

**Site suitability analysis for the evaluation of adventure tourism
along the proposed Kohsar Tourism Highway**

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Tourism is a sector in which people travel to locations for professional or personal reasons. It is generally divided into many types depending upon where the tourists are travelling and for what purpose. This study focuses on Adventure tourism in mountains. Adventure tourism is among the rapidly growing types of tourism and a significant component of the tourism industry. Mountains are exceptionally alluring destinations for adventure tourism because they provide a variety of activities in landscape that is rich in both literal and symbolic representations of adventure. The goal of this study was to classify suitable sites for adventure tourism along the proposed Kohsar Tourism Highway into 3 categories; skilled adventure tourism (SAT), mass adventure tourism (MAT) and experiential adventure tourism (EAT). Skilled adventure tourism (SAT) is only for true adventure seekers that live for challenge and excitement for example zip-lining, bungee jumping, hiking and skiing. Experiential Adventure Tourism (EAT) comprises of participants that are eager to learn, enjoy and experience a connection with nature for example camping, multi-day hiking, bird watching and horse riding. Mass Adventure Tourism (MAT) is the type with least level of risk and low outdoor skills for example one-day hiking and biking. The evaluation factors include resource condition, ecological sensitivity, safety condition and difficulty condition. The results show that 16% of the study area has good resource conditions, most difficult conditions exist in 4.5% of the study area, 25.5% study area has safest conditions and high ecologically sensitive areas cover 4% of the study area. After the integration of these conditions suitability values of each condition were evaluated for different types of adventure tourism and categorized the study area into skilled, mass and experiential adventure tourism. 4.5 % of the study area is suitable for skilled adventure tourism, 53.7% is suitable for experiential adventure tourism and 40.8% is suitable for mass adventure tourism. Ayubia,

Khanspur, Riala, Changla gali, Chowain, Bhalgran, Mang, Kot, Pallandri, Cheeras and parts of Sehnsa Tehsil in AJK (Azad Jammu and Kashmir) are suitable for skilled adventure. Murree, Bhangal, Kuza Gali, Kohati, Mouri, Bhamrot Syedan, Beor, Bhagoon, Plahter, Kohatti, Dewal Shareef, etc are suitable for Experiential adventure. Moreover, a wide range of areas including Murree, Patriata, Ghora Gali, Samli, Angoori, Kahuta, Rawat, Mang, Panjar, Kotli Sattian, Lower Topa, etc. are suitable for Mass adventure tourism. This study has provided a framework for tourism scholars to look more into adventure tourism because despite being a newcomer to tourism industry it has a great potential for development, employment generation and economic prosperity for the local people.