

Redefining Ecotourism: A Conservationist Analysis Based on Aldo Leopold's Land Ethics

Marlon T. Naiz¹, Jaime Del Rosario², Bernardo Chua, Jr.³

¹Southern Christian College

^{2,3}Notre Dame University

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100400402>

Received: 14 April 2026; Accepted: 20 April 2026; Published: 12 May 2026

ABSTRACT

In light of environmental concerns, ecotourism is facing more criticism for putting human interest ahead of ecological integrity, highlighting the need for an ethical approach that balances both human and environmental needs. Aiming to redefine ecotourism through a conservation-focused ethical framework, this study explores the connection between ecotourism and Aldo Leopold's Land Ethics. Using a qualitative approach, the research utilized semi-structured interview guide conducted on eleven (14) participants who are involved in managing ecotourism sites from selected areas.

There are five (5) prevailing themes as to the concept of ecotourism: ecotourism as environmental preservation, community and cultural preservation, ecotourism as a tool for social connection and well-being, tourist-centric definition of ecotourism, purpose, and future direction of ecotourism. The findings also show that, in contrast to anthropocentrism, Leopold's conservation principle stresses the extension of ethics, the concept of community, and ecological awareness. Furthermore, applying the principle of land ethics to ecotourism frameworks, Leopold reminds us of the importance of moving away from profit-driven conservation, advocating for a more balanced approach that values the well-being of all living and non-living components of the environment.

This study highlights how ecotourism can support both economic development and a deeper respect for nature, promoting responsible travel that values community, conservation, and the intrinsic worth of all parts of the environment. Ecotourism is a type of responsible travel to natural areas that promotes community involvement and ecological stewardship, putting ecosystem health and integrity first, aiding conservation initiatives, and appreciating the inherent worth of all biotic and abiotic environmental components.

Keywords: Environmental Ethics, Conservation, Aldo Leopold, Land Ethics

INTRODUCTION

One widely cited definition of ecotourism is "all nature-based forms of tourism in which the main motivation of the tourists is the observation and appreciation of nature as well as the traditional cultures prevailing in natural areas" (UNWTO, 2002) This definition emphasizes the motivation of the tourist, centering ecotourism primarily on human activity—particularly the act of travel. However, reducing tourism solely to human mobility overlooks the broader consequences of travel on the places visited. Tourism inevitably produces direct and indirect impacts on the environment, often serving as the backdrop of tourism activity. As such, ecotourism must be examined as a concept embedded within complex relationships between humans and the natural world.

The issues related to tourism lie in human activities and mobilities that influence not only the visited place's social aspect but also the place's physical environment. Researchers (Grofelnik, 2023; Tian, 2023; Guan, 2022) investigate the impact of tourism by tracing the carbon emissions in developing tourism sites. This calls, therefore, for a deeper understanding and thorough debate of tourism and environmental care issues. A solution should be sought to provide a system that satisfies the human need for recreation while continually caring for our home. Therefore, environmental ethics in tourism are needed to ensure sustainable ecotourism (Le, 2020; Souto, 2023; Jafari, 2023).

Integrating the nature's inherent value into ecotourism is important to portray ecotourism for ecology. This can be understood by stressing the value of ecology in ecotourism. Studies (Rea et al., 2017; Stronza et al., 2019) suggest frameworks for studying ecotourism for conservation that are beneficial for both natural and social environments. However, sustainable ecotourism is not only understood in terms of ecology but also based on the idea of economic development – sustaining the ecology to prolong its service to the tourism industry. Research (Sangpikul, 2017; Kim et al., 2019; Shedenov et al., 2019; Mustofa, 2022) suggests frameworks and policies centered on how ecotourism would benefit the locals. It stresses the social and economic aspects of ecotourism. This can be portrayed as ecotourism for the economy. This creates a conceptual tension between anthropocentric models, which value nature instrumentally, and ecocentric perspectives, which recognize ecological systems as morally significant beyond human use.

This study addresses this tension by applying Leopold's Land Ethic as a philosophical lens for reexamining ecotourism. While ecotourism is often promoted as a responsible and sustainable way to travel, its deeper foundations still tend to revolve around people. This human-centered, or anthropocentric, view has shaped much of how ecotourism is understood and practiced. By this, we often overlook something crucial: nature has an intrinsic value. This study seeks to address this conceptual gap by re-defining ecotourism through the lens of Leopold's Land Ethics, proposing a framework that treats nature not as a resource to be used, but as a community to which we belong.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

Several researchers made discourses on tourism and presented them from different standpoints. Although they cover a variety of perspectives, this review outlines topics as background and leads readers to the main focus of the study. This highlights literature on tourism trends, environmental approaches, the history of the Anthropocene, the problem of Anthropocentrism, Aldo Leopold's Ecological Ecocentrism, and Land Ethics.

Trend on tourism

As discussed in the academic world, tourism yields various meanings from different studies. Fennel (2001), for instance, conducted a content analysis of the definition of ecotourism and found that the standard concepts of these definitions were conservation education, ethics, sustainability, impacts, and local benefits. Hafezi et al. (2023) also found almost the same themes: community involvement, environmental sustainability, economic viability, cultural authenticity, visitor experience, and governance and management of ecotourism activities as major themes for understanding tourism. However, this study stresses the importance of community involvement in developing and managing tourism activities. However, more than this definition analysis is needed to understand the tourism concept; instead, it contributes to understanding the concept.

The argument on the meaning of the tourism concept cannot be perceived or understood from one angle. Blamey (1997) contended that by understanding the concept of tourism, it is necessary to distinguish normative and descriptive views as well as goals and outcomes that may affect our attitude towards studying the concept. Furthermore, Sirakaya (1999) provides a supply-side view of ecotourism and states that ecotourism is a new form of non-consumptive, educational, and romantic tourism, while Cheia (2013) proposes that in understanding ecological tourism is to understand the impacts that it has had on various element of human society. This is the only overview showing that the tourism concept is multifaceted and can be interpreted holistically.

Considering a broader perspective to understand tourism, one should look at the trends in the discussion and practice of tourism activities. Together with the changing world, the recent development of tourism centers on technology-driven innovation (Wang et al., 2022; Papp & Toth, 2022; Sigala & Gretzel, 2019). This might be due to the availability of these elements in human society that can be easily accessed. Further trends in tourism involve sustainability and tourist preferences (Papp & Toth, 2022; Scott et al., 2021). Researchers with different standpoints on tourism trends contributed to Current concepts of tourism.

Tourism interpretation, however, changes depending on generation and period. Following the trends in tourism, Hall and Gosling (2016) argued that sustainable tourism is a key concept in the tourism industry, focusing on environmental, social, and economic sustainability. They suggest that sustainable tourism requires a holistic and

integrated approach to development and management and that tourism businesses must embrace sustainable practices to remain competitive and relevant. On the other hand, Steinbrink et al. (2012) focus on the development and globalization of tourism, which presents tourism as a complex phenomenon that raises the challenges of the traditional power structure of tourism. This understanding focuses on the effects of tourism on societal status and less on environmental status.

Technology has a significant role in the tourism industry. Buhalis and Amaranggana (2014) insisted that technology is transforming the tourism industry, focusing on personalization, real-time communication, and immersive experiences. It was supported then by later research focusing on mobile devices, social media, and online platforms (Buhalis & Foerste, 2021). Similarly, Sigala and Gretzel (2019) state that tourism focuses on integrating technology, data, and innovation, which, therefore, should address new challenges such as data privacy and security to maximize the benefits of technology-driven innovation. While Moutinho (2000) agreed with the emergence of technology in tourism, he added that the growth of ecotourism and the increasing importance of branding in tourism are critical trends. This research shows that tourism as a human activity adopts the source availability of tourism development.

The development of tourism is not limited to locale. The trend of globalization is also visible in the discussion of tourism, which local actors and practitioners should adopt (Ianioglo & Rissanen, 2020; Patiño et al., (2016). The same is true of Eagles's (2007) study on global trends in nature-based tourism, in which he argued that tourism is a growing sector that has the potential to contribute to sustainable development. On the other hand, Ewert and Shultis (1997) focus on resource-based tourism and come up with the same argument. He added that resource-based tourism offers a unique and authentic tourism experience. Pigram (2000) agreed upon presenting the positive trends of tourism that can contribute to economic development. Tourism, therefore, is a global issue that does not focus only on economic aspects but also on environmental debates.

Environment Approaches on Tourism

Developing the tourism industry to the environment is a significant connection since it brings issues that concern ecology. Pollution, resource depletion, and habitat destruction are major environmental issues that should be considered as solutions to policies and practices in tourism (Holden, 2016). Gale and Hill (2016) advance the impacts of tourism on the environment and argue that sustainable tourism should reflect on tourism practices and the benefits of ecotourism for local communities. Stressing tourism's benefits to people might create an ethical dilemma between tourists and locals, particularly when cultural norms and values clash. Mostafanezhad and Hannam (2016) argued for responsible and sustainable tourism. Promoting sustainability can be attained through understanding consumer behavior by including environmental attitudes, values, and beliefs (Han, 2021).

On the other hand, Jamal and Higham (2021) focus on justice and ethics when discussing tourism, considering the power imbalances and social injustices inherent in tourism. These studies ensure the link between the tourism industry and environmental care. Weaver (2017) maintained that effective tourism management practices guarantee that tourism is sustainable and does not harm the environment.

While Holden (2016) cited the impacts of tourism on the environment, he argued the need for sustainable tourism practices that prioritize the environment over human interest. A similar claim was made by Koens et al. (2018) upon studying the relationship between tourism and water and suggested an ecocentric perspective to promote sustainable water use in the tourism industry. Casagrande and Rinaldi (2002) also agreed with the ecocentric approach in tourism, viewing tourism as a complex system that can be understood by understanding the interaction between social, economic, and environmental factors. Nikazachenko et al. (2018) consistently assessed environmental impacts and suggested an ecocentric approach to environmental ethics to prioritize the environment's well-being over human interest. The ecocentric approach is a solution to the increasing negative impacts of tourism on the environment.

On the contrary, various studies uphold that ecocentrism is only one angle in considering environmental ethics in tourism. They maintain a balance of anthropocentric and ecocentric approaches to the environment. Font and Tribe (2001), for instance, discuss the potential for environmental awards to promote "green tourism" and, subsequently, sustainable tourism, which can be perceived through anthropocentric and ecocentric approaches

to the environment. This is supported by Neto (2003), who promotes an ethical and holistic approach to tourism development, which can be grounded in a broader set of values, including social justice and cultural preservation, and strengthened by Pookhao (2013), who explores the ethical consideration of both approaches and sees the importance of a balanced approach. He maintained that while the anthropocentric perspective prioritizes human interests and needs in ecotourism, the ecocentric approach perspective prioritizes the well-being of the environment and its ecosystems. Dolnicar (2020) and Weaver (2017) agreed with the balance of two approaches to the environment to promote sustainable tourism, which is to minimize the negative impact on the environment.

Alternatively, Holden (2013), while promoting conservation efforts by minimizing the negative impact on the environment, stands for ethical consideration in tourism to promote a green economy. In contrast, Foris et al. (2018) do not mention the importance of ethical consideration in tourism but stresses quality tourism, promoting sustainable tourism, and responsible tourism practices. These researchers see the importance of the discussion of environmental approaches towards tourism since there will be a factor in management practices if we do not scrutinize the basis of our environmental care.

History of Anthropocene

The history of the Anthropocene has been debated in various research studies, but the common denominator for these researches is the interaction between man and the environment. Anthropocene is helpful for historians because it signals a new era in which human activity has become an essential geological force (Robin & Steffen, 2007; Thomas, 2014). According to Stefen et al. (2011) and Nixon et al. (2019), this interaction between man and the environment leads to a new form of human dominance over the planet, leading to widespread environmental change. This rapid environmental change should be recorded due to the emergence of the Anthropocene as a new geological era. McNeill and Engelke (2016) discuss the major drivers for this change, which include population growth, economic growth, and technological change. Thrischler (2016) reinforces this argument by suggesting that historians should focus on human and environmental interaction rather than technological and scientific innovation alone. It means that the Anthropocene does not only challenge the history of science but also modern civilization. Historians, therefore, must re-examine their understanding of human agency and the role of the environment in shaping human history (Chakrabarty, 2018; Bonneuil et al., 2016; Hamilton et al., 2015).

Mahaswa and Widhianto (2020) question the human centrality in the Anthropocene concept. They suggest that the idea of the Anthropocene is inherently anthropocentric and overlooks the agency of non-human actors in shaping the environment. They argue that the Anthropocene requires a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between humans and the environment and calls for a more inclusive approach to environmental stewardship. That is why Ferrando (2016), who explores the implications of the Anthropocene for post-humanist thought, suggests that the Anthropocene represents a shift away from Anthropocentrism and towards a more inclusive approach to environmental thought and that it offers an opportunity for rethinking the boundaries between the human and non-human worlds.

Philosophical Roots of Anthropocentrism

On humanism

One apparent root of Anthropocentrism in philosophical view is the tradition of humanism. Humanism can be traced back to a sophist philosopher, Protagoras, whose dictum says, "Man is the measure of all things". It states that humanity sets the basis of all standards in the universe. It emphasizes humans as the center of the universe. John (2016) argued that humanism is a system or ideology that aims to create a better and more conducive environment for human existence, emphasizing humans' values, achievements, happiness, and dignity. Humanism focuses on promoting and enhancing the unique qualities of humanity, positioning human beings at the center of the universe. Ukwamedua (2023) highlights the strengths and limitations of the humanocentrism of Protagoras, emphasizing the importance of recognizing the complexities and potential consequences of adopting a human-centric worldview. He shows how an extreme interpretation of humanism could lead to challenges and existential dilemmas, potentially resulting in existential anarchism, where human existence faces uncertainties and disruptions. He then advocates for a balanced approach to humanism that considers both the

value of human agency and the interconnectedness of human existence within larger existential and ethical frameworks.

The tradition of humanism flows down the veins of contemporary philosophers. For instance, Marx's humanism, which was influenced by Feuerbach, with a socialist perspective, emphasizes the detrimental effects of religion on society, particularly in terms of hindering human potential for the welfare of humankind. Marx's humanism is portrayed as a philosophy that addresses human alienation, exploitation, and the promotion of human welfare and creativity within society. However, Shakil (2019) criticized Marx's humanism by highlighting concerns about sacrificing individual freedom for the collective progress of society. He argued that Marx's emphasis on the collective ego and the subjugation of individuality undermines true humanism and suggests that humanism should prioritize the value and dignity of individuals over society, emphasizing that society should serve as a means to promote the freedom and progress of individuals.

On the other hand, Russo (2023) explores the distinction between the Enlightenment concept and the humanistic concept of humanity, focusing on Kant's incorporation of the humanistic tradition into his ethics. Kant's humanism is portrayed as a complex interplay between Enlightenment ideals and elements of the humanistic tradition. He discusses how Kant's ethics intersect with humanistic concepts such as the *Weltbürger* (citizen of the world), self-improvement, and *humanitas*. These elements emphasize the importance of education, aesthetics, and social interactions in shaping a secular morality of self-government within Kant's ethical framework. Kant's humanism underscores the role of rational freedom, education, and social interplay in navigating the complexities of moral decision-making and the art of living a fulfilling human life.

While philosophers perceive how important it is to view the human person in reflecting on the right act to maintain humanity, some might view it otherwise. Obioha (2021) reviews humanism by examining its role in addressing the challenges faced by humanity in contemporary society. He critiques the prevalent trends of intolerance, self-centeredness, and egoism that hinder human progress and societal well-being. Obioha argues that humanism, as a philosophical stance, aims to foster human flourishing and promote the welfare of all individuals, including other sentient beings and the planet as a whole. Nevertheless, he emphasizes that true humanism involves moving beyond individualistic pursuits and egoism toward a collective vision of a better society. He further contends that humanism should prioritize collaboration, mutual support, and a concern for the common good to achieve meaningful progress and create a more harmonious and sustainable world.

Critic to Anthropocentrism

Anthropocentrism may empower humans regarding capabilities supremacy, yet it also results in various opposing views. There are critics against Anthropocentrism. Vijayaraj (2017), for instance, stresses the concept of ecofeminism, which challenges patriarchal paradigms by emphasizing the interconnectedness between women and nature, asserting that women and the environment are inseparable. This theory critiques the anthropocentric mindset that historically placed man over nature, leading to environmental degradation. Ecofeminist principles advocate for equality, justice, and sustainability while promoting a holistic understanding of the relationship between gender, ecology, and society. This principle was further articulated by Philips (2020), who critiques current environmental management practices within a capitalist system and proposes ecofeminist principles to build a new relationship with nature. She further suggests developing ecocentric connections, revaluing epistemological frameworks, and focusing on an ethic of care as essential for addressing environmental challenges.

Further criticism of Anthropocentrism was articulated by Solichin (2019), who identifies a mining company as an actor representing capitalist Anthropocentrism. Capitalist Anthropocentrism is characterized by motives focused on developing civilization through modern science, modernism towards conservatism, and colonialism. Her study utilizes ecofeminist theory to examine the role of women in resisting the exploitation of nature. It highlights the dual role of female characters as victims and fighters against capitalistic Anthropocentrism. Lastly, Natalis et al. (2023) discussed Anthropocentrism vs. ecofeminism. Their study delves into the values and viewpoints that have contributed to the shortcomings in environmental regulations and advocates for a more responsible legal theory informed by ecofeminist principles. They highlighted the legacy of ecofeminism,

interconnectedness, reverence for nature, and gender perspectives in contrast to Anthropocentrism: dominance and control, hierarchical dualisms, and technological fixation.

Theocentrism is another environmental approach that has critics against Anthropocentrism. Seleem and Lasker (2022), for instance, in the perspective of Islam, discuss the importance of recognizing nature as a creation of God and challenge the anthropocentric view prevalent in secular environmental theories while suggesting a reevaluation of human relationship with nature based on divine principles. They assert that nature is not created solely for humans; humans are created for nature as well. The theocentric perspective views nature, including the flora and fauna, as coequals with humans, considering them as sensitive and communicative beings, similar to humans. In the same way, the Christian perspective was articulated by Olaniyan (2023). He argues that ethnocentrism, distinct from Anthropocentrism, is environmentally friendly without neglecting the importance of humans. While Anthropocentrism tends to prioritize human interests and needs above all else, theocentrism acknowledges the divine ownership of the universe and emphasizes that the best guidance on how to interact with the world comes from God. Lowe et al. (2021) strengthen this idea by exploring the challenge of balancing socio-economic development and biodiversity conservation in the face of global environmental change. He cited the anthropocentric approach in development conflicts with the ecocentric or biocentric focus in conservation while proposing ethnocentrism as a biblically normative and conceptually practical way to transcend these conflicting worldviews. Grasse (2016) further gives a foundation for this idea by discussing the history and development of Christian environmentalism. He compares the prevailing anthropocentric view with alternative interpretations like ecocentrism and biocentrism, presenting potential approaches to developing a Christian ecological theology free from Anthropocentrism, aiming to enhance the alignment of Christian principles with environmental values and efforts.

Conservation Efforts

The effort to conserve is significantly linked to the idea of ecocentrism. Many researches highlight the importance of adopting an ecocentric rather than an anthropocentric perspective in biodiversity conservation efforts. For instance, Taylor et al. (2020) emphasize the need for ecocentrism in biodiversity conservation, advocating for a shift towards ethical reasoning that prioritizes the intrinsic value and interests of species and ecosystems over human-centered perspectives. They further argue that promoting moral justification for biodiversity conservation based on ecocentric values is crucial for effectively planning and implementing conservation efforts. By incorporating ecocentric values into conservation recommendations, there is potential to guide governments towards more robust biodiversity conservation strategies. Kopnina et al. (2018) advocate for setting aside at least half of the Earth's land and seas for nature conservation. They support the Nature Needs Half Movement, which advocates for setting aside at least of the Earth's land and seas for conservation.

Washington et al. (2021) delve into the challenges associated with anthropocentric perspectives and human-centered attitudes in conservation and explore how prioritizing human interests over the intrinsic value of nature can lead to detrimental consequences for biodiversity and ecosystems. They specifically criticized anthropocentric conservation by citing the following practices: Utilitarian resources extraction, species-centric conservation, and fragmented conservation approach. Furthermore, Ghijselinck (2023) contends that the potential of relational can be more fully realized by using them to offer prescriptive guidance to conservation decision-making and practice. However, their embeddedness in a meaningful relationship with care and respect towards nature must be emphasized and mainstreamed to facilitate this.

Arne Naess

A form of conservation effort was made by the deep ecology movement popularized by environmental philosopher Arne Naess. Her ecosophy brought interest in recent research utilizing it to solve contemporary environmental issues brought by Anthropocentrism. Deep ecology is a philosophical and environmental perspective that emphasizes all living beings' intrinsic value and interconnectedness within ecosystems. It is a shift away from Anthropocentrism towards an ecocentric worldview. It emphasizes the intrinsic value of all living beings and the interconnectedness of humans with the natural world. It advocates for a holistic understanding of ecosystems, biodiversity conservation, and sustainability, promoting harmony and respect for nature.

A critique of Anthropocentrism was explored by Barman (2022), who delves into the contrast between ecocentrism and Anthropocentrism in ecology theory and discusses how ecocentrism emphasizes nature-centric value systems, while Anthropocentrism places humans as the central focus. He explores Arne Naess's contribution to environmental philosophy and the shift towards deep ecology as a move from Anthropocentrism to ecocentrism. Biswas and Prakash (2022) explored the relationship between Samkhya philosophy, deep ecology, and sustainable development. They discussed how the philosophical notion of nature in Samkhya demonstrates our embeddedness in nature, indicating that the idea of deep ecology is inherent in Samkhya philosophy.

Rochmani et al. (2023) also explore whether judges, in resolving environmental cases in court, are oriented towards protecting and saving the environment using a deep ecology approach by discussing obstacles faced by the judges in realizing ecological justice, highlighting the importance of incorporating profound ecological principles in environmental case settlements. Haukeland (2023) and Vetlesen (2017) delve into Naess's concepts of ecosophy and deep ecology, focusing on the ethics and value within this framework as responses to the ecological crisis, emphasizing the need for a sustainable and eco-friendly future and providing insights into his perspective on environmental ethics and the intrinsic value of nature.

Aldo Leopold

Land ethics is another ecocentric ecological movement that Aldo Leopold popularized. Like the deep ecology movement, land ethics criticized the anthropocentric view towards ethical consideration of the natural world. Many recent researches deal with the clarity and the expansion of implications of the concept of land ethics. Meine (2022), for instance, delves into the scrutiny of Leopold's attitudes and actions, particularly regarding racism, inequity, and injustice in conservation history. She discusses the evolution of Leopold's view towards just human relations, cultural diversity, and the expansion of ethical considerations in the conservation movement through his influential essay "The Land Ethic."

Millstein (2018) aims to challenge and dispel common misconceptions surrounding Aldo Leopold's influential land ethic and provides critical insights and analysis to clarify misunderstandings and provide a more accurate interpretation of Leopold's environmental philosophy. Furthermore, Millstein (2020) explores the relationship between the healthy functioning of the land community, as emphasized by Aldo Leopold, and the maintenance of characteristic functions of populations within the land community. He discusses how these functions are essential for sustaining the land community's ecological balance and healthy functioning.

While Zhao (2016) explores the causes, content, and ideological characteristics of Aldo Leopold's land ethic, highlighting its significance in guiding contemporary environmental movements and promoting ecological holism, Eba (2020) provides a critique of Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic in the context of environmental management. He acknowledges the significance of Leopold's environmental ethics, particularly his ecocentric perspectives and emphasis on the ecosystem's intrinsic values, and at the same time, criticizes Leopold's view of ecological systems as inadequate, pointing out limitations in the organic model of ecosystems presented in Leopold's land ethic.

The Land Ethic

The most significant contributor to the evolution of ecocentric environmental ethics is Aldo Leopold (1887–1948). He was the first to advocate for a significant rethinking of ethics in light of the development of ecology science during his lifetime. He dedicated his life to integrating ethics and ecology.

A thorough explanation of Leopoldian philosophy is provided in DeJardin's (2013) exposition of Leopold's Land ethics. Leopold begins "The Land Ethic" by recounting the tale of Odysseus, who, after returning from the Trojan War, hanged twelve of his female slaves for disobedience. Odysseus' actions were not regarded as unethical or inappropriate because enslaved people were considered to be property. Since then, ethics has advanced to the point that everyone now has a moral standing. Leopold urges continuing this expansion of ethics to embrace land, plants, and animals in "The Land Ethic."

Leopold introduces "The Land Ethic" by making a moral extensionist suggestion. Although "we have no land ethic yet, we have at least drawn nearer the point of admitting that birds should continue as a matter of biotic right," he tells us that "the land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively, the land." He suggests that we should extend moral consideration—"biotic rights"—to birds, soils, waters, plants, and animals.

The "land community" is bestowed with moral authority. As long as the community is respected, its individuals can still be used as resources. The "ecological conscience" holds that people are not masters of nature but only "biotic citizens," members of the biotic community. With the help of ecology, moral emphasis is shifted from individuals to biotic systems.

Leopold's most famous and contentious quote succinctly encapsulates this component of the land ethic. When something works to maintain the biotic community's integrity, stability, and beauty, it is doing the right thing. When it tends in a different direction, it is incorrect.

According to Clark (2002), the problems that the Land Ethic addressed more than fifty years ago still affect this generation. He urged that we view today's environmental moral challenges in the context of Leopold's moral principles. As Leopold noted, even though there are many things we can live without, wild animals and wild areas are not among them. We must have a firm understanding that some things are irreplaceable.

Millstein (2018) defended land ethics by challenging some common misconceptions about Leopold's land ethic. He argues that Leopold's call for an expanded ethic that includes the natural world is often misunderstood as a call to prioritize the needs of the environment over the needs of humans. Millstein clarifies that Leopold's ethic is not anti-human or anti-development but rather a call for a more holistic and sustainable approach to human development that considers the needs of humans and the natural world. Shaw (1997) interprets land ethic as not just a set of rules or principles to follow but rather a way of life that requires the cultivation of particular virtues, such as humility, empathy, and respect. Shaw suggests that Leopold's land ethic is more than just an ethical theory; it is a way of living that can help individuals and communities achieve a deeper connection to the natural world. Nelson (1998) argues that the land ethic provides a compelling and persuasive framework for understanding the relationship between humans and the natural world and has important implications for environmental policy.

Statement of the Problem

This research aims to analyze the concept of ecotourism using the conservationist view of Aldo Leopold. Specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

1. How is eco-tourism defined by those who practice and manage eco-tourism activities?
2. Why does Leopold contradict the Anthropocentric attitude towards eco-tourism management?
3. What solution does Land Ethics provide for the problem of anthropocentric attitude towards eco-tourism management?

Theoretical Considerations

This study follows the conservationist perspective of Land Ethics of Aldo Leopold. Land Ethics' environmental perspective rests on the view that everything above earth is interconnected and that values from which our environmental decisions should emanate must be taken from this holistic view.

Significance of the Study

This paper aims to contribute insights on tourism and its environmental impact through a conservationist view of Land Ethics. The findings of this study contribute further insights into the ongoing discourse on tourism and environmental care. This study can help tourism managers and owners design their services that promote the long-term sustainability of tourism and educate their clients on a more integrated approach to the environment.

This can also be a basis of insights for the Department of Tourism to inform the programs of government in tourism and the environment and then reflect on their policies and activities. Tourists and travelers may be enlightened by this study regarding the impact of their subscribed activities, which may turn them into agents for positive attitudes toward environmental care.

Limitation of the Study

This study focused on the redefinition of ecotourism and analysis of Aldo Leopold. It gathered the standard concept of ecotourism, and with the analysis of Leopold's Land Ethics, it aimed to provide a new definition. The conduct of the study is also limited to the location identified in this study.

Definition of Terms

Ecotourism is a subset of the tourism industry that centers on providing leisure by exposing travelers to a convenient environment.

Conservation – is an environmental effort that promotes environmental intervention to prolong the benefits it can serve.

Ecocentrism is an environmental approach that derives value from all parts and members of an ecological environment.

Anthropocentrism – an environmental approach that focuses on the desire and interest of the human person as the sole basis of valuation.

Land Ethics is an ethical theory of Aldo Leopold whose basic idea lies in the interconnected members of the biotic society whose preservation should be managed as a whole.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlined the many procedures used by the researcher to gather pertinent data to address the research question. It contains the research design, participants, setting, measures, procedures, data analysis and limitation of the study.

Research Design

A qualitative design was utilized in this study. This approach worked effectively for the type of data that this study needs to collect during its conduct. The information was taken via interviews with people who work for the tourism destination or from written materials that outline the goals of the destination or tourism bureau. The researcher prepared questions to help lead the interview and ensure that pertinent information about this study was discussed.

Participants

The researcher interviewed fourteen (14) participants. Some works in a local government tourism office while others work in a private owned eco-tourism site. The researcher ensure that participants are involve in managing eco-tourism sites that validates their concept of eco-tourism. The interview was conducted both individual and group for others, considering the preferred time of the participants. Other participant also preferred a prepared recorded audio as respond to the guide interview. The length of the interview varied to the interest of the participants to provide answers based on the interview guide.

Locale of the Study

The conduct of the interview was performed under selected municipalities in the PPALMA Area. Particularly, the research conducted to three municipalities, the municipality of Libungan, Midsayap and Aleosan. Considering that the area has a numerous growing ecotourism site, the researcher conducted a field interview from both municipal tourism offices and selected ecotourism sites.

Research Instrument

The researcher utilized a semi-structured interview guide. There are two translations of the questions; first is written in English and Second is written in Visayan. The guide is composed only three questions which aims to gather data pertinent to the first objective of the study. The first question aims to understand ecotourism while the second question aim to lay down the purpose of ecotourism and the third question visit the programs for ecotourism. Each main questions are also guided by sub-questions to reinforce the narratives of the informants.

Data Gathering Procedure

Upon approval of the dean's conduct, the researcher prepared a communication letter to the authorities necessary for the conduct of the interview. The researcher went through municipal authorities, including asking a consent from NCIP for areas declared as ancestral domain. Since the interview is limited for ecotourism, the researcher secured a consent from the Timuay of the Indigenous group to assure the green light of the research. After securing all necessary permits and consents from authorities, the researcher proceeded to schedule to each informants the time and place for interview. Each informant was informed and given choices to participate and to record the whole interview.

Method of Analysis

The researcher used thematic analysis in presenting the data. The raw data from audio record was transcribed and translated into English. Common themes are extracted from initial coding to deep coding to produce major themes relevant to the research question. Then, data information are utilized for philosophical analysis based on Aldo Leopold's Land Ethics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the study's findings based on data gathered through both interview and archival research methods. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the themes that emerged from the collected data and situates them within the broader theoretical and conceptual frameworks relevant to the study. The discussion begins with an examination of the understanding of ecotourism, followed by an analysis of the ethical and philosophical perspectives of Aldo Leopold, and, lastly, an investigation of the implications of Leopold's environmental philosophy for ecotourism.

Understanding of Ecotourism

Defining ecotourism is important to those who manage ecotourism sites and to those who work in agencies that regulate the operation of ecotourism areas. This is evident in the efforts to conserve the environment in the ecotourism industry. These efforts are driven by ideals and values that inform the stakeholders or community involved in ecotourism. It is also important to those considered ecotourists and those who subscribe to this subset of the tourism industry. As the researcher conducted group and individual interviews with those involved in ecotourism management, the concept of ecotourism is thematized by focusing on environmental preservation, community and cultural preservation, a tool for social connection and well-being, a tourist-centric definition, and ecotourism's goals and future direction.

Ecotourism as Environmental Preservation

Participants recognize the importance of maintaining natural landscapes and biodiversity and minimizing environmental disruption when discussing what ecotourism is. For them, ecotourism emphasizes nature preservation, sustainability, and biodiversity conservation.

Nature Preservation and Sustainability

One emerging dominant theme in the understanding of ecotourism is the preservation of nature and sustainability. Many participants emphasized the importance of maintaining the natural environment through non-invasive

practices, such as minimal landscape changes and respect for natural surroundings, to avoid ecological disruption or restore nature to its original state. As stated by a participant:

"Mao ning ginaingon ni president nga "restoring the Garden of Eden" kay ang pag landscape ana, wala'y gidisturb nga kinaiyahan. Unsa tong naa dira, mao to'y giimprove. Pero to the extent nga maghukay, mamuldos para maestablish, . . . kumbaga mora siya'g gilandscape through its nature. Kanang kung unsa ang iyahang porma, mao ra pud atuang gisunod . . . Wala siya gidisturb kaya "restoring the Garden of Eden" ang ingon ni sir kay dili siya parehas sa uban nga bulldoson ang tibukok para patukoran ug building. Hukayon ug dako, patukoran ug pool. Dili ing-ana ang atua" This is what the president calls 'restoring the Garden of Eden' because the landscaping does not disturb nature... What is there, that is improved. However, to the extent of digging and bulldozing to establish, it never happened. It's like it is landscaped through its nature. That whatever its form, that's what we follow. . . It was not disturbing nature, so he said 'restoring the Garden of Eden' because he is not like the others who bulldoze the whole thing to build a building. Dig big, build a pool. That's not the case. (Participant B).

The portrayal of "restoring the Garden of Eden" reflects an ideal rooted in religious beliefs, emphasizing stewardship of the environment. The participant suggests an intention not to redesign or dominate the landscape but to work within its existing contours. By contrasting their approach with sites that bulldoze land for infrastructure development, the participant draws a moral boundary between ecological sensitivity and environmentally intrusive tourism practices. The emphasis on following the land's natural form indicates an adaptive relationship with nature, where development is restrained and responsive rather than transformative. This articulation reveals a stakeholder's conservation mindset that values ecological preservation and sustainability as defining features of ecotourism management. This is further illustrated by the concept of "eco-friendly". According to another participant,

"Ang pagsabot man gud nako sa ecotourism, ginadayo man jud na sa mga turista, di ba? So dapat eco friendly jud kumbaga. Kay daghan man jud siya muabot nga mga kuan, so walay dapat ana kuhaon. Dapat pud siya dugangan. Pagwapuhon pa ba. Tanuman aron mugwapo siya pagbalik. [My understanding on ecotourism, it is visited by tourists, right? So it should be eco friendly. Because it is visited by a lot of tourists, so nothing should be taken here, it should be added, beautify it. It should be planted so that it will looks beautiful again] (Participant J)

This concept of ecotourism is framed as inherently "eco-friendly" due to the volume of tourists it attracts, thereby emphasizing responsibility in the face of human presence. The insistence that "nothing should be taken" and that planting and beautification must occur suggests a restorative concept, which means human visitation necessitates environmental restoration. The participant highlights a view of addition rather than removal. The reasoning is that environmental care becomes necessary due to tourist activity. This is further supported by another participant. As stated,

"Sa amoa, ang among gikuan pud ang environment friendly, sunod kanang simple lang na maoffer namo sa tao . . . So, environment, naa mi mga trees, nature, ana lang amua sir - Mountain view. Overlooking amuang maoffer diri." [In our case, environment friendly. Next to that a simple thing that we can offer to people . . . So, environment, we have trees, nature, that's all sir - Mountain view. Overlooking is what we can offer here]—Participant E

Participant E's emphasis on simplicity and natural scenery positions the environment itself as the central attraction. Rather than foregrounding built amenities, the participant emphasizes landscape visibility and a natural atmosphere as the primary offerings. This articulation suggests that ecological features are not supplementary but foundational to the tourism experience. The absence of elaborate infrastructure in the description reinforces an orientation toward environmental minimalism, where development is secondary to natural presence. Such framing reflects an appreciation of ecological aesthetics and implies that preserving the natural setting is integral to maintaining the site's identity. Such an idea has been supported by another participant by stating;

"The best keyword to describe ecotourism is sustainability. . . So, with minimal environmental impact, it will reduce waste, pollution, and degradation. Because there are implementations that help damage our environment,

and, second, we cannot lose conservation, because it will also protect our natural habitats, wildlife, and ecosystem, and sustainable practices for a long-term approach, implementing the eco-friendly measures." – Participant D.

Participant D explicitly conceptualizes ecotourism through the lens of sustainability, highlighting minimal environmental impact, conservation, and long-term ecological protection. The reference to reducing waste, pollution, and degradation indicates awareness of tourism's potential harms and the necessity of preventive measures. By stressing sustainable practices as a "long-term approach," the participant situates ecotourism within a framework of continuity rather than short-term exploitation. This articulation demonstrates a perspective informed by a discourse that ecological protection is embedded in operational planning and policy implementation.

These understandings describe nature as an expendable resource but as the defining feature of the tourism experience. However, the justifications for preservation frequently intersect with concerns about tourist influx, site attractiveness, and long-term operational viability.

Ecotourism, in this theme, emerges as a space where ecological sensitivity and tourism functionality coexist, revealing the complex ethical positioning that characterizes contemporary ecotourism management.

Biodiversity Conservation:

Environmental preservation is supported by stakeholders' concept of ecotourism as a means of biodiversity conservation. Participants emphasize the preservation of native trees, wildlife habitats, and the overall ecological balance. According to a participant;

Ang farm nag emphasize jud ug preservation sa kinaiyahan, ilabi na jud sa mga native trees, susama sa mahogany, para mamaintain ang biodiversity. Didto na area, gipreserve jud to didto labi an ang mga mahogany, kay naa ra jud na sila diha. Naa'y mga Lanzones, rambutan, mangosteen, daghan na didto sir. [The farm emphasizes ecological preservation, particularly of native trees like mahogany, to maintain biodiversity . . . That area is preserved there, especially the mahogany, because they are already there. There are Lanzones, rambutan, mangosteen, many are there sir] (Participant A)

The participant explicitly situates ecotourism within the framework of biodiversity conservation, emphasizing the preservation of native and existing tree species. The deliberate protection of mahogany trees and fruit-bearing species such as lanzones, rambutan, and mangosteen reflects a conscious effort to maintain ecological continuity rather than replace it with a uniform, commercial landscape. The participant's remark that these trees are preserved "because they are already there" suggests a respect for ecological presence prior to tourism development. This however raise a question of the concept of conservation considering that mentioned plants are commonly reproduce and not native to the place. This articulation underscores an understanding of ecotourism as protection of biodiversity as both ecological foundation and defining feature of the farm environment. This is supported by the vision of one of the ecotourist site;

"The preservation of soil, flora, and fauna; natural landscaping of the surroundings while enhancing the place with grown economic trees, vegetables and ornamental plants; and putting up edifices like river pools, animal domain, garden of love, and learning habitats are efforts to replicate the garden of Eden" – SCC Nature Farm leaflet (Background and Rationale)

It reinforces this biodiversity orientation by explicitly referencing the preservation of soil, flora, and fauna, while integrating agricultural and ornamental cultivation into the landscape. The language of "replicating the Garden of Eden" frames biodiversity conservation within a symbolic narrative of harmony and ecological abundance. Unlike purely aesthetic landscaping, the leaflet highlights ecological components—economic trees, vegetables, animal domains, and learning habitats—suggesting multifunctional land use that combines conservation, education, and modest development. However, the inclusion of constructed features such as river pools and thematic gardens indicates that preservation is accompanied by selective enhancement. Biodiversity is therefore preserved alongside infrastructural additions, reflecting a blended model of conservation and site development.

Ecotourism can be a tool for sustainability when it prioritizes ecosystem health over short-term economic gains. It emphasizes the protection and conservation of natural environments, aiming to minimize the ecological footprint of tourism activities. Nature preservation should be a foremost legacy of ecotourism instead of economic benefits. Leopold reminded us that the concept of conservation ought to be for the "integrity, beauty, and stability of the biotic community". This means that ecotourism is not solely for economic purposes but for balance and preservation for all members of the biotic community. While there is a need for the preservation of the environment, the preservation of the community should be part of it. This, however, should not be misunderstood as meaning that the value of society is more important than the environment. The intrinsic value of each is important to Aldo Leopold. As emphasized by Rumukumba (2022), moral changes in attitudes about tourism brought on by its effects on the environment are likely to have a significant impact on how tourism is spent and would probably lead to a reassessment of its focus on pleasure. In addition, it might inspire a search for more ecologically beneficial and carbon-reduced tourism alternatives.

These accounts highlight that environmental preservation is a key operational priority at the ecotourism site. Both the interview data and institutional documents emphasize the importance of protecting native species, preserving natural habitat, and maintaining ecological diversity. The farm is presented not just as a scenic location, but as a living ecological system. Participants demonstrate ecological awareness, recognizing the interdependence of species and the importance of maintaining biological diversity. The concept they offered strongly align with Leopold's Land Ethics. However, some practices reveals anthropocentric framing. Leopold allows human intervention but cautious against manipulating ecosystems solely for human standards of beauty and order. Land ethics prioritize biotic functioning over visual appeal.

Community and Cultural Preservation

Participants viewed ecotourism as a means to preserve cultural heritage, uphold traditions, and create economic opportunities for local communities. Since some ecotourism sites are located within the ancestral domains of indigenous peoples, the local community is always concerned about how ecotourism preserves and promotes local culture.

Cultural Heritage

One aspect that supports the community and cultural preservation is cultural heritage. Many stakeholders emphasize that ecotourism can be a tool for tourists to understand and acknowledge not only the place but also the local community. A participant state;

"Kay sa amo mga katutubo, sa kumonidad, dapat ang amuang custom, kultura masustain. Para abunda pud ang panginabuhian, dapat masustain ang kinaiyahan." [Because to us, Indigenous people, for our community, our customs and culture must be sustained. In order to have an abundant livelihood, nature must be sustained.] (Participant J)

Participant J expresses ecotourism as always related to the experience of Indigenous people, emphasizing the need to sustain both cultural customs and the natural environment. The linkage between livelihood abundance and environmental sustainability suggests an integrated worldview in which culture and ecology are inseparable. Unlike purely economic framings of tourism, this account positions environmental preservation as a prerequisite for cultural continuity. Nature is not merely a backdrop for ecotourism activity but a foundational element of communal identity and survival. Ecotourism, in this articulation, becomes a mechanism for reinforcing traditional practices while safeguarding the ecological conditions that enable them. Another participant supports the understanding by stating;

"Sa ako, ancestral domain, dili pwede mabag-o. Mao nang giclaim sa kalolohan namo para dili mabag o ang kinaiyahan, hangtod sa hangtod para sa mga sunod na mga henerasyon." [To me, ecotourism is an ancestral domain; it cannot be changed. That is why our ancestors claimed this land so that nature does not change, forever, for the future of the next generations.] (Participant K)

The participant deepens this perspective by invoking ancestral domain as both a territorial claim and a moral responsibility. The assertion that the land "cannot be changed" reflects a preservationist ethic rooted in

intergenerational continuity. By referencing ancestral claims to protect nature “for future generations,” the participant frames environmental stewardship as a historical obligation inherited from forebears. Ecotourism is thus embedded within a long-standing custodial relationship with the land, where conservation is not primarily managerial but moral and genealogical. The land is portrayed as an enduring heritage rather than an exploitable property, reinforcing its cultural and spiritual significance.

"It can alleviate poverty also, and cultural preservation. It also protects local traditions, heritage, and customs." (Participant D)

Participant D complements these culturally grounded perspectives by emphasizing poverty alleviation alongside cultural preservation. Ecotourism is described as capable of protecting traditions, heritage, and customs while simultaneously supporting economic upliftment. This dual framing reflects a developmental logic in which cultural continuity and livelihood improvement coexist.

Ecotourism, as portrayed from these accounts, is more than environmental management; they present it as a vehicle for cultural survival and ancestral stewardship. Participants articulate a worldview in which land, identity, and livelihood are interdependent. The protection of customs and traditions is inseparable from the preservation of nature, suggesting a holistic understanding of community well-being. However, economic considerations remain present, especially in discussions of poverty alleviation and livelihood abundance. This illustrates the elements that must be balanced: cultural preservation, developmental aspirations, and ecological preservation.

Economic Benefits to Local Communities

Community preservation does not focus solely on cultural preservation but also addresses a reality common to native communities – local economic stability. Participants emphasize that preserving nature offers another opportunity for the local community. Ecotourism promotes economic development among indigenous peoples. One participant states;

"Next is economic growth; especially when there are many visitors to a site, the income will rise. It will generate income for our local communities and national economies. It can also alleviate poverty because you create jobs and there is economic growth, so that it can alleviate poverty" – Participant D.

The participant explicitly frames ecotourism as a driver of economic growth, linking visitor influx to income generation at both local and national levels. The emphasis on job creation and poverty alleviation situates ecotourism within a developmental narrative in which tourism serves as an economic engine. Environmental sites are therefore not only preserved landscapes but productive assets capable of stimulating community advancement. The articulation reflects a macro-level understanding of ecotourism’s economic potential, portraying it as a strategic mechanism for improving livelihoods and fostering social mobility. Considering the participant as a local government tourism officer, they clearly see the economic development opportunities brought by ecotourism. This concept is supported by other participants stating;

"Kung naa ang matambabay ug agkir agkir, naa jud Negosyo. So, makatabang jud sa local. Mapromote ang lugar, mapromote ang kultura, mapromote pa jud ang mga product, mga small business. So makatabang ta sa atuang kumonidad." [if there is matambabay and agkir agkir, there will be businesses. So, it helps the local. It will promote the place, promote the culture, promote the products as small businesses, so, we can help our community.] (Participant H)

Participant H locates this economic framing in the emergence of small businesses, product promotion, and community entrepreneurship. The presence of visitors stimulates commercial activity, enabling local enterprises to flourish and local culture to be marketed alongside products. Economic benefits are presented as communal empowerment, where tourism visibility translates into opportunities. Ecotourism in this account becomes a platform for circulating local identity through economic exchange, reinforcing its role as a catalyst for grassroots development rather than merely institutional revenue generation. Another participant supports the understanding by emphasizing the benefit gained by taking care of the environment, stating;

"Mapreserve nimo ang nature, ang balik sang nature sa imoha ba – ang experience sa tao, makapasweldo ka sa tao, ang income niya, at least masustain. Actually, ang income niya dili man ingon nga anu. The purpose of income kasi is para masustain lang siya – Sa sweldo sang tao, maintenance niya, bayad sa kuryente, bakal sa mga bulak." [If you can preserve nature, nature has something in return to you – the experience of people, you can pay people (workers), their income, at least we can sustain them. Actually, its income is not that high. The purpose of income is only to sustain the operation– In the salary of the staff, its maintenance, electricity bill, buy flowers.] (Participant F.)

The statement that "nature has something in return" suggests a reciprocal dynamic: by preserving the environment, economic returns emerge, enabling further conservation and site maintenance. The participant cites how challenging it can be for stakeholders to maintain ecotourism sites. While environmental preservation is a goal of ecotourism, the operation sometimes requires investment and human resources. Income is necessary for sustaining both environmental preservation and human labor.

Beyond environmental conservation, ecotourism plays a crucial role in protecting communities and preserving culture. Stakeholders' ecotourism also highlights cultural heritage and economic benefits to local communities. Ecotourism here is seen as empowering indigenous populations, preserving traditional knowledge, and promoting sustainable livelihoods. Small businesses rise to the challenge in the market on a site. Both tourists and locals benefited from the economic results ecotourism brought. Locals provide the availability of products and services that tourists need. This understanding of ecotourism came from municipal tourism officers. As stated in the first part of this paper, ecotourism for the economy is a common understanding of its purpose. Recent research (Sangpikul, 2017; Kim et al., 2019; Shedenov et al., 2019; Mustofa, 2022) provides frameworks for how ecotourism enhances economic benefits for locals.

Considering land ethics, the understanding is partially aligned. Leopold's land ethics also acknowledges that human communities are integral to the land as members of the biotic community. Land ethics, while acknowledging humans as part of the community, stressed that it has a similar worth to the natural environment. The value of the biotic community lies in every member of the community, and its stability is of prime importance. It implies that no human value is given priority in environmental morality. Leopold's land ethic is derived from the concept that man does not own the land.

Ecotourism as a Tool for Social Connection and Well-being

Participants also highlighted the importance of ecotourism in fostering relaxation and escape, family bonding, and social engagement. While there are various motives for engaging in ecotourism activities, social connections and human well-being are among them.

Relaxation and Escape:

Ecotourism is often understood as a way for visitors to reconnect with nature and find peace or relaxation. Ecotourism managers are trying to meet visitors' needs by developing natural landscapes or building structures.

"Relaxation sa tao although kana lan pud ang maoffer nga maka feel ug freshness ang mga visitors through nature. Then, ang amo pud nga, (unsa ni) daw mappreciate pud sa tao ang greatness sa Ginoo nga makastay sila didto sa taas, makita nila ang palibot, "Oh, how great thou art jud." Unya, makauan pud sa mga tao . . . nga maappreciate pud nila ang nature ug mapangalagaan pud nila ang nature. Mapreserve. Isa pud ang cleanliness, oh at least, makita pud nimo na ang mga tao, disciplined pud sila." [Relaxation for people, although that is all that can be offered to make visitors feel fresh through nature. Then, for us, people will appreciate the greatness of the Lord, and they can stay up there. They see the surroundings, "Oh, how great thou art." Then, it is also for people... that they can appreciate nature and take care of nature – preserve the nature. Another one is the cleanliness. At least, you can see people are disciplined.] (Participant E)

The participant frames ecotourism as a space for psychological renewal and spiritual reflection. Relaxation, freshness, and elevated views of the landscape are described not merely as recreational benefits but as moments

that inspire awe and gratitude toward divine creation. The reference to appreciating “the greatness of the Lord” situates environmental experience within a spiritual framework, where nature becomes a medium for moral awareness. The participant also connects appreciation with responsibility, suggesting that when visitors encounter the beauty of nature, they become more inclined to preserve and protect it. In this understanding of ecotourism, relaxation is not passive consumption but a pathway toward ecological appreciation and ethical conduct.

"Material gadgets for information and references to enhance learnedness and wisdom such as caring for plants, appreciation of quality time for the self and the family, enjoying healthy foods with friends, relaxing and communing with nature are made available to amplify the valuing of relationship, appreciating stewardship call, and cherishing God's creation." – SCC Nature Farm Leaflet (Goals and Objectives of SCC Nature Farm)

The institutional leaflet expands this experiential dimension by presenting ecotourism as a site of learning, relationship-building, and stewardship formation. Activities such as caring for plants, spending quality time with family, and communing with nature are framed as opportunities to cultivate wisdom and deepen moral values. The language of stewardship and cherishing creation indicates that environmental engagement is intentionally designed to shape attitudes and ethical awareness. Ecotourism is thus conceptualized not only as a recreational venue but as an educative environment that nurtures appreciation, relational connectedness, and responsibility toward the natural world. This understanding is supported by another participant by stating;

"Giplan jud guro ni ni sir para sa mga tao, family bonding, enjoyment, mga relaxation sa mga tao. Kung mamunga na ang mga kahoy, ginaapil namo ang mga bisita mag fruit picking." [I guess, sir, the President planned this for the people: family bonding, enjoyment, and relaxation. When trees bear fruit, we involve the guests for fruit picking.] (Participant A)

Participant A reinforces this relational and communal aspect by emphasizing family bonding, enjoyment, and participatory experiences such as fruit picking. The involvement of visitors in harvesting activities reflects an interactive model of ecotourism, where guests engage directly with the rhythms of nature. Such participation transforms visitors from passive observers into temporary participants in ecological processes.

Ecotourism benefits not only the local community. Travelers' main purpose in embarking on this adventure is to reveal how human is part of nature. Engaging with nature during travel offers opportunities for reflection, stress relief, and deeper connections with the natural environment. Leopold's land ethic emphasizes moral responsibility for the environment. There was a lack of emphasis on how humans' well-being can be benefited from engaging with the natural environment. Yet Leopold mentions "stability" and "beauty" in land ethics, revealing how humans, as members of the biotic community, should maintain their relationships with the rest of the community. This concept of ecotourism may be a venue for Leopold's idea of ecological awareness. As tourists participate in ecotourism activities, they will have the opportunity to learn about appropriate frameworks that truly value the natural environment.

These accounts portray ecotourism as a means of fostering social connection and well-being. Nature is presented not merely as preserved landscape but as a medium through which visitors encounter relaxation, escape from urban set-up, and, ultimately, moral reflection. Travelers' main purpose in embarking on this adventure is to engage with nature, which offers opportunities for reflection, stress relief, and deeper connections with the natural environment. However, nature, in this understanding, frequently appears as a medium for human benefit. Leopold allows experiential enjoyment only if it does not degrade ecological systems or “it preserves the integrity of the biotic community.”

Tourist-Centric Definitions

Participants' results also focus on enhancing visitor experiences through eco-friendly, engaging, and diverse activities, showcasing the value of interaction with nature and communities. Frequent themes emerge in visitor experience and engagement, as well as in diversification of activities.

Visitor Experience and Engagement:

Several definitions focus on the visitors' experience, including eco-friendly accommodations, guided nature tours, and interactive nature activities such as fishing or boating. Ecotourism, being "tourist-centric," involves balancing environmental care with enhancing the visitor's experience. According to one participant;

"Ang ideya jud sa ecotourism is dili lang natural aspect pero maghatag ug experience sa mga turista." [The idea of ecotourism is not just the natural aspect, but to create an experience for tourists.] – Participant I

Participant I explicitly broadens the definition of ecotourism beyond its natural foundation, asserting that it must also generate meaningful experiences for tourists. This articulation shifts emphasis from ecological preservation alone toward experiential value creation. Nature remains important, but it is framed within a larger objective: designing encounters that engage visitors emotionally and recreationally. Ecotourism, in this sense, becomes a curated environment in which landscape and activities are structured to meet visitor expectations. The statement signals a transition from purely conservation-oriented thinking to a hybrid model that integrates ecological setting with experiential design. This understanding was due to the demand by travelers. As one of the participant stated;

"But I cannot say "no" sa mga gusto mamingwit kasi mao na ang gusto sa uban na ilabi na sa mga bata nila na gusto makaexperience ug pamingwit. Then, ang bangka namo sa una for fishing jud ni. However, gusto man gud sa uban na magsakay sakay, magexperience ug bugsay so giopen na lang namo sa uban." [But I cannot say "no" to those who want to fish because that is what others want especially their children who want to experience fishing. Then, our boat was for fishing. However, some people want to ride, experience rowing so we just opened it to others.] Participant H

The participant illustrates how visitor demand directly shapes site management decisions. Activities such as fishing and rowing, originally limited or functional, were opened to guests in response to tourist interest—particularly for children seeking experience. The inability to refuse these requests highlights the influence of consumer preference in guiding operational choices. Ecotourism management here appears adaptive and responsive, modifying site use to enhance visitor satisfaction. While such flexibility strengthens accessibility and enjoyment, it also reveals how recreational expectations can gradually expand the functional boundaries of the natural site. Development becomes negotiated between ecological limitations and experiential demand. In another statement of a participant;

"Ang pagsabot man gud nako sa ecotourism, ginadayo man jud na sa mga turista, di ba? So dapat ecofriendly jud kumbaga. Kay daghan man jud siya muabot nga mga kuan, so walay dapat ana kuhaon. Dapat pud siya dugangan. Pagwapuhon pa ba. Tanuman aron mugwapo siya pagbalik. Kay diri lang sa amua, naupaw na man jud siya no? morag maulaw na pud mi." [My understanding of ecotourism is that it is visited by tourists, right? So it should be eco-friendly. Because many tourists visit it, it is... beautified. It should be planted so that it will look beautiful again. Because here on our site, it is bare, right? We seem shy to offer this to tourists] (Participant L)

Ecotourism here is emphasized as promoting eco-friendliness while simultaneously expressing concern about site aesthetics in relation to tourist perception. The desire to beautify, plant, and enhance the area arises partly from the anticipation of visitor judgment—"we seem shy to offer this to tourists." Environmental enhancement thus becomes intertwined with reputational and visual appeal. Preservation is not only ecological responsibility but also a matter of presentation. The articulation reflects a managerial sensitivity to visitor expectations, where landscape improvement is motivated by both environmental care and the desire to remain attractive to incoming tourists.

These accounts reveal an expanding orientation toward tourist-centered development within ecotourism management. While environmental protection remains a stated priority, experiential enhancement increasingly influences operational decisions. Activities are introduced or expanded to accommodate visitor preferences, aesthetic improvements are pursued to meet tourist expectations, and natural spaces are curated to generate memorable encounters. This demonstrates adaptive management responsive to human demand. However, it also signals the growing centrality of visitor satisfaction in shaping environmental use. Ecotourism within this theme

reflects a delicate balance: nature is preserved, yet it is simultaneously structured and modified to serve experiential objectives. The tension between ecological integrity and consumer-oriented development becomes more pronounced, illustrating how anthropocentric considerations subtly guide the evolution of ecotourism practice.

Diversification of Activities

The inclusion of farm tourism, adventure tourism, and other recreational activities shows how ecotourism has evolved beyond its original scope. What once focused mainly on passive observation of nature has expanded to embrace a wide range of interactive and immersive experiences. This shift reflects not only changing tourist interests but also the growing demand for meaningful, hands-on engagement with natural and rural environments. Informants state:

“My adventure tourism pud mi tungod sa bodega tungod naay sky walk, sky bike ug zipline. Sa ecotourism, nangkaan ridge, agkir agkir ug matambabay. Naa pud mi farm tourism.” [We also have adventure tourism because of the Bodega Resort and they have a sky walk, sky bike and zipline. In ecotourism, we have nangkaan ridge, agkir agkir and matambabay. (Participant I)]

The participant describes the coexistence of multiple tourism models within the same locality, which indicates a shift toward thrill-oriented and infrastructure-supported attractions. Ecotourism is no longer confined to passive appreciation of nature but is integrated with physically engaging and commercially attractive activities. This diversification signals the transformation of natural landscapes into multifunctional tourism spaces where ecological sites are layered with entertainment-oriented structures. This diversification for visitor adventure extend to farm tourism as mentioned by another participant;

“Oo, farm tourism unya gibutangan nila ug eco. Kuan man gud siya, ah. . .Naa siya’y pool unya, at the same time, naa pud siya’y farm. Tapos kung nay mga kuan, nay mga bunga ang trees . . . ang mga guest pwede sila mag involve sa ah, kuan. . . ginaapil namo sila sa fruit picking. Oo, sa environment. . .mao man to ang ilahang gikuan sa SOC na involve ang mga tourist sa unsay activity diri sa farm.” [Yes, farm tourism then they put eco in it. It's really a farm, ah. . . It has a pool then, at the same time, it also has a farm. Then if there are farms, the trees have fruits . . . the guests can get involved in the ah, farms. . . we involve them in fruit picking. Yes, in the environment. . . that's what they told the SOC to involve the tourists in any activity here on the farm.] (Participant A)]

This highlights the blending of farm tourism with ecological branding. The site includes recreational amenities such as a swimming pool while maintaining agricultural elements where guests can participate in fruit picking. The addition of the term “eco” to farm tourism suggests a strategic positioning that aligns the site with environmental consciousness. Yet the integration of leisure facilities alongside agricultural production demonstrates how ecotourism becomes hybridized—simultaneously recreational, agricultural, and environmental.

While this diversification enhances economic viability and broadens audience appeal, it also introduces new pressures on land use and environmental integrity. The ecological space becomes layered with multiple functions, raising important questions about the balance between sustainability and commercial expansion. These understanding and practices has a weak alignment to Land Ethics. Leopold reminded us of the dangers of this kind of development. It sometimes prioritizes ecotourism development at the expense of environmental and cultural sustainability. This definition can result in practices that prioritize profit over preservation, creating tensions between tourism development and ecological ethics. Dineen (2014) offered a version of Leopold's land ethics, which holds that it is a social critique of modernity inspired by his evolutionary ecological outlook. While land ethics is a critique against human-centered views, it recognizes the role of human in ecological awareness. Ecotourism can be a venue for ecological education, and both locals and tourists can be agents of ecological moral responsibility.

Goals and Future Directions of Ecotourism

Participants' understanding of ecotourism highlights their motivations behind managing ecotourism sites and ambitious plans to develop innovative tourist attractions. It includes ecological sustainability, economic development, and infrastructure development.

Ecological sustainability

Participants' goals in ecotourism highlight its explicit connection to environmental protection, including conserving biodiversity, minimizing destruction, and fostering sustainability. Participant states:

"First, conserve or protects the natural habitats, wildlife system, biodiversity preservation maintains ecological balance and also preserve endangered species. It can also reduce pollution, encourages sustainable practices, minimizing waste and pollution, climate mitigation, wildlife protection supports anti-poaching efforts and habitat preservation." [Participant D]

Participant's comprehensive understanding of ecological sustainability reflects an awareness of global environmental discourse, where sustainability encompasses interconnected ecological systems rather than isolated practices. Ecotourism is framed as an instrument that safeguards endangered species and maintains wildlife systems. The emphasis on structured environmental management suggests that ecotourism is understood not merely as recreation but as an environmental protection strategy embedded within broader sustainability principles. This understanding is supported by another participant who states that;

"Naa gihapon didto ang conservation. Mao gihapon nay mosulod didto. Mosulod didto ang pag alaga sa kahoy nga anaa dira. Naa man ta'y mini forest didto. Likod sa Gethsemani area. So, wala to siya gihilabtan nga bungkagon nato siya. Gihimo siya kung unsa man siya, giimprove lang siya ug gamay." Conservation is still there. The same goes in there. That includes the care of the trees that are there. We also have a mini forest there. Behind the Gethsemani area. So, it was not touch to destroy it. It was made as what it is, it was just improved a little bit. (Participant B)

The participant localizes conservation within the actual landscape and continue stresses non-destruction and minimal intervention, emphasizing that the forest was preserved as it is. This reflects a conservation ethic centered on restraint and protection. The notion of "improvement" without destruction suggests a management approach that attempts to maintain ecological integrity while allowing limited enhancement. Conservation, in this account, is continuous and embedded in daily stewardship practices, especially in the care of trees and forested areas. This is supported by another participant saying;

"Ang main purpose gid siguro, sa akon lang na level, is ang conservation sang area. Siyempre, makita man gud nato karon ang mga yuta, puro na lang ginakaingin. Pero kung mapreserve gid siya, qwapo gid siya. So, kay kini, gaserve man gid siya na ecotourism, as much as possible, bawal gyud magputol putol. Kami gani ginabawalan mi ana pero ginaputlan gyud namo kay mulampas na man gud siya sa iyang beauty ba. Mupangit na pud hinuon. Morag trim lang siya. Bottom line lang gyud siguro is anu . . . conservation of the environment." [The main purpose, at my level, is the conservation of the area. Of course, we can see that the lands are now being use for swidden. But if it's preserved, it is beautiful. So, because of this, it also serves as ecotourism, as much as possible, it is forbidden to cut. We are even forbidden to do that but we cut it because it's beyond its beauty. It's ugly. We just trim it. Bottom line is probably conservation of the environment.] (Participant F)

This articulation strongly identifies conservation as the "main purpose" of ecotourism, especially in contrast to destructive land practices such as kaingin (swidden agriculture). Preservation is linked to environmental beauty and ecological value. However, the participant also introduces a revealing tension: while cutting is generally prohibited, selective trimming is justified for aesthetic purposes. Vegetation is sometimes managed to maintain visual appeal. This suggests that conservation is upheld, yet occasionally negotiated when aesthetic standards are perceived to be compromised. Environmental protection remains central, but it is subtly mediated by considerations of appearance and tourism presentation. Leopold allows human intervention for maintaining the health of the environment, but for aesthetic value? Leopold will not agree on it.

Across participants, ecological sustainability is consistently identified as the primary goal of ecotourism. The narratives reflect both global environmental awareness and localized stewardship. However, conservation is not absolute non-intervention. Selective improvements, which are justified to enhance beauty or functionality remains a priority for ecotourism managers, although, the environment is valued, preserved, and defended against exploitation. This dual orientation—protection alongside managed intervention—creates an important

philosophical tension that Leopold's Land Ethic articulated regarding whether land is treated as a community to which humans belong or as a resource carefully managed for sustained human benefit.

Economic Development

A clear purpose of ecotourism, as stated by several respondents, is to boost local economies by creating jobs, promoting local businesses, and developing tourist infrastructure. Participants expressed;

“Kasi kung magdagsa ang turismo, mailhan jud ang munisipyo at the same time, ang economy, magboost jud siya. Ug, kung naa man gud kuan, halimbawa kung naa ang matambabay ug agkir agkir, naa jud Negosyo. So, makatabang jud sa local. Mapromote ang lugar, mapromote ang kultura, mapromote pa jud ang mga product, mga small business. So makatabang ta sa atuang kumonidad.” [Because if tourism increases, the municipality will be known at the same time. The economy will boost. And, if there is matambabay and agkir agkir, there will be businesses. So, it helps the local. It will promote the place, promote the culture, promote the products as small businesses, so, we can help our community.] (Participant I)

This understanding expressed tourism as a catalyst for municipal recognition and economic stimulation. Ecotourism is viewed as a multiplier effect: attractions generate businesses, businesses support families, and the municipality gains visibility. The participant connects tourism development to cultural promotion and small enterprise expansion, suggesting that ecotourism serves both economic and socio-cultural advancement. Here, environmental attractions function as economic drivers, transforming natural sites into engines of local development and communal upliftment. This idea is reinforced by another participant;

“Economic benefits, just because eco-tourism support local economies, it give jobs to anu yung nakapalibot sa isang site. It called support tourism, which is help the local communities to have jobs . . . economic growth, especially pag maraming pumupunta sa isang site, the income will rise. It will generate income for our local communities and national economies. It can also alleviate poverty because you create job creation and there is economic growth, so it can alleviate poverty” economic benefits, just because eco tourism supports local economies, it gives jobs to what surrounds a site. It's called support tourism, which is helping the local communities to have jobs . . . economic growth, especially when there are many visitors to a site, the income will rise. It will generate income for our local communities and national economies. It can also alleviate poverty because you create job creation and there is economic growth, so it can alleviate poverty] (Participant D)

Participant D presents a more systematic articulation of economic benefits, highlighting job creation, income generation, and poverty alleviation. The repeated emphasis on poverty alleviation positions ecotourism as a developmental solution, especially in rural or peripheral areas. Economic growth, in this articulation, is not incidental but central to the rationale of ecotourism and sometimes, strong driver for developing ecotourism sites. This, however, reinforces the need to strike a balance between supporting local economies and ensuring that tourism remains respectful of both people and the natural environments they depend on.

With these concepts, ecotourism is consistently conceptualized as an instrument of economic development. Tourism increases municipal visibility, stimulates entrepreneurship, generates employment, and contributes to poverty reduction. Natural landscapes are not only ecological assets but economic capital capable of sustaining livelihoods. This developmental framing reinforces the legitimacy of ecotourism as both conservation and economic policy. However, the strong emphasis on economic growth also reveals a utilitarian dimension: nature's value is partly measured by its capacity to produce income and stimulate markets. While community benefit is prioritized, environmental preservation is frequently justified in relation to sustained economic returns. Leopold insist that environment has an intrinsic value apart from the economic benefit gained by humans.

Infrastructure Development

Participants frequently mentioned plans and goals for improved infrastructure, such as better roads, waste management systems, and visitor facilities, highlight that ecotourism management remains developing in some aspects. While interest in ecotourism continues to grow, the supporting systems needed to manage it sustainably often lag behind.

"Una, maghimo mi ug morag canteen bitaw. Coffe shop, dira namo iplatar sa babaw. Himuan ug dalan pero hangtod karon, la pa daw budget." We'll make a canteen. Coffee shop, we'll put it on top. Build a road but until now, there is no budget. – Participant J.

Participant J identifies planned additions such as a canteen, coffee shop, and road construction. These developments are presented as necessary enhancements to improve accessibility and visitor convenience. However, the mention of budget constraints highlights the economic realities shaping infrastructure growth. The expansion plans indicate an understanding that ecotourism competitiveness requires built amenities. Nature alone is perceived as insufficient; supportive structures must be added to accommodate guests and increase site functionality. Infrastructure development, therefore, emerges as a strategic response to tourism demands and market expectations. Clearly, this plans are for economic boost of the site. Similar understanding was stated by another participant;

"Kung kaluy an unta sir, kung igrant sa Ginoo, swimming pool. Muingon kang infinity ba, . . . kung itugot sa Ginoo. Dili man ta ka kuan kay number 1, tubig. Naa mi tubig amua lang. naa mi source diri, powerspray ang gabira. Okay man pud ang kuan. Sunod, kining amuang gikalkal, kay ingon sa akuang pinsan, unahon sa ni. Naa mi, in between dira sir, butangan namo ug swing dira sir ug seesaw. Mao pa na ang kuan namo kay naan a man mi ziplat diha. So, tama tama lang pud na naa mi space diha. Unya ielevate gamay kay butangan n apud ug playground. Ipadaplin lang namo. Kay nakuan man tong kamunsil, siguro magstructure mi. iatras na lang jud didto." If by grace, if granted by the Lord, swimming pool. Something you can say it's infinity, if the Lord wills. We can't expect it much because number 1, we need water. We have water on our own. We have a source here, pulled by powerspray. Next, this one we dug, because as my cousin said, this should be first. We have, in between there, sir, we put a swing here, sir, and seesaw. That's what we took because we had a ziplat there. So, it's okay that we have space there. Then elevate it a little bit to put a playground. We'll just set it aside. Because we got that kamunsil, maybe we'll fucos on structure. just back off there. – Ms. Participant E

Participant E envisions more ambitious recreational facilities, including a swimming pool, playground equipment, and spatial elevation for improved layout. These proposals are framed within practical considerations such as water availability and spatial planning. The inclusion of playgrounds and leisure amenities suggests a deliberate attempt to diversify target demographics, especially families. The development process appears incremental and adaptive, shaped by available resources and perceived visitor needs. The landscape is gradually reorganized to support structured recreation for boosting the service it can provide to the ecotourist. Further infrastructure developmental goal was expressed by another participant;

"Actually, naa pa na diha, dugangan na siyag anu, morag ligbos ba. Morag ani pero isa lang ang punoan - morag umbrella. Idugang na siya diha para naa sad pasilungan ang tao. Gagmay lang, tama lang sa unom ka tao. Tapos naa pa to silay plano nga cable car. Diri gihapon na area. Ang zipline man gud namo, sa ako lang, mali ang pagkaplatar. . .sa ecotourism man gud dapat advantage jud siya, or else, mugasto kag mali ba." Actually, we still add there, it's like mushroom. It looks like this but has only one stand - like an umbrella. We'll add it there so that the visitors have shelter. It's small, just right for six people. Then they have a plan for a cable car. On the same area. Our zipline, I think, is wrong because in ecotourism, it should be an advantage, or else, you'll spend money for nothing. – Participant F

The participant discusses additional visitor shelters, plans for a cable car, and reflections on the strategic placement of a zipline. Infrastructure is evaluated in terms of advantage and cost-efficiency, indicating an economic rationalization of development. Built structures are expected to enhance ecotourism's appeal; otherwise, they are seen as financial missteps. The proposal for a cable car signifies further vertical expansion and intensification of recreational features. The environment becomes a spatial platform for engineered attractions designed to increase experiential value. Most of these plans are not actually developing nature nor contributed to the beauty of the natural environment but possibly destruct the biodiversity present in an area. This is further attested by another participant;

"Gwapo kayo ang plano ni sir dira sauna ui. Naa duha ka zipline. Ang isa ka zipline maggikan diri sa water refiling station . . . motugpa didto sa nay activity area namo didto sa gazebo. Tapos ang isa ka zipline maggikan diri sa sulod sa ranso, katong nay dagko kayo nga mga kahoy. So, motugpa sad siya didto sa likod sa swimming

pool. . . actually kung muagi ka didto sa isa ka zipline, icross nimo ang swimming pool ug kung muagi sad ka sa pikas, icross nimo ang mini forest. Ecopark ang plano.” Sir had a beautiful plan here before. There are two ziplines. A zipline leaves from here at the water refilling station and drops off at our activity area at the gazebo. Then, a zipline comes from inside the ranch, the one with the big trees. So, he'll land in the back of the swimming pool. Actually, if you go there on one zipline, you will cross the swimming pool; if you go on the other side, you will cross the mini forest. The plan was an ecopark.” – Participant B.

Participant B recalls an earlier master plan involving dual ziplines that would traverse the swimming pool and mini forest, forming part of a broader “ecopark” vision. The design integrates natural features with aerial infrastructure, transforming ecological zones into interactive pathways. The crossing of the mini forest and swimming pool via zipline reflects a blending of conservation space with thrill-based activity. The concept of an ecopark suggests a reimagining of the landscape as a structured recreational complex rather than solely a preserved habitat. This plan, for some reason, is in conflict with the prior understanding of ecotourism which is purely for environmental care and awareness.

These themes reflect the aspirations of participants to improve visitor experience through better facilities and demonstrate a willingness to innovate and diversify ecotourism offerings to attract more visitors. The goals of ecotourism resonate with the stakeholders' understanding. Stakeholders maintain the ecological sustainability programs of their sites for reasons both prolonging nature and economic sustainability. Economic development has always been the aim of ecotourism sites, seeing what opportunities the natural environment can bring to the local community. Ecotourism has also been viewed as a tool for the promotion of local identity and awareness. This does not expose the local community, but it empowers the local community for environmental decisions. Leopold's land ethic has been a guide for all of these emerging goals of ecotourism. Ecological sustainability and cultural community are implied in land ethics, but economic development should be taken with provision. Economic development is human-centered and not nature-centered. Ramukumba (2022) maintains that with Leopold's Land ethic, actors in the travel industry should treat the natural environment with the same respect that they do themselves. Thus, it will make the sector easier to sustain.

While such development may enhance accessibility and economic sustainability, it also reconfigures the ecological character of the site. The land increasingly functions as a platform for recreational architecture. Conservation remains verbally affirmed, yet structural expansion introduces deeper intervention into natural space. The shift from minimal improvement toward recreational engineering raises critical philosophical questions regarding the extent to which land remains protected versus transformed for experiential consumption. While some development may be permissible, Leopold's ethic requires that such interventions preserve ecological integrity and stability. If structural expansion fragments habitats or prioritizes visitor experience over ecological health, it represents a reversion to anthropocentric land-use thinking.

Aldo Leopold and Anthropocentrism Constructs

As articulated in the early chapter of this manuscript, Leopold's environmental ethics is a departure from the practice of Anthropocentrism. As such, Leopold's environmental philosophy promotes an environmental ecocentric or holistic philosophy. His holistic philosophy stressed significant points in the environmental discussion, which Zhao (2016) discussed in his analysis of Leopold:

The Evolutionary Order of Ethics

Leopold started his essay on Land Ethics by stressing the human value over other objects, including the environment, as a commodity. In human-centered valuation, those apart from humans are mere commodities from which humans should benefit.

"We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." – Leopold (1949)

He further states,

"People often use the economic scale to measure the value of environmental protection."

If it continues, nothing remains in our environment, considering humans' limitless desire and interest-driven behavior. Leopold states a fundamental critique of the dominant anthropocentric perspective in environmental management. He argued that environmental degradation largely stems from the human tendency to regard land merely as a commodity that can be owned, utilized, and exploited for economic gain. Such a perspective encourages practices that prioritize short-term economic benefits over long-term ecological sustainability. In contrast, Leopold proposes the concept of the land as a community to which humans belong.

Leopold, therefore, suggests an ethics that extends to the environment. To arrive at this, Leopold explains that there are stages of the evolution of ethics: the first is the ethical stage of the relationship between human beings, the ethical stage of the relationship between man and society, and lastly, the ethical stage of the relationship between man and social community. Leopold points out that ethics is not limited to human relations but extends to the land. By land ethics, Leopold advocates that humans should have an ecological conscience that maintains the preservation and maintenance of all things in the land.

"The first ethics dealt with the relation between individuals; the Mosaic Decalogue is an example. Later accretions dealt with the relation of society. The Golden Rule tries to integrate the individual into society; democracy integrates social organization into the individual. There is as yet no ethic dealing with man's relation to land and to the animals and plants that grow upon it. Land, like Odysseus' slave-girls, is still property. The land relation is still strictly economic, entailing privileges but not obligations. The extension of ethics to this third element in the human environment is, if I read the evidence correctly, an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity. It is the third step in a sequence. The first two have already been taken. Individual thinkers since the days of Ezekiel and Isaiah have asserted that the despoliation of land is not only expedient but wrong. Society, however, has not yet affirmed their belief. I regard the present conservation movement as the embryo of such an affirmation." -Aldo Leopold (1949)

This first concept in Land Ethics clearly departs from human-centered frameworks. He reinforces the moral standing of the natural environment beyond human valuation. The passage from Aldo Leopold in *A Sand County Almanac* presents a historical and ethical progression in the development of moral responsibility. Leopold explains that early ethical systems, such as the Mosaic Decalogue, primarily governed the relationships between individuals by establishing moral rules that regulate human behavior toward one another. Over time, ethical frameworks expanded to include the relationship between the individual and society, which aim to harmonize individual actions with social organization. However, Leopold emphasizes that despite this ethical evolution, society has yet to fully establish a moral framework that addresses humanity's relationship with the natural environment, including land, animals, and plants. Instead, land continues to be treated largely as property, valued primarily for its economic utility rather than as part of a broader ecological community. By comparing land to the slave-girls of Odysseus in *The Odyssey*, Leopold highlights how nature is still perceived as something to be owned and controlled rather than respected. He argues that extending ethics to include the land represents the next stage in moral development—one that is both an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity. While some individual thinkers have long recognized that environmental destruction is morally wrong, Leopold notes that society as a whole has not yet fully embraced this belief. In this context, he views the conservation movement as an emerging societal acknowledgment of the need for a "land ethic," which recognizes the intrinsic value of nature and affirms human responsibility toward the entire ecological community.

The Concept of Community

Leopold explains that the environment is composed of a biotic community. He shows that everything that exists is a member of the biotic community, and they function in various ways. Each, therefore, has a biotic right to exist. As articulated by Leopold, the community is not limited to human's relationship to nature but includes everything on the soil. The elements of air and water are treated as members of the biotic community and bear the right to exist in the community.

"The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land" – Aldo Leopold.

Leopold proposes the "stability" of the land, considering that the health of the land should be maintained. Each member of the community contributes to the preservation of the land, which makes the land healthy. Balancing the environment, therefore, is necessary to preserve the land. Any act that leads to this purpose, therefore, is allowable. Hunting for Leopold is allowed only if several animals create an imbalance in the environment. A deer cannot be allowed to overpopulate a particular area, for it leads to diminishing shrubs and herbs, which, in turn, leads to a lack of food for all herbivores in the area. Carnivores are also necessary to maintain the function of the environment. Leopold's "land community" states that everyone has the right to exist as members of this community.

Millstein (2018) emphasized and clarified the concept of "interdependence" in Leopold's land community, contending that it should include both positive and negative causal relations. She further presents a debate on whether land community is an individual and argues that the understanding of Leopold's "community" is consistent with some contemporary understanding of ecology.

“Ecological Awareness

"Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land." – Aldo Leopold.

Leopold's advocacy for ecological awareness impacted the succeeding environmental philosophy after his period. While debates on environmental ethics occur among contemporary philosophers, Leopold's influential environmental ethics merge into the understanding of regular people. Leopold already envisioned this. He was aiming for people to have an ecological awareness, an awareness that is grounded in the broader view of the environment – a holistic view of environmental ethics. He disapproved of the Anthropocentrism of environmental ethics, for it limits our view of what people can see and fails to realize that people are only members of the land community.

Aldo Leopold's ecocentrism suggests a solution to the problem of a myopic view on environmental conservation. By extending our moral responsibility to the natural world, Leopold proposes a kind of ethics that does not limit the value of the human person alone. By understanding that human beings are only part of a larger community, we may consider our grounds for moral consideration the respect for all members of the biotic community.

Land Ethics opposes Anthropocentrism in a way that the latter values only the human person, and the former sees the person as only part of a broader perspective of the land community. Land ethics is a departure from a human-centered approach to environmental care. While both aim to care for the natural world, an implication may be made if one is taken as the grounds of the environmental, ethical framework over the other.

"The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land" – Leopold.

Schmutz (2016) asserts in his paper that Leopold's land ethic can indeed be viewed as an early form of posthumanism, as it advocates for a shift in how humans perceive their place within the ecological community, which leads to a perspective that encourages deeper ethical consideration of non-human entities and ecosystems. On the other hand, Tan (2021), by examining literature, posed a powerful critique of Anthropocentrism while aligning with the principles of land ethics, advocating for a reevaluation of humanity's role within the ecological framework, which calls for greater awareness and responsibility towards environmental stewardship.

Implications for Environmental Ethics

If one has to take the environmental ethics of Leopold as a ground for environmental valuation, one is taking a progressive approach to environmental ethics. One has to expand his understanding, not limiting his perspective to what a human can utilize from the environment, but to what a human can do as a member of the land community. Therefore, the perspective delimits the idea of seeing the natural world as a commodity but extends one's view to the relation to nature and everything there is.

... a land ethic changes the role of homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect to fellow members, and also respect to the community as such." – Aldo Leopold on Land Ethics.

The departure from the anthropocentric attitude toward responsibility to nature is the main implication of land ethics in terms of environmental ethics. Humans cannot dominate the environment if everything outside the human is seen only for utilization. This is not the human who knows and controls the environment. Everything existed about each other in the land community, and therefore, everything should be preserved.

"...a system of conservation based solely on economic self-interest is hopelessly lopsided. It tends to ignore, and thus eventually eliminate, many elements in the land community that lack commercial value but that are (as far as we know) essential to its healthy functioning. It assumes, falsely, I think, that the economic parts of the biotic clock will function without the uneconomic parts." – Aldo Leopold.

Upon discovering the data presented in the previous chapter, Leopold's environmental ethical framework is always relevant in ecotourism practices and management. While most stakeholders seen the importance of conservation in ecotourism, there were practices that does not meet conservation as framed by Land Ethics. Organizations directly involved in ecotourism site operations might use Leopold's ethical framework to draft environmental policies and activities.

What ecotourism should be as analyzed in the framework of Land Ethics? These are specific implication of Land Ethics in the different stakeholder's understanding of ecotourism. First, ecotourism as conservation should prioritize ecological integrity. This is the measurement of effectiveness of ecotourism in terms of ecological preservation and awareness. The increasing number of visitors and increasing revenue generated should not be the basis of effectivity of ecotourism. Second, ecological education should be attached in managing ecotourism sites. This cannot be limited in presenting the natural resources to the visitors for them to enjoy and be amazed by nature but this should bring them realize how we are a "plain member of this land community." Third, ecotourism management should integrate with scientific research or assessment. Scientific research deepens community's awareness of present biodiversity. For example, a scientific research assessment should be conducted before introducing new species of plant, especially economic trees, to an area for it directly affect the biodiversity.

This study can be a response to the contention of Rumukumba (2022) who tried to articulate the relevance of Leopold's Land Ethics to tourism, and was right in concluding that very little has been written to include the ethical environmental principles suggested by Aldo Leopold to the tourism industry for its benefits.

SUMMARY

This study focuses on the application of Aldo Leopold's Land Ethics in ecotourism concepts. It specifically aims to answer the following problems: (1) How is tourism defined by those who practice and manage tourism activities? (2) Why does Leopold contradict the Anthropocentric attitude towards tourism management? (3) What solution does Land Ethics provide for the problem of anthropocentric attitude towards tourism management?

The study utilized data acquired through archival research and personal interviews. Interviews, with the use of semi-structured interview guide, are done to those who are directly involve to manage ecotourism sites, both private and government owned sites. With these information data, the researcher makes a philosophical analysis through a conservative lens of Aldo Leopold's Land Ethics. The study reveals main themes: Ecotourism as Environmental Preservation; Tourism as Community and Cultural Preservation; Tourism as a tool for Social Connection and Well-being; Tourism as Tourist-Centric; and Purpose and Goals of Tourism. Study also reveals that Aldo Leopold criticizes anthropocentric view of ecology with his concepts of the extension of ethics, the biotic community and ecological awareness. Similar concepts brought implication to ecotourism management.

The following discussions of the concepts of ecotourism brings how conservation analysis significant in purifying such concepts. Aldo Leopold's land ethics can be strengthened as foundation of understanding and managing ecotourism industry. Ecotourism, though by nature is for human consumption, can be a tool for ecological awareness and environmental preservation. With a limited analysis of the application of land ethics to ecotourism, the author attempts to contribute to a solution to the problem. Ecotourism can be analyzed through this framework with the principles of Land Ethics. First, Leopold established that our ethical considerations are

not limited from person to person but should extend to the Land and everything on it. Therefore, our notion of what environmental act to consider should start with the idea that we have a moral responsibility to air, water, plants, animals, and every member of the biotic community. This is also the concept of Leopold's community. Humans are only part of this community, and the rest of the members are worthy of respect. However, Humans should have an ecological awareness that may exercise or bring this framework to environmental care. So, in ecotourism, stakeholders should act as a community driven by respect for every member and equipped with ecological awareness as an agent of applying the framework or expanding the awareness.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal that while ecological conservation is widely acknowledged among stakeholders, ecotourism remains predominantly framed within anthropocentric practices and assumptions. Environmental conservation is often justified in terms of sustaining tourism benefits, supporting local economies, or enhancing visitor experience rather than recognizing the intrinsic worth of ecological systems. This understanding of ecotourism hardly aligned with Leopold's Land Ethics framework. Alignment with land ethics is strongest where ecological preservation is emphasized independently of profit, and weakest where land becomes commodified for recreational and economic expansion. This reflects a broader tension within sustainability discourse in ecotourism, where ecological care becomes instrumental for human economic benefit rather than ethical. Interpreting these findings through Leopold's framework reveals the limitations of such human-centered perspectives and highlights the need for a deeper ethical reorientation.

Leopold's Land Ethic provides a critical alternative by expanding moral concern beyond human interests toward the entire biotic community. His concepts of ethical extension is clearly a parting from limiting the rest, except human beings, as mere means only for human benefit. Environment and all parts in it have an inherent value that is apart from human use. This should be realized as an ecological conscience by human beings as a plain member of land community. From this conservationist analysis, ecotourism can be reframed as more than responsible travel; but as a moral relationship between humans and the ecological systems they inhabit. From this perspective, ecotourism should not merely minimize environmental harm but actively contribute to the integrity, stability, and beauty of ecological communities.

Leopold's land ethics suggest an apparent framework for environmental care. As applied in ecotourism, the principle of Land Ethics is necessary for a holistic approach towards ecotourism. As an asset of this industry, our natural environment should not only be conserved and protected for more prolonged utilization but, in the first place, for they have inherent worth as members of the biotic community. So, to redefine ecotourism in a conservative analysis of Leopold's Land Ethics, the author arrived at this concept:

Ecotourism is a type of responsible travel to natural areas that promotes community involvement and ecological care, putting ecosystem health and integrity first, aiding conservation initiatives, and appreciating the inherent worth of all biotic and abiotic environmental components.

RECOMMENDATION

Some considerations for improving the ecotourism industry are noted upon conducting the research. The author arrives to recommend the following:

1. Further scientific research should be conducted to identify the flora and fauna of the area in order to implement the right programs and management in an ecotourism site.
2. There should be further programs and activities on eco-centric ecological awareness among tourists and locals to attain a deeper understanding of the environment and a solid commitment to the conservation of the environment.
3. Ecotourism and the region's ecological policies should be reviewed and establish clear regulatory frameworks to ensure ecotourism initiatives align with land ethics principles.

REFERENCES

1. Blanco, E., Lozano, J., & Rey-Maqueira, J. (2009). A dynamic approach to voluntary environmental contributions in tourism. *Ecological Economics*, 69(1), 104-114.
2. Bonneuil, C., & Fressoz, J. B. (2016). *The shock of the Anthropocene: The earth, history and us*. Verso Books.
3. Buckley, R., Zhong, L., Chen, H., & Wan, Y. (2019). *Tourism and sustainability in a changing world*. Springer.
4. Buhalis, D., & Amaranggana, A. (2014). Smart tourism destinations enhancing tourism experience through personalisation of services. In *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2014* (pp. 377-389). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-03973-2_28
5. Buhalis, D., & Foerste, M. (2021). Technology as a catalyst of change: Enablers and barriers of the tourist experience and their consequences. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 20, 100529. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2021.100529>
6. Burchett, K. (2014). Anthropocentrism and nature. *Attempt Reconcil. Teor*, 34, 119-137.
7. Casagrandi, R., & Rinaldi, S. (2002). A theoretical approach to tourism sustainability. *Conservation ecology*, 6(1).
8. Cater, E. (2013). Anthropocentrism, tourism and the environment: The example of the protected area. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 16(3), 199-215.
9. Chakrabarty, D. (2018). Anthropocene time. *History and Theory*, 57(1), 5-32.
10. Cheia, George. (2013). Ecotourism: Definition and Concepts. *Revista De Turism Studii Si Cercetari in Turism Journal of Tourism Studies and Research in Tourism*.
11. David A. Fennell (2001): A Content Analysis of Ecotourism Definitions, *Current Issues in Tourism*, 4:5, 403-421
12. Dolnicar, S. (2020). Designing for more environmentally friendly tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 84, 102933.
13. Donev, D. (2019). *Ecocentrism or the Attempt to Leave Antropocentricity*. Trivent Publishing.
14. Eagles, P. F. (2007). Global trends affecting tourism. In *Tourism and protected areas: benefits beyond boundaries: the Vth IUCN World Parks Congress* (pp. 27-43). CABI.
15. Ewert, A., & Shultis, J. (1997). Resource-based tourism: an emerging trend in tourism experiences. *Parks & Recreation* (Ashburn), 32(9), 94-104.
16. Fereshteh Hafezi, Masoud Bijani, Saeed Gholamrezai, Moslem Savari, Sabine Panzer-Krause. (2023). Towards sustainable community-based ecotourism: A qualitative content analysis. *Science of The Total Environment*. Volume 891,164411, ISSN 0048-9697, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.164411>.
17. Ferrando, F. (2016). The party of the Anthropocene: Post-humanism, environmentalism and the post-anthropocentric paradigm shift. *Rel.: Beyond Anthropocentrism*, 4, 159.
18. Font, X., & Tribe, J. (2001). Promoting green tourism: The future of environmental awards. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 3(1), 9-21.
19. Foris, D., Popescu, M., & Foris, T. (2018). A comprehensive review of the quality approach in tourism. *Intech Open Science*, 10, 159-188.
20. Gale, T., & Hill, J. (2016). Ecotourism and environmental sustainability: An introduction. In *Ecotourism and Environmental Sustainability* (pp. 3-16). Routledge.
21. Gilbert, B. (2022). The problem of anthropocentrism and the human kind of personhood. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 01914537221110900.
22. Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. (2015). *Tourism and water: Interactions, impacts and challenges*. Channel View Publications.
23. Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. (2021). Tourism and water: Interactions, impacts, and challenges. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(1), 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2020.1851035>
24. Grofelnik, J. (2023). The contribution of tourism to carbon emissions in Slovenia. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1-18.
25. Guan, X. (2022). Tourist carbon footprint in a developing country: A case study of Thailand. *Sustainability*, 14(4), 1438.

26. Guczalska, K. (2023). Ecocentrism. Hopes And Concerns. Scientific Papers of Silesian University of Technology. Organization & Management/Zeszyty Naukowe Politechniki Slaskiej. Seria Organizacji i Zarzadzanie, (183).
27. Hall, C. M., & Gössling, S. (2016). Tourism and water: Interactions, impacts, and challenges. Channel View Publications.
28. Hamilton, C., Bonneuil, C., & Gemenne, F. (2015). Thinking the anthropocene. In *The Anthropocene and the global environmental crisis* (pp. 1-13). Routledge.
29. Han, H. (2021). Consumer behavior and environmental sustainability in tourism and hospitality: A review of theories, concepts, and latest research. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(7), 1021-1042.
30. Hatley, Andrew Nolan, "Anthropocentrism and the Long-Term: Nietzsche as an Environmental Thinker." PhD diss., University of Tennessee, 2016. https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_graddiss/3700
31. Hoffman, A. J., & Sandelands, L. E. (2005). Getting right with nature: Anthropocentrism, ecocentrism, and theocentrism. *Organization & Environment*, 18(2), 141-162.
32. Holden, A. (2013). Tourism and the green economy: A place for an environmental ethic?. *Tourism recreation research*, 38(1), 3-13.
33. Holden, A. (2016). *Environment and tourism*. Routledge.
34. Hsu, C. H. C., & Lu, L. (2015). The impact of website quality on customer satisfaction and purchase intention: Impulse buying and word-of-mouth communication as moderators. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 48, 569-577. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.02.054>
35. Ianioglo, A., & Rissanen, M. (2020). Global trends and tourism development in peripheral areas. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 20(5), 520-539.
36. Jafari, J. (2023). Tourism and sustainability: New tourism in the third world. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 48(3), 1-10.
37. Jamal, T., & Higham, J. (2021). Justice and ethics: Towards a new platform for tourism and sustainability. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(2-3), 143-157.
38. Kapiki, S. (2012). Current and future trends in tourism and hospitality: The case of Greece. *International Journal of Economic Practices and Theories*, 2(1).
39. Koens, K., Postma, A., & Papp, B. (2018). Tourism and water: Interactions, impacts and challenges. In *Tourism and Water* (pp. 1-17). Channel View Publications.
40. Kopnina, H. (2020). Anthropocentrism: Problem of human-centered ethics in sustainable development goals. In *Life on land* (pp. 48-57). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
41. Kopnina, H., Washington, H., Taylor, B., & Piccolo, J. (2021). Anthropocentrism: More than Just a Misunderstood Problem. *The International Journal of Ecopsychology (IJE)*, 3(1), 4.
42. Kuhlmann, W. (1996). Making the law more ecocentric: Responding to Leopold and conservation biology. *Duke Env'tl. L. & Pol'y F.*, 7, 133.
43. Le, T. (2020). Tourists' pro-environmental behavior in Vietnam: An application of the theory of planned behavior. *Sustainability*, 12(15), 6250.
44. Leopold, A. (2010). B Holism (Ecocentrism). *Environmental Ethics: The Big Questions*, 193.
45. Mahaswa, R. K., & Widhianto, A. (2020). Questioning the 'Anthropos' in the Anthropocene: Is the Anthropocene Anthropocentric?. In *SHS Web of Conferences* (Vol. 76, p. 01040). EDP Sciences.
46. McNeill, J. R., & Engelke, P. (2016). *The great acceleration: An environmental history of the Anthropocene since 1945*. Harvard University Press.
47. McShane, K. (2007). Anthropocentrism vs. nonanthropocentrism: Why should we care?. *Environmental Values*, 16(2), 169-185.
48. McShane, K. (2013). Ecocentrism. In *Critical environmental politics* (pp. 83-90). Routledge.
49. Moore, B. L. (2017). *Ecological literature and the critique of anthropocentrism*. Springer.
50. Mostafanezhad, M., & Hannam, K. (2016). *Moral encounters in tourism*. Routledge.
51. Moutinho, L. (2000). Trends in tourism. *Strategic management in tourism*, 3-16.
52. Neto, F. (2003, August). A new approach to sustainable tourism development: Moving beyond environmental protection. In *Natural resources forum* (Vol. 27, No. 3, pp. 212-222). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
53. Nikazachenko, A. L., Yudashkina, E. E. E., Vlasov, G. V., Novikova, V. V. E., & Lebedev, K. A. E. (2018). Modern approaches to assess tourism industry-related environment. *Journal of Environmental Management & Tourism*, 9(2 (26)), 298-303.

54. Nixon, R., Mitman, G., Armiero, M., & Emmett, R. S. (2019). The Anthropocene.
55. Papp, Z., & Toth, G. (2022). Recent trends and challenges in the tourism industry. *Sustainability*, 14(2), 621. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14020621>
56. Pigram, J. J. (2000). Tourism and sustainability: a positive trend. *Trends in outdoor recreation, leisure and tourism*, 373-382.
57. Pookhao, N. (2013). Ecotourism Ethics: Anthropocentrism or Ecocentrism. *Journal of Thai Hospitality and Tourism*, 8(1), 31-37.
58. Probyn-Rapsey, F. (2018). Anthropocentrism. *Critical terms for animal studies*, 47-63.
59. Quinn, J. F. (1995). Anthropocentric Modernism and the Search for a Universal Environmental Philosophy. *Dialogue and Universalism*, 5(1), 71-86.
60. Robin, L., & Steffen, W. (2007). History for the Anthropocene. *History Compass*, 5(5), 1694-1719.
61. Rumukumba, L. (2022). The application of Aldo Leopold's land ethic in tourism: A critical review. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 30(2), 1-14.
62. Russell K. Blamey (1997) Ecotourism: The Search for an Operational Definition, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 5:2, 109-130, DOI: 10.1080/09669589708667280
63. Scott, N., Hall, C. M., & Gössling, S. (2015). *Tourism and water: Interactions, impacts, and challenges*. Channel View Publications.
64. Sessions, G. (1987). The deep ecology movement: A review. *Environmental review*, 11(2), 105-125.
65. Sigala, M., & Gretzel, U. (2019). Smart tourism destinations: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Travel Research*, 58(4), 540-563. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287518758914>
66. Sirakaya, E., Sasidharan, V., & Sönmez, S. (1999). Redefining ecotourism: The need for a supply-side view. *Journal of travel research*, 38(2), 168-172.
67. Souto, S. (2023). Sustainable tourism in developing countries: A case study of Brazil. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1-20.
68. Steffen, W., Grinevald, J., Crutzen, P., & McNeill, J. (2011). The Anthropocene: conceptual and historical perspectives. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A: Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Sciences*, 369(1938), 842-867.
69. Steinbrink, M., Frenzel, F., & Koens, K. (2012). Development and globalization of a new trend in tourism. *Slum tourism: Poverty, power and ethics*, 32, 1-17.
70. Thérèse Conway & Mary Cawley (2016): Defining ecotourism: evidence of provider perspectives from an emerging area, *Journal of Ecotourism*, DOI: 10.1080/14724049.2016.1153105
71. Thomas, J. A. (2014). History and biology in the Anthropocene: problems of scale, problems of value. *The American Historical Review*, 119(5), 1587-1607.
72. Tian, X. (2023). Carbon footprint of tourism in China: An input-output analysis. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 321, 127704.
73. Treich, N. (2022). The Dasgupta Review and the problem of anthropocentrism. *Environmental and Resource Economics*, 83(4), 973-997.
74. Trischler, H. (2016). The Anthropocene: A challenge for the history of science, technology, and the environment. *NTM Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Wissenschaften, Technik und Medizin*, 24(3), 309-335.
75. UNTWO. (n.d.). Tourism definitions. United Nations World Tourism Organization. Retrieved from <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-definitions>
76. UNWTO. (1994). Recommendations on tourism statistics. United Nations World Tourism Organization.
77. VYSOCHAN, Oleh et al. Comparative Bibliometric Analysis of the Concepts of “Ecotourism” and “Agrotourism” in the Context of Sustainable Development Economy. *Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism*, [S.l.], v. 13, n. 2, p. 561-571, mar. 2022. ISSN 2068-7729.
78. Wang, D., Li, X., Song, H., & Huang, Z. (2018). Recent advances in smart tourism research: A review of publications from 2015 to 2017. *Journal of Travel Research*, 57(8), 1143-1168. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287518755528>
79. Wang, D., Li, X., Song, H., & Huang, Z. (2022). Smart tourism research: A comprehensive review. *Tourism Management*, 89, 104992. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104992>
80. Weaver, D. (2017). *Tourism management*. John Wiley & Sons.
81. Weaver, D. B. (2006). *Sustainable tourism: Theory and practice*. Butterworth-Heinemann.
82. y Patiño, M. G., Medina, F. X., & Arilla, J. M. P. (2016). New trends in tourism? From globalization to postmodernism. *International Journal of Scientific Management and Tourism*, 2(3).