

Carrying Capacity Study of Coastal Tourism in Kumarakom, Kerala.

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ABSTRACT

Kumarakom Panchayath falls under Kottayam taluk and the Pallom development block of the Kottayam district. At present 61.22 Hectare of land is categorized as Resort area. Due to rapid growth of tourism, there will be a higher demand for land which will result in the faster development of the remaining resorts. It is assumed that over and above 61.22 ha of already committed resort areas an additional 40.44 ha of erennial crop with settlement will also be utilized for resort development and related activities. For Kumarakom panchayath a future scenario (Year 2011) of spatial structure has been worked out here based on the existing scenario and the envisaged changes in the land use structure. In addition to the projected population of 27,300, the tourist equivalent population also has to be considered for evaluating all central facilities requirement as well as utilities service requirement for Kumarakom panchayath. This means Kumarakom Panchayath is loaded with 42,000 (27,300 + 14,700) population instead of 27,300 natural population for providing services and facilities. The holding capacity of 91.5 ha of resort area in Kumarakom Panchayath estimated till 2011 will be 3660 beds (40 x 91.5 beds). The holding capacity of tourist beds in Aymanam and Arpookara panchayaths will be 20% of 3660 i.e. 732 beds. Thus, total holding capacity will be approximately 4392 beds. Usual tourist staff ratio of a luxury resort of three to five stars is 1:3. Therefore, population equivalent for a tourist is assumed as 4. This means for a holding capacity 3660 tourist in Kumarakom panchayaths, population equivalent of tourist will be 14, 640 (3660 x 4). Various suggestions regarding restricted development and environmental protection are suggested through this study.

Keywords: *capacity study, coastal tourism, holding capacity*