

**POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP
ECOTOURISM IN BADULLA DISTRICT**

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The Potential Opportunities to Develop Ecotourism in Badulla District

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Abstract

The concept of Ecotourism, which emerged before several decades, is no longer a new jargon to Sri Lanka & it acts as a vehicle for the rapid economic & social development in most destinations. However, available resources, capabilities rules and regulations Eco practices are different from one destination to another. Sri Lanka is an island with a rich cultural heritage, diverse landscapes, and a significant number of wildlife reserves. Badulla is situated in the Uva province of Sri Lanka & a place with cross culture, religious value and better climate, but in tourism industry not in adequate level. Via this research I wish to identify the Potential Opportunities to Development Ecotourism in Badulla District, the problems and obstacles faced by hotel owners and operators when doing ecotourism practices & to identify subjects to overcome those problems in order to promote the Badulla as the niche market for the Ecotourism.

To conduct this research the methodology that followed was the questionnaires to collected primary data from hotels which are approved by the tourist board of Sri Lanka. According to the accommodation guide book (May – October 2009) there are 6 hotels in Badulla region with the relevant secondary data.

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According to the findings through this research there were three hotels that have already entered to the ecotourism. Majorly the Ella Adventure Park, practicing ecotourism in grand level since 6 years. According to the finding they face several obstacles. Such as less attention provided by government, lack of Ecotourism specialist, infrastructure facilities, less promotional programme as the country, big competition, government rules and regulation and high amount of initial cost.

By concluding all the evidence large amount of resources available in Badulla & by that few amount of resources have been utilized by those hotels & most of the other resources are present in under utilize stage. The owners of the hotels are willing to practice the ecotourism in their hotels. So for all there must be central governing body, promote Sri Lanka as Ecotourism destination through BBC T.V, CNN, Al Jaseera and Radio Australia, improve infrastructures and government must give fullest support for Ecotourism are the suggestions overcome those problems.