HOW CAN AN ECO LODGE BECOME A SUSTAINABLE AND SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS MODEL: ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

Starting from the worldwide need for a change towards a more sustainable development under an economic, social and environmental point of view, this paper attempts to analyze and explain how ecotourism and ecolodges in particular can help such a need.

This work in fact, which is primarily focused on the rather new concept of eco-accommodations, wants to understand if and how they are really able to guarantee a sustainable tourism development (with regards to the specific destination where they are implemented) and which factors are predominant and necessary to implement this type of business.

The main objective of this research is to analyze and discover whether and how an ecolodge can be considered feasible under an economic, social and environmental point of view. The term feasible in this context is meant as an overall process where the various aspects that are analysed (economical, environmental and social) fit all together in order to generate a wholesome business model which is not exclusively beneficiary for the entrepreneur but also for the local community and the surrounding ecosystem.

Initially it is important to clarify the concepts of ecotourism and eco-accommodations, identify the common features they need to have and analyze them under different perspectives through the real examples provided. This part is conducted using the previous literature and case study available. Afterwards some open-ended question interviews are performed to different eco-accommodations managers and owners in order to have some in-depth knowledge and as a result a business plan is executed.

Thanks to previous research and results it is possible to state whether and under which circumstances eco-resorts are feasible considering the social, environmental and economic features.