda. The administrative center of this woreda is Gunde Meskel other towns Salayish and Cheka. The source from History, culture and tourism of Dera woreda (Tefera, 2004) and from the woreda tourism office.

The woreda has three marked regions. Dega accounting for 20%, Woyina Dega 30% and Qola 50% of the total. Its annual temperature ranges between 18. C-25 c and it is one of the regions reaching this amount of rainfall. The annual rainfall ranges between 2100mm to 2500mm and its average altitudes ranges from 1500 to 2400 meter above sea level. The source from History, culture and tourism of Dera woreda (Tefera W. 2004) and from the woreda tourism office.

The 2010 National census reported a total population for this woreda of 224,910 of whom 111,762were Men and 113,148 were Women. 5020 or 4.22 of its urban dwellers. The majority of the in habitants were Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Christianity with 85% of the population observed this belief, while 13.7% of the population said they practiced Muslim and 1.3% were protestant. The two largest ethnic groups reported in Dera were the Oromo (86.08%).The source from History, culture and tourism of Dera woreda (Tefera W. 2004) and from the woreda tourism office.

3.2. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The main source was used for this study compromise primary as well as secondary data. The primary data was collected from the sample population through interviews, focus group, discussion and extended personal observations. Regarding to secondary data, the researcher have employed published and unpublished sources such as, books, journals, magazines, proceedings, pamphlets and articles.

3.3. SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

The researchers used non - probability sampling techniques. Among those techniques researchers were mainly concentrated on, (Judgment sampling method), because it was the best way to get our respondents or to get peoples who have efficient information and knowledge about our study.

. The targeted respondents (5) are internal servants of churches, tour guides, travel agencies, culture and tourism offices who have well knowledgeable about the ecotourism potential and development challenge in Dera Woreda. The researchers Sampling technique was used for this study is Judgment sampling method, based on the knowledge they have about this study. Because this type of sampling is the best method to get peoples who have efficient information and knowledge about our study. Appropriate information and necessary photographs were obtained from cultural and tourism office.

3 .4 DATA ANALYSIS

After the data collected through different methods of data gathering techniques, then these data were edited, coded processed and analyzed to provide relevant information. Which enables the respondent's response was make sound decisions. The result was expressed through graphs and tables and percentage.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to gather data from the study area 5 samples were taken purposefully. But out of the 5 respondents, 60% of them were male and 40% were female. In terms of age composition, majority of respondents were between the age of 25 - 35 (60%), followed by age groups between 36 -45 age (40%),

4.1 Ecotourism potential of the study area

Table 4.1 Perception of Households about Ecotourism Potential of the Study Area

What potential attraction areas of tourism are there in your locality?		
	Number of respondents	Percent (%)
A, Natural (biodiversity)	2	40
B. Cultural traits	2	40
C, religious and historical sites	1	20
Total	5	100

Table shows that, the presence of the potential for tourism in general and ecotourism sites in particular in the study area. The area is full of both natural and cultural resources like the old Religious site of Mammo medhanialem with an impressive geographic location and full of ancient materials. And other historical as well as topographic structures that have the potential of attracting tourists are found in that locality. Respondents acknowledged their locality for its wide variety of ecotourism sites with religious sites, cultural traits and natural aspects (biodiversity).

4.2. ECOTOURISM POTENTIAL

Dera woreda has endowed with multiple natural, cultural and religious resources suitable for nature and culture based ecotourism developments. The numerous potential ecotourism resources in the woreda have the opportunity to be developed into ecotourism products (DWCT, 2010).

Table 2: Ecotourism potential in dera woreda

Ecotourism potential in dera woreda			
No	**Cultural and religious resources**	**Natural**	**Historical and religious attraction**
1	Religious site	Giragn mukecha	Harbu Meskele
2	Local arts and handcrafts	Jemma bridge	Meskele eyesus monastery
3	Cultural festival	Jemma forest	Karra abo church
4	Cultural horse riding	Dingay mushira	
5	Cultural food and drinking		
6	Coffee ceremony		

4.1.1 Natural resources (Attractions)

Giragn mukecha (mortar)

Giragn mukecha is located in Oromia regional state north Shoa zone in Dera woreda kabigolelcha Kebele and it far from Gunde Meskel town 10km in northern direction. Giragn mukecha was used by Gerang Mohamed in the ancient time. This Mortar/Mukecha/ has a long natural stone mortar and its length above 1m and 85cm length above the earth. The depth of this mortar is 30cm.Weyira tree is found on the top of the mountain. This tree gives beautiful structure of the mountain. Giragn mukecha /mortar/ is different from other stones that are found around this like broken woods.This stone was dig in to the inner part it makes 3 and 4m but they expected that it will get mineral when it is searched by archeologist. At this time this natural

place gives special protection in Dera woreda. In addition to this to protect the land around Giragn Mukecha /Mortar/ and planting tree to covered by forest..

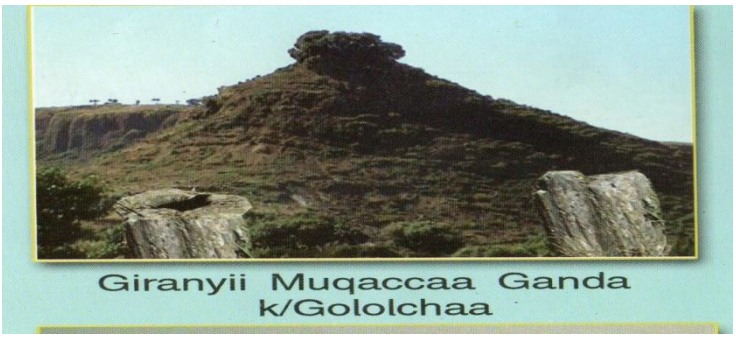


Figure 1: Giragn mukecha (source: Dera woreda tourism office)

Jemma Bridge and Jemma forest

The Jemma Bridge is connecting Dera woreda with north Shoa zone and it built at Jemma River. This bridge has 18 meter. At present time it is the first by its length from other bridges found in north Shoa zone and its length are 277m. Around this bridge there are so many things attraction the tourists. From these attraction things some are natural forest, sense (itan), Imnebered, Jens stone and…are found around this bridge. The Jemma rivers chirecha uses for sand beach and for recreation. The Chelenko Mountain (gedel) also found near to this river at the western direction..Near this bridge the water is flow in to Abay River but at present time there are many animal species found in this river (water body) for example crocodile, snakes, zendo & fish.

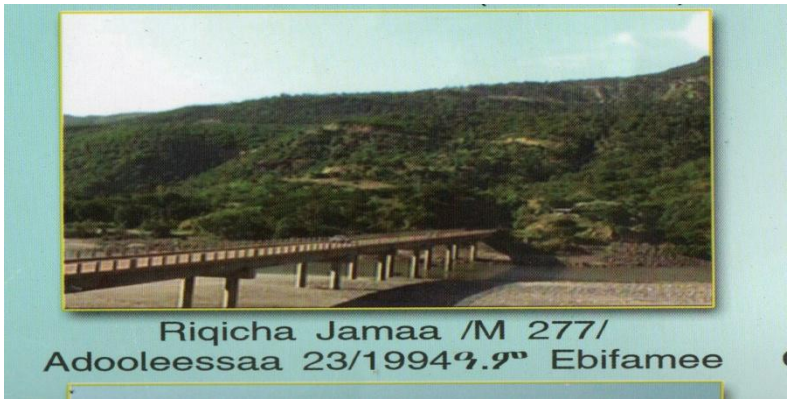


Figure 2: Jemma bridge (source: Dera woreda tourism office)

Jemma forest is found near Jemma Bridge. It is a natural forest and it is cover 205m.In this forest there are different attractive plants and animal species. Animal species that are found in the forest are like serval (aner), common jackal, Leopard, rabbit, Dikula, warthog, monkey Baboon, Hyena, crested porcupine (jart), klipspringer(ses), Genet(shelemetmat) and different bird species and from plant species like podocarpus falcatus (Zigba), schinus molle (kundo berbere), Ficus vasta (warka), Acacia spps,balantics, corthon(macro stachys), Pinuspatularhamnuspridoides, grevillea Robusta and…etc are found in the forest.

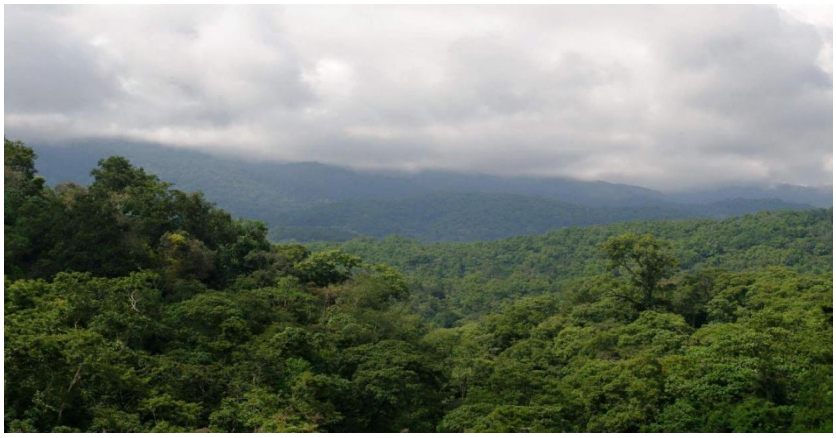


Figure 3: Jemma forest (Source: Dera woreda tourism office)

Dingay mushira is found near to the Kara Abo church in Kara mitikora Kebele in Amhara Amba village from Gunde Meskel town 12 km far from and its length 95 m above sea level, the soil of this place is red colour, it has also wide road, the name Dingay mushira come from the position and the standing if the stone is like mushira by its nature.

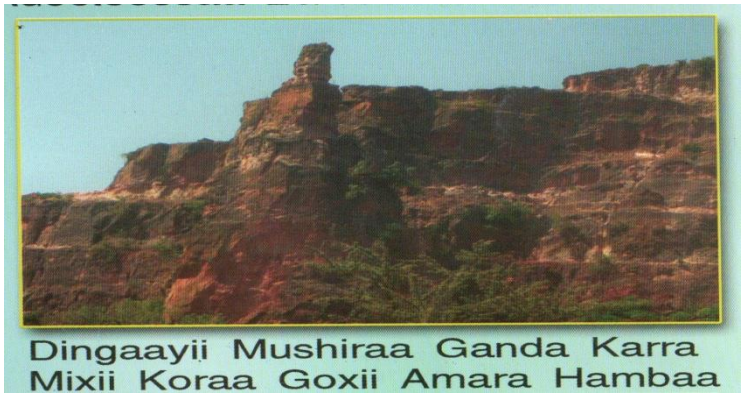


Figure 4: Dingay mushira (Source: Dera woreda tourism office)

4.1.2 Cultural and religious resources

Dera woreda has many unique cultural attraction and ways of local community life. The major cultural ecotourism resources of Dera woreda include lifestyle of the local community, religious sites, distinctive cultural patterns, local arts and handcrafts, cultural festivals, Cultural horse riding, Cultural foods and drinks like Marqaa and Borde, Coffee ceremony (especially when a coffee days celebrated) etc.



Figure 5: cultural dresses and materials (Source: Dera woreda tourism office)

4.1.3 Historical and religious attraction

Harbu Meskele is found in Oromia region, north Shoa zone in Dera woreda at Salayish 01 Kebele and it far from Gunde Meskel town 12kmin the western direction .Harbu Meskel was stand by the person Meskele in the first century and he growth by milk and honey. The name of the tree is harbu/Shola/.The tree was stood by the person who lives around the tree and he uses the tree for different activities. Due to this give the name Harbu Meskele that comes from the name of the user and planter. The history of Harbu Meskele was described by old men Ato Girma Reda and Ato Habtamu Jemalu in addition to this they also describe the history of OPDO start to agreement near to the tree inorder to fight the Derg and their followers and their interest/dream/ comes success. Although they get win in the conflict.

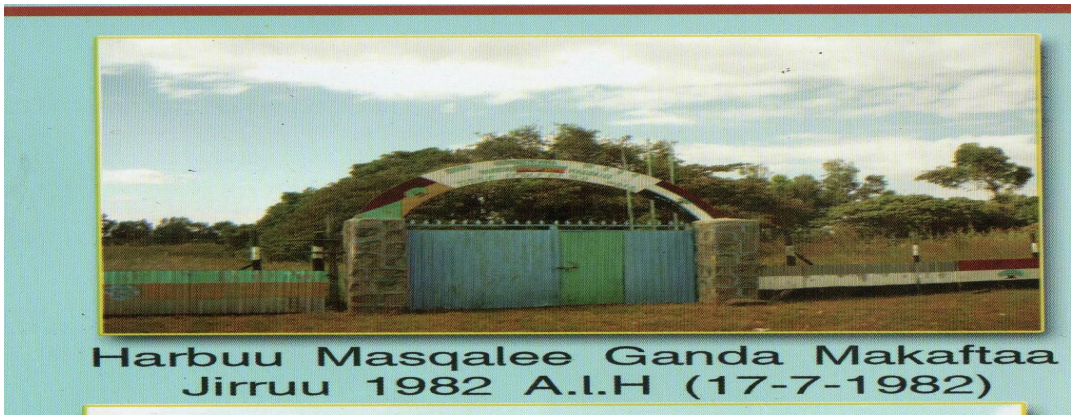


Figure 6: Harbu Meskele (Source: Dera woreda tourism office)

Meskele eyesus monastery is found in oromia region at north showa in dera woreda at the twon of in 01 Kebele during emperor Zeryakob time between 1400-1662Ec from his father king Dawit with Eskndria Christian together come to Ethiopia at this time king Dawit was dide in sadenly way. After this emperor Zeryakob in order to achieve his father goal he goes to Eskndria. then he come to the crest of Jesus from Eskndria to Ethiopia .after he return the crest won dream that came from the Jesus 'set the crest on the original place. After the dream emperor Zeryakob set the crest at the original place. After this when he look the crest size become circle. Emperor Zeryakob come the crest from the Eskndria rest at Debre Birehan in Degem Goro (mauntaion)and pias Gunde Meskel .After he reach in Gunde meskel the crest stay in this place from 3 months and 3 days in this place. After this the crest goes to Gishen Mariam. The history of this crest was taken by the old fathers and Abune gorgorios for a long period of time.

At this time there are many tangible things that act as the historical descriptions of this are;

1. Emperor Zeryakob built building that shows the structure Jesus crest croses and near to the cross Aba Giorgis Zegasichas mekabir are found.

2. Emperor Zeryakob in addition to cross they recived soil from Eskndria .This soil at this time found in betelhim set by Joniya.

Emperor Zeryakob built the church in the places of the cross get but the church was destroyed during the invention time of Ahmmed Giragn. The name ADERE come from geez word HADERE it means the cross live in this places at night. Abune Gorgorios come to visit this holly place but the church is destroyed by the Ahmmed Giragn invasion.

The tourist mostly comes to visit this places on march 10 and September 21 and many tourist attraction in this places are; the true cross of Jessus,the Aba Giorgis Zegasichas mekabir, Architecture of set virgin Mariam drawn by sent Lukas. Due to this most of the followers of Ethiopian orthodox Tewahido church and other tourist visit this places by coming of all part of Ethiopia and foreign tourist.



Figure 7, Festivities of Timket/Epiphany at Gunde Meskel Town (Photo by Teferi)

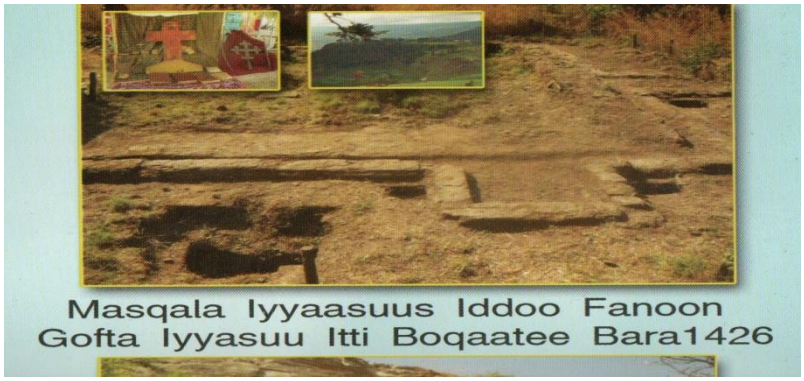


Figure 8, Meskele Eyesus

Kara Abo church is found in north Shoa zone in dera woreda in Kara miti kora Kebele at Amhara Amba village and from the woreda town Gunde Meskel far from 12km and east of Gunde Meskel direction and found in 232km to Addis Ababa, this church has along years ago and it built during the period of king Lalibela (1115-1197) time this church was built from one stone as the historical defines. The internal part of the church is very long and the end point is not known as the local community defines the internal length of the church is the same as the distance from the church to Addis AlemYaya Kebele. In the internal part of the church it has two door and the door that female and male entering is different also there are three finished pillars and two starting pillar that was built at the time of the church built, in addition to this the place that Stilt (Tabot) is built from one stone as the information told by the man deacon Dawit Zinaw.

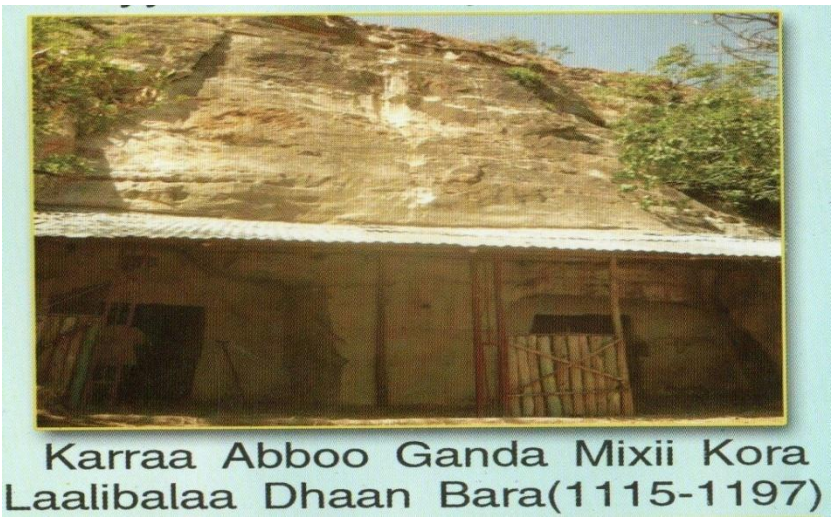


Figure 9: Kara Abo church (*Source: Dera woreda tourism office)*

4.2 CHALLENGES OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Table 4.2 Perception about the Obstacles in the Development of Ecotourism

What are the main obstacles of ecotourism development in your locality?	
Challenges	Level
Lack of awareness	High
Infrastructural problem	High
Absence of clear cut developmental approach plan towards tourism	Medium
Others	Medium

The study area is endowed with rich natural and manmade resources, but the people living around are suffering from food insecurity and the resources as well, are destroyed by the unwise and negligence and personal interest based usage of the resources. The data revealed that the respondents show that the main obstacles for the development of ecotourism is lack of

infrastructural facilities and absence of clear cut developmental approach plan towards tourism respectively. These all on one way or another are the main challenges for the underdevelopment of ecotourism in the study area. Comparably of the respondents relate the main obstacle of ecotourism development to lack of awareness on the resource usage and protection. Apparently in above, the respondents understanding about ecotourism is revealed and accordingly majority of the respondents have a good understanding what ecotourism means. But here, lack of awareness is raised as one of the main obstacles for the development of ecotourism in the study area. In the aspect of how to utilize and use for the good of the local community there is a gap which arise from different angle. The key informant explained the idea as follow; no one comes to any of the sites for tourism purpose (they lack the habit of going to sites with/without fee) and they try to hunt and destroy the biodiversity (with exceptional cases of funeral, to churches or in search of animal food, to the wetland). The infrastructural problem also comprises the promotion and advertisement to attract investors and other stakeholders. Yet, nothing in this respect is done. That is why different types of destructions occurring in the sector in this place. The rest focus on the absence of clear cut tourism development policy, but it may not be actually the case rather; it may be due to the responsible body who can tell them about the policy and its implementation as well as the significance of the sector to them and to the country (awareness creation and capacity building).

4.3 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

According to FGD (focus group discussion) discussants of the study area community leaders and interview with key informants, the illegal use of resources of the study area and its surroundings is another challenge. Local people in the study area depend on the natural resources of their locality for their livelihoods in many ways. Traditionally, protected areas prohibit resource uses and shield off nature from any kind of human uses. Recently, however, the prohibition of resource uses in protected area systems has been strongly debated both from a pragmatic point of view and a humanitarian approach. According to (Jacobs, 2001), this situation is becoming more problematic in view of the growing population and arduous level of poverty in developing countries, such as Ethiopia.

4.3.1 Land fragmentation and degradation

According to FGD discussants and some key informant interviewees, the loss of land outside of the protected areas has led to a recent spate of land clearing inside the protected areas (sanctuaries). Protected wood lands are being cleared for charcoal production and small scale farming in the Woreda. Excessive soil erosion resulting from land clearing for settlement and charcoal production is affecting the productive protected area. And quitting such habits and engaging the communities through sustainable ecotourism activities can a great challenge according to some+ informants.



Figure 10, land fragmentation and degradation in the study area (photo by author February 2019)

4.3.2 Cooperation of stake holders related challenges

As to the key informants from DWCT, the local government and the local community are the two main stakeholders of the sector in the study area. However ecotourism is not only the concern of these two bodies, but there are a number of other institutions which should have been much concerned about the sector including the regional government, the Private sector and Organizations both government and non-government, which are found at international, national and regional levels.

During the FGD discussions and stakeholder interviews, woreda officials described their role in ecotourism as being to act as an intermediary between tourism bureau officials and the community. However, as indicated in the FGD, the local government, particularly woreda officials were more concerned about their administrative responsibility rather than for biodiversity conservation works in the study area.

According to FGD discussants, there is loose collaboration and communication among these two major stakeholders of the sector. No forums and dialogues were conducted within communities, Woreda administration, and local representatives.

A key informant interviewee also indicated that there needs to assemble those key stakeholders including others to face the complicated challenge encountered the sector. Thus, the big challenge to develop ecotourism is that, there is no platform created to mobilize and initiate the major and other stockholders for community-based ecotourism development in the study area. In general, framework of participation is not designed, private sector involvement is low, regional bureaus support is low and there is lack of formal relationship among them.

4.3.3 Lack of trained manpower in the field ecotourism

According to Dera Woreda Culture and Tourism office (DWCT), there was only a two man who has training in tourism at the Woreda level (interview,). In addition, there were no tour operators and tour guides who were trained in tourism at either zonal or at Woreda level. Moreover, there were no personnel who were specifically committed to ecotourism development and management at regional and federal level. According to researcher observation, it was able to know that there were even very few tourism experts at the zonal level, most of which were from history, management and other related fields.

4.4 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE STUDY AREA

4.4.1 Hospitality of host community

The community in general and service providing staff in particular have an important role over the satisfaction level of the customers. Hospitality is a part of a product that tourists will experience when they are looking for rural life, farming technique and meeting the community. As guests are great value in the Study areas' culture, domestic and foreign tourists have welcomed in a hospitable manner. Supporting this attitude of communities, one of the tourists visiting the area stated that I had some of the most special encounters, such as the kindness of the children who picked armfuls of beans from their small fields to give us as I walked. Moreover, as it is illustrated in table 13 below, the direct participants were asked to express whether they appreciate the coming of tourists. All (100%) of the respondents stated that they appreciate the coming of foreign visitors to their villages.

The respondents were also asked how they feel when they meet foreign visitors (happy, disturbed, or indifferent). For this, all (100%) of them reported that they felt happy. Additionally, interview with participants identified that they have a great motive to welcome the domestic tourists too. The domestic and foreign tourists' recommendations in suggestion box, that provided by woreda level Culture and Tourism Offices, readout the attitude of tourists towards host communities as open, friendly people, honest and welcoming.

Proximity of the area to nearby tourist sites

Location is crucial to the sustainability of ecotourism as it needs to be accessible to the tourists. Prefer locations of the ecotourism sites are relatively close to existing highways and have an existing road network on the property. In this regard, the proximity of the ecotourism sites to the tourist destinations of Oromia National Regional State. For instance, the study area where the Jemma forests, Kara Abo church and Giragn Mukecha sites are located about 137, 80 and 80 kilo meters respectively before arriving in the study area. An important sign for the location advantage of the study area is tourists booked in North Shoa can spent some of their times in one or more of sites since they are found in the main of the road from Addis Ababa to the study area.

5. CONCLOSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. CONCLUSIONS

In this research, different data were obtained from experts and different governmental organizations, local communities and tourists through key informant interview, and focus group discussion. According to these findings, the following main points were found as the major potential and challenges of ecotourism development in North Shoa Zone Dera Woreda. Therefore, the following summary has been made based on the data discussed and analyzed. The study area was found to be gifted with various tourist sites that could be developed into viable community based tourism products. These products would range from cultural activities to natural attractions to other recreation opportunities.

The Meta and Tuti Culture many opportunities for the development of various ecotourism products, including cultural dances, cultural and traditional festivals including Coffee day and traditional wedding ceremonies. In addition the living condition of these people is shown to be under a serious problem of food insecurity (as 69.1% of the respondents are food insecure). In synthesizing the findings, the study shows the presence of abundant, both natural and man-made tourist attracting sites, but the people living there are not getting advantages from it.

Limited attention of the local government that given to the sector (concerning the protection and management of the resources), is also another critical challenge for the development of ecotourism in the study area. The finding from document analysis indicates that there are two major manifestations of this challenge. These are the institutional structure of culture and tourism office that are not considered community based ecotourism and lack of skilled man powers hired in culture and tourism offices.

Generally, I conclude that the area is full of potential resources of ecotourism/tourism and contrary to this, the local peoples are far from the benefit getting from these resources due to lack of strong and consistent management in coordinating and consulting about the permanent and sustainable utilization of these resources.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The research findings of this study identify a lot of challenges affecting the development and operation of ecotourism in the study area. In addition, some opportunities that should be strengthened and maintained in the future ecotourism development process of the study area are also carefully investigated. Based on the findings of the Research, the following recommendations are assumed to play a significant role in improving the ecotourism opportunities and solving, at list minimizing, challenges of ecotourism development in the area.

- It is difficult to run ecotourism development without the collaboration effort of the local community. Thus, culture and tourism offices should take the responsibility to develop the awareness of the local community on the concept, benefit and value of tourism in general and ecotourism in particular. In addition, adequate Training language and communication skills, tour guiding and service delivery should be given to the participants of the area.

- Local control and ownership is one of the important principles to the long term functionality of ecotourism development. Culture and tourism offices should not make things on the merit of their interest. Major Decisions on the expansion of ecotourism should be on the hand of the local community' Participation and management.

- Methods to create formal financial procedures and financial information system must be designed. Otherwise, corruption and mismanagement will influence the community tourism development activity.

- Local economic diversity is also important to the sustainability of ecotourism. Training and graduating local community on the craft production, organization of cultural events and souvenir selling is suggested to diversify economic participation in tourism.

- To solve the current capacity problem among the ecotourism; capacity building trainings comprising of techniques of micro project or business designing, implementation and management are critical Inputs to be provided to ecotourism members.

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APPENDIX

WOLKITE UNIVERSITY

College of Agriculture and Natural Resource

Department of Wildlife and Ecotourism Management

A proposal Questionnaire on Ecotourism Potential and Challenge in Dera Woreda at North Shoa Zone, Ethiopia

Section –one (1) – background information

1. Age a.18-27 ☐ b. 28-37 ☐ c.38-47 ☐ d. 48-57 ☐ e.58 and above ☐
2. Sex a Male ☐ b. Female ☐
3. Educational level
   a. Primary ☐ c. Diploma ☐
   b. Secondary ☐ d. Degree and above ☐

Section –Two (2)

1. Do you have any awareness about the ecotourism potential and development challenge?

a. Good awareness ☐ b moderate ☐ c. Lack of awareness ☐

2. Depend on question number one how many in numbers?

3. If you have any awareness about the ecotourism potential and development challenge in Dera woreda. What are the major sources of this information?

   a. Books ☐ b. newspaper ☐ c. magazine ☐
   d. broadcast media ☐ e. If other specify……..

4. What do you understand by the term of challenge?

5. is there any prob☐f theft and illici☐ Dera woreda ecotourism potential & development challenge? a. Yes b. No

6. For the 5th question if your answer is yes, How church servants protect theft and illicit trafficking?

a. By hiring guards ☐ b. by giving awareness to hosts ☐

c. by using rule and regulation☐ d. if others please specify…….

7. How the government is concerned about the demonstration challenge?

A. more attention ☐ moderate ☐Lack of attention ☐

8. Is there any negative effects by tourists on cultural festivals?

a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

9. for the 8th question if your answer is yes. Among them which one is the main effect?

a. Social☐ b. Economic ☐ c. Environmental☐ d.Cultural ☐

10. Are you know the major opportunities of ecotourism development in the woreda?

a. yes b. no

11.Depend on question number 10th if your answer is yes identify it's.....

12. Do you appreciate the coming of tourist in to the woreda?

a. yes b. no

13. How do you feel when you meet tourists (visitors)?

a. Happy b.Indifferent

Section Three (3)

The following points are the possible factors contributing for spiritual degradation and the physical effects (challenges) on the Ecotourism potential and development challenges of Dera due to Ecotourism activities.

So, please check the point and indicate the extent of your agreement and disagreement by placing a thick in the appropriate box 1.

What potential attraction areas of tourism are there in your locality?

	Number of respondents	Percent (%)
A, Natural (biodiversity)		
B. Cultural traits		
C, religious and historical sites		
E. None		
Total		

2.

What are the main obstacles of ecotourism development in your locality?		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
Lack of awareness		
Infrastructural problem		
Absence of clear cut developmental approach plan towards tourism		
Others		
Total		

3.

Response	Count	Percent
Do you appreciate the coming of foreign visitors?		

Yes		
No	-	-
Total		
How do you feel when you meet foreign visitors?		
Happy		
Indifferent	-	-
Total		

Section four (4)

1. Your general understanding about ecotourism effect and how you rate it in your environment?
2. Is there a problem of ecotourism effect in your environment? If there is, please mention it in detail?
3. Mention in detail mechanisms being designed by your environment to minimize the negative effect of tourism (ecotourism) activities their effectiveness?
4. General mechanisms you suggest for ecotourism effects in Dera woreda?
5. Do you experience any cooperation with government to solve the negative tourism (ecotourism) effects?
6. What roles you believe that government should play in relation to solving the negative effect of ecotourism (tourism)?

Thank you so much for responding the questions