Sustainable Tourism Development in Nepal: Evaluation andPerspectives

A.M. Boselli, G.U. Caravello, A. Seipoini[1] and A. Baroni

Instituto di lgiene-University di Podova, Via Loredan, 18 – 35131 PADOVA, Italy
[1]Instituto di Chimica Industriale, Universita di Padora, Via Marzolo, 09 – 35131 PADOVA, Italy

ABSTRACT Nepal is a little country situated in the central part of the Himalayas. Although the country is rich in extraordinary natural beauty, its morphology hinders development and there are few sources of raw materials. Closed to the outside world until 1952, Nepal has had, in recent years, an extremely weak and unstable economic growth: at present the pro-capita income is US$170 p.a. and nearly seventy-one percent of the population lives below the poverty line. Agriculture is the main economic activity making up fifty-eight percent of the Gross National Product and employing seventy-nine percent of the workforce. With the opening of the country to the outside world, tourist activity is set to become the main source of income: in the Himalayan district of Khumbu, for example, more than sixty-five percent of the families depend economically on tourism. In 1991, 292, 995 tourists visited Nepal, with an increase of about one hundred and sixty-seven percent over the last ten years. This rapid development of tourism, has, on one side, produced positive effects, including an increase in income of the population, but, on the other hand, it is causing profound social, environment and cultural modification through migrations, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, pollution, cultural contamination tec. Therefore, it is necessary to promote, in Nepal, policies for sustainable touristic development or, alternatively planned and regulated to control the impact on nature and local populations in order to conserve the resources on which it is based.