



Exploring Eco-Tourism and its Implementation

Development Alternatives (DA) conducted a workshop under a project with the National Mission on Himalayan Studies (NMHS) on 25th April 2018, at Mandi, Himachal Pradesh. This was an initiative to begin interactions with local stakeholders of the state, for developing an eco-tourism cluster. The key objectives were to understand the root-level eco-tourism scenario in Himachal Pradesh to structure the project, and to solicit feedback and suggestions on the same by providing a common platform for discussion. The expected outcomes of the workshop were to encourage deliberation on the objectives of the project, tap into the participants' detailed knowledge-base, and provide useful suggestions to the onsite implementation of eco-tourism initiatives. Around 20 participants contributed to this process, recommending potential sites for DA to intervene in. Acting on these inputs, the DA team visited a few sites, such as Thatta village and Parashar Lake, to interact with local people and gauge the potential of intervention in these areas. The District Forest Officer of Mandi, who was also an attendee at the consultation, ensured cooperation from the department in carrying out the proposed intervention.