

IUCN Pakistan Programme

**Northern Areas Strategy for
Sustainable Development**

Background Paper

Sustainable Tourism and Cultural Heritage

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BPSP	Biodiversity Planning Support Programme
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCD	Convention to Combat Desertification
COP	Conference of the Parties
GBF	Global Biodiversity Forum
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
R-GBF	Regional Session of the Global Biodiversity Forum
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Technological, Technical and Scientific Advice
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation
UNDP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

FOREWORD

The Northern Areas have a unique and critical role to play in the sustainable development of Pakistan. Although they span a relatively small geographical area, the Northern Areas serve as a vital catchment for the Indus River, upon which a majority of Pakistan's irrigated agriculture and hydroelectricity depends. The Northern Areas also contain the nation's most important natural forests, extensive mineral reserves, and a wealth of biodiversity. Dramatic scenery, some of the world's highest mountains, and a rich cultural and archaeological heritage make the Northern Areas one of the most visited tourist destinations in the country.

Over the last several decades, however, many of the Northern Areas' natural resources have come under increasing pressure, as a result of a growing human population and the opening of the Karakoram Highway. At the same time, it has become increasingly recognised that the isolated nature of many of the region's communities, coupled with the Northern Areas' high-altitude and fragile environment, poses special constraints and challenges to development. Perhaps more so than in any other part of Pakistan, there is a need in the Northern Areas to ensure that social and environmental considerations are fully integrated into the development process.

In response to these concerns, the Northern Areas Administration began the preparation of a Northern Areas Strategy for Sustainable Development in 1999, with the financial assistance of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation; technical support has been provided by IUCN–The World Conservation Union. The Strategy addresses a broad range of social, economic and environmental issues, and seeks to provide a comprehensive policy framework for the sustainable development of the region. It responds directly to the provisions and recommendations of the National Conservation Strategy, adopted by the Government of Pakistan in 1992.

In parallel, *The State of the Environment and Development in the Northern Areas* summarises in a single volume the key information gathered during the preparation of the NASSD. It is the first report of its kind to be produced for the Northern Areas, which provides a succinct, up-to-date and readily accessible analysis of the status of the most important environment and development sectors in the Northern Areas, including information on major trends and issues, the responses taken by both government and civil society to date, and strategic options for the future. It also provides a baseline against which future change can be measured and establishes the context and foundations for the Northern Areas Strategy for Sustainable Development.

During early consultations at the tehsil level, and with key governmental and non-governmental organizations 16 areas of intervention were identified as being critical for the NASSD. These include sectors like: water; agriculture; forestry; biodiversity; rangelands and livestock; the private sector; energy; urban

environment; and cultural heritage and sustainable tourism. In addition, some crosscutting themes were identified as crucial to each sector, including population, poverty and environment; communication for sustainable development; environmental education; NGOs; gender, environment and development; environmental health; and governance.

To address the needs of each of these areas, basic information was gathered through consultations and literature reviews. This data was analysed through background papers commissioned on each of the sectors and themes identified. The draft of each paper was shared with the larger community of stakeholders of the NASSD as well as experts in the relevant field of knowledge.

The papers follow a similar format: analysis of the current situation; issues; past and present initiatives in the sectors and thematic areas along with the lessons learnt; stakeholders; and recommended policy and action measures. The authors have also addressed cross-sectoral linkages and environmental concerns for the sake of more integration in planning for sustainable development.

There were constraints to developing these Background Papers and in some cases these hurdles were only partially overcome. These included the fragmented and scattered nature of information, the prevalent culture of not sharing information, contradictory and unreliable data, lack of thinking on cross-sectoral linkages and integrated planning, and lack of expertise in developing linkages with the environment.

Parts of the information of the papers were then incorporated into the State of the Environment and Development (SoED) and the main strategy, i.e., NASSD. However, since the Papers contain a wealth of extremely useful information, a decision was taken to produce a series of NASSD Background Papers.

Considering the need and importance of timely sharing information with the stakeholders, these papers are being produced without extensive editing. The authors have sole responsibility for the views expressed and data presented.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tourism sector is one of the major contributors to the economy of the Northern Areas, though no official statistics are available but it is estimated that more than 50% of International tourists arriving in Pakistan visit Northern Areas. The meeting place of three mighty mountain ranges – Karakoram, Hindu Kush and Himalayas – Northern areas are considered trekkers and mountaineers paradise with five peaks higher than 8000 meters including the world second highest peak – K-2.

Northern Areas have a rich cultural heritage including a large number of archaeological sites and historical buildings, depicting the long, turbulent history and diverse culture of the area. The cultural heritage not only serve as a sense of identity and belonging for the local people but can also be a source of economic benefits for the inhabitants of the area through the promotion of cultural tourism and sale of local handicrafts.

There are many agencies and organizations working for promotion of tourism and preservation of cultural heritage of the area. These include government agencies (Ministry of Tourism, PTDC, Northern Areas Tourism Development Board); private sector (hotels, tour operators, guides & porters); international organizations and NGOs (IUCN, WWF, AKCSP, KADO, AFP, ACP etc); and the local community.

Despite all these efforts, the goal of sustainable tourism development and conservation of cultural heritage of Northern Areas can only be achieved if all the stakeholders address various issues faced by the sector in coordinated manner. If this is not done, it can have serious consequences for the sector, which will ultimately, have negative impacts on the economy and society of Northern Areas. The major challenge for the policy makers and planers is how to promote tourism in the area in a sustainable fashion, with minimum possible negative impacts on local culture and natural environment i.e. to achieve a balance between profits and conservation.

The objective of this paper is to identify the issues faced by the sector and suggest practical and impermeable recommendations for resolution of these issues. The paper would untimely feed into the Northern Area Strategy for Sustainable Development (NASSD) – the sustainable development framework for Northern Areas – being formulated by the Northern Areas Administration with the technical assistance of IUCN Pakistan.

Some of the issues identified in the paper are:

- m Policy formulation and implementation issues;
- m Lack of authentic tourism statistics;
- m Inadequate infrastructure;
- m Lack of security;
- m Improper marketing;
- m Lack of human resource development;
- m Lack of understanding about Ecotourism;

- m Environmental issues;
- m Preservation of cultural heritage

The following are the suggested recommendations for addressing the issues identified above:

- m Reforming the policy formulation and implementation mechanisms;
- m Tourism statistics and data collection;
- m Human resource development;
- m Communication and transport;
- m Efficient marketing and product development;
- m Ensuring tourism friendly environment;
- m Proper utilization of parks & protected areas:
- m Development of 'Ecotourism';
- m Addressing environmental issues;
- m Northern Areas Polo Festival;
- m Linking cultural resources with economic activities;
- m Establishment of 'Artisans Village';
- m Protection of Architectural Heritage;
- m Establishment of 'Local Languages Promotion Authority or Academy';
- m Establishment of Northern Areas Arts Council;
- m Pakistan Television Gilgit Centre;
- m Protection and Promotion of Archaeological Sites; &
- m Establishment of museums in Northern Areas

1. INTRODUCTION

The Northern Areas are one of the main tourism destinations in Pakistan both for foreign and domestic tourists. The natural beauty, some of the highest mountain peaks in the world, the largest glaciers outside the polar region, the rich cultural heritage, the remnants of the long history in the form of archaeological sites are the main tourism assets of the area. Several mountaineering and trekking expeditions visit the area every year (see table on page 13). Tourism is one of the major sectors of the economy of Northern Areas providing employment and income to a large segment of the population. Since most of the tourism in Northern Areas is based on its natural assets – mountains, glaciers, rivers – the challenge for the policy makers and planners is how to develop tourism in the area with minimum negative impacts on natural environment, on which the whole industry is based i.e. how to make the tourism development process in the area ‘sustainable’. Other important considerations such as the impact of tourism on local culture, infrastructure development etc also has to be taken into account.

The Northern Areas have a rich and diverse cultural heritage in the form of arts and crafts, built and archaeological heritage, an indication of the various influences that the area received during its long and turbulent history. The world famous rock carving and inscriptions discovered in the area – from prehistoric to the modern – times have helped in reconstructing the history of this region. The preservation, conservation and promotion of cultural heritage of Northern Areas is important not only because it gives a sense of identity and belonging to the people of the area, but it can also be used for economic benefits through development of cultural tourism.

If the tourism infrastructure development and the inflow of tourism is left unregulated and unplanned and nothing is done for conservation of the cultural heritage of the area, it can have serious repercussions, in the shape of destruction of natural environment on which ultimately the whole tourism industry is based. Unregulated tourism can also have negative impacts on the local culture and the people, leading to, conflicts and social unrest.

This background paper attempts to identify and list these and other issues and suggests the way ahead for addressing the issues identified (in consultation with the major stakeholders through workshops and meetings) with the main focus on environmental and sustainability aspects.

The background paper, would feed into the Northern Area Strategy for Sustainable Development (NASSD) – a strategic policy framework for sustainable development of the Northern Areas – being developed by the Planning and Development Department, Northern Areas through NACS Support Project with technical assistance of IUCN-The World Conservation Union. The rationale for NASSD can be traced back to The World Conservation Strategy (WCS), formulated in 1980 under the auspices of United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and IUCN-The World Conservation Union. The strategy focused on the rationalized

development and conservation of natural resources. Pakistan, like many other countries, proceeded with the formulation of a National Conservation Strategy (NCS) – which is a major recommendation of WCS – in 1992, with the assistance of IUCN-The World Conservation Union. Thereafter, it was realized that the implementation of the NCS would depend on the active participation of the provinces. In this connection, the NWFP took the initiative, and was the first province in Pakistan to compile the Sarhad Provincial Conservation Strategy (SPCS) in 1996. Later on, Balochistan and Northern Areas also followed the example set by NWFP, initiating work on the formulation of Balochistan Conservation Strategy (BCS) and Northern Areas Strategy for Sustainable Development (NASSD) respectively.

The NACS Support Project has identified priority areas and sectors to be included in NASSD through broad based consultation with the people of Northern Areas – Cultural Heritage & Sustainable Tourism being one of the priority areas identified.

1.1. The Area

The Northern Areas lie between 34° 40' and 37° North latitude and 72° 30' and 78° East longitude in Karakoram – Himalayan region, spread over 72,496 sq. Kilometres. The population of the area, according to the 1981 census, is 573,614. Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas, Government of Pakistan administers the Northern Areas through the Chief Secretary Northern Areas. Gilgit is the administrative headquarter of the Northern Areas, which is divided into five districts – Gilgit, Baltistan, Diamer, Ghizer and Ganche – for administrative purposes. The Northern Areas Legislative Council is the elected legislative body with the Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas acting as its Chief Executive.

1.1.1. Mountains

The Northern Areas are considered mountaineering and trekkers paradise due its unique geography. Three of the world's greatest mountain regions – The

Table 1: The Highest Peaks of Northern Areas

S. No.	Peaks	Altitude (meters)	Range	World Ranking
1.	K-2 (Chogori)	8,611	Karakoram	2
2.	Nanga Parbat	8,125	Himalaya	9
3.	Gasherbrum I	8,068	Karakoram	11
4.	Broad Peak	8,047	Karakoram	12
5.	Gasherbrum II	8,035	Karakoram	14
6.	Gasherbrum III	7,952	Karakoram	15
7.	Gasherbrum IV	7,925	Karakoram	17
8.	Disteghil Sar	7,885	Karakoram	20
9.	Kunyang Chhish	7,852	Karakoram	22
10.	Masherbrum NE	7,821	Karakoram	24
11.	Rakaposhi	7,788	Karakoram	27
12.	Batura	7,785	Karakoram	28

Source: www.tourism.gov.pk/mountaineering.html

Karakoram, Himalayas and Hindu Kush meet in this area. Five of the world's fourteen peaks higher than 8,000 meters including the world's second highest peak – K-2, 29 peaks over 7,500 meters and 101 peaks over 7,000 meters are located here. Following table lists the fourteen highest peaks of Northern Areas:

1.1.2. Glaciers

The Northern Areas also have some of the largest glaciers outside the polar region including:

S. No.	Name of Glaciers	Area (sq km ²)	Length (km)
1.	Siachen	685	72
2.	Baltoro	529	62
3.	Biafo	383	65
4.	Hispar	343	49
5.	Panmah	254	42
6.	Chongo Lungma	238	44
7.	Batura	220	56
8.	Khurdopin & Yukshin Garden	135	37
9.	Braldu	123	36
10.	Barpu	123	33
11.	Yaqghil	114	31
12.	Virjerab	112	38
13.	Mohmil	68	26
14.	Gasherbrum	67	25
15.	Malangutti	53	22

Source : Mol, 1991

Some of the major tourist destinations in Northern Areas are:

Gilgit, Yasin Valley, Phandar, Rama Lake, Naltar, Hunza (the famous Baltit Fort is located at Karimabad, Hunza), Buddhist Rock Carving (mainly concentrated in and around Chilas), Nagar, Gulmit, Skardu, Sadpara Lake, Deosai & Khunjerab National Parks, Kachura Lake, Shigar, Khaplu, Hushe and Shimshal Valleys

1.1.3. Indus River

Indus River – the great trans-Himalayan river of South Asia and one of the longest rivers in the world, having a length of 1,800 miles (2,900 kilometres) – rises in south-western Tibet at an altitude of about 18,000 feet (5,500 metres). The river's annual flow is about 272 billion cubic yards (207 billion cubic metres) – twice that of the Nile and three times that of the Tigris and Euphrates combined. The river's name comes from the Sanskrit word Sindhu ("river" or "stream"). It is mentioned in the Rigveda, the earliest (c. 1500 BC) chronicles and hymns of the Aryan peoples of ancient India, and is the source of the country's name.

The Northern Areas form the upper drainage basin of Indus River, contributing three fourth of the total discharge. For about 200 miles the Indus flows northwest, crossing the south-eastern boundary of Jammu and Kashmir at about 15,000 feet. A short way beyond Leh, in Ladakh, it is joined on its left by its first tributary, the Zaskar. Continuing for 150 miles in the same direction, the Indus is joined by its notable tributary the Shyok on the right bank. After its confluence with the Shyok

and up to the Kohistan region, it is fed by mighty glaciers on the slopes of the Karakoram Range, the Nanga Parbat massif, and the Kohistan highlands.

The Shigar joins the Indus on the right bank near Skardu in Baltistan. The Gilgit, farther down, is another right-bank tributary, joining it at Bunji. Some miles farther downstream, the Astor River joins as a left-bank tributary. The Indus then flows west, crosses the Kashmir border, and turns south and southwest to enter Pakistan. There it skirts around the Nanga Parbat massif (26,660 feet) in gorges as deep as 15,000 to 17,000 feet and 12 to 16 miles wide. Trails cling grimly to precipitous slopes overlooking the river from elevations of 4,000 to 5,000 feet.

1.1.4. Karakoram Highway (KKH) – The Silk Route

The Karakoram Highway – 805 kilometres dual carriage all weather road – connecting Rawalpindi/Islamabad with China's Xinjiang province is the Northern Areas link to the rest of Pakistan. KKH starts from Havelian and winds through Abbottabad-Mansehra-Thakot-Besham-Pattan-Sazin-Chilas-Gilgit-Hunza to the Chinese Frontier across the 4,733 metres high Khunjerab Pass. The road built by the Frontier Works Organization (FWO) of Pakistan Army in association with the Chinese experts and technicians has been described as a marvel of civil engineering and even as "the Eighth Wonder of the World." Completed in 15 years (1962- 78), it has been forced through some of the world's toughest terrain. The road not only opens up the Northern Areas to trade and travel but also provides easy access to hitherto closed regions, connected by jeep or goat tracks (PTDC, 2000).

Apart from its strategic importance, KKH is also historically significant since it follows closely that segment of the ancient silk route, which passed through the Northern Areas. The Silk Route connected Europe, Central Asia, China, Northern Areas and India. It was not only a major trading route but was also used by pilgrims and explorers for travelling to India, China and Central Asia. Buddhist monks from India spread the teachings of Buddhism in China and South East Asia through the Silk Route.

1.1.5. Forests and Agriculture

In Northern Areas, forests occur between 750 to 3,900 meters and consists, primarily of Conifers. Based on the rainfall and moisture conditions the forests of Northern Areas can be classified into four categories: Sub-tropical Forests: occurring at the height of 900 to 1500 meters, the main species in these forests are Pistacia Matica, Pistacia Khinjak (Pista), Olea Cuspidate (Wild Olive), Dodonaea Viscosa (Sanata), Reptonia Buifolia, Artemisia, Saccharum Spontaneum and Ariticasp. Temperate Forests: occurring at the height of 1,500 to 3,600 meters, the main species are Cedrus Deodora, Pilea Morida, Pinus Gerardiana, Abies Pindrow and Juniper Nicropoda. Sub-Alpine Forests: These forests occur at the height of 3,300 to 3,800 meters and primarily consists of A. Pindrow, A. Spectabilis, P. Wallichiana, Betula Utclaus, Salix and Dwarf Junipers. Alpine Scrub: Above the Sub-Alpine Forests, patchy scrubs are found extensively throughout the Northern Areas at the height of 3,600 to 3,900 meters.

Main crops of Northern Areas consists of Wheat, Maize, Barley, Potato and vegetables. Fruit trees are also planted in the valleys of Baltistan, Hunza and Yasin. Common fruits of the area include Apricots, Almonds, Pomegranate, Grapes, Peaches and Mulberry.

1.1.6. Wildlife

The major wildlife species found in Northern Areas include: Marco Polo Sheep, Markhor, Ibex, Urial, Blue Sheep, Snow Leopard, Black Bear, brown Himalayan Bear, Lynx, Wolf Fox, Partidge, Chikor, Eagle, Vulture and Falcon.

1.2. People

The population of Northern Areas is as varied as its natural environment and reflects a rich legacy of cultural change, migrations and conquests over the thousands years. In Baltistan the main ethnic group – the Baltis – belong to Central Asian-Asiatic stock, closely related to Tibetans and Ladakhis. Elsewhere in the Indus valley the inhabitants are of Indo-European Aryan descent. In Hunza the biggest ethnic group is Burusho of central Hunza. In Gilgit and Chilas, Shinas are the main ethnic group, while to the south Kohistanis and Gujjars also live in significant numbers. Other major ethnic groups in Northern Areas include: Wakhis, Dommas, and Kashmiris.

1.2.1. Languages

The Northern Areas show the most intricate pattern and diversity of languages. The linguistics experts broadly divide the many languages spoken by the local inhabitants into two categories: Dardic and non-Dardic languages. A brief description of the major local languages (both Dardic and Non-Dardic) is given below:

1.2.1.1. Dardic Languages

Khowar

Although it is the main language of Chitral – spoken by the ‘Kho’ the most important tribe of Chitral – Khowar speakers can also be found in Yasin and in some parts of Gilgit.

Shina

It is the major language spoken in the Gilgit valley, Palas and Astor. Shina speakers can also be found in Hunza, Ishkoman and Baltistan. It is spoken in many different dialects such as Gilgit dialect, Palas Dialect, Tangir Dialect etc.

Maiyan

It is the least known of all Dardic languages, spoken in Kandia, Bankar, Patan and Indus Kohistan area.

1.2.1.2. Non-Dardic Languages

Burushaski

It is the major language of Hunza and Nagar and is also spoken in some parts of Yasin. Burushaski is a unique language and have no established relationship with any of the other languages spoken in the area. It is still an unwritten language, but some of the European scholars have used Roman script for writings in Burushaski.

Domaaki

It is the language of Domas – A community of musicians and smiths – settled in Hunza. This Indo-Aryan language is now a dying language because the new

generation of Domas communicate mainly through Burushaski and Shina – the dominant languages of the area.

Wakhi

A few thousand people in the upper Hunza valley and upper Ishkoman speak this language. The majority of Wakhi speakers live in upper Oxus valley, which is under the territorial control of Afghanistan and Central Asian republics.

Balti

Balti – a Tibetan idiom close to Ladakhi – is spoken in the western Baltistan in the areas around Skardu.

Apart from these local languages Urdu, being the national language of Pakistan, is widely understood, while some of the settlers also speak Punjabi, Pushto and Gujarati.

1.2.2. History

The Northern Areas of Pakistan has a long and turbulent history. Despite being almost cut off from the rest of the world due to its geography, the people of the area never remained isolated and were influenced by the events taking place in the Central Asia, India, Persia and China. This area has been known as 'Dardistan' and 'Boloristan' in the historical works. The British historians coined the term Dardistan – to describe the ethnically and culturally diverse inhabitants of the area as one homogenous group – based on the accounts of the Herodotus and Sanskrit texts, which refer to the people of the area as 'Dards'. The locals never call or have called themselves Dards, except for a brief period in medieval times, where the inscriptions point to Dard kings in the Kishanganga valley. The term Boloristan is probably linked to Patola Shahi rulers of the area who were called Bolo or Balor by the Arabs and hence the area Boloristan.

The people of the area are descendents of the earliest Indo –Aryan tribes, who migrated from Trans-Pamir region between 2000 and 1500 BC, and settled in the northern mountain valleys – the present day Chitral and Northern Areas.

A brief historical description of the area, from pre-history to the modern times – based, to a large extent, on the rock engravings and inscriptions, discovered at various parts of Northern Areas – is given below.

1.2.2.1. Pre-History (The Rock Art People)

The earliest inhabitants of this area – their history can be traced back to about 5th millennium B.C. – can be termed the "People of the Rock Art" as it was they who started the tradition of rock engravings in the Northern Areas, which was continued by their successors up to the modern times. They were hunters and food gatherers, hunting collectively and living in rock shelters and dried up river channels. They used to cross the river Indus by rafts or logs with no knowledge of boat making. Animal skin was used as protection from cold and in latter stages, they developed family system with proper roles for men, women and children. They used to practice a religion based on the fear and worship of mountains.

1.2.2.2. The Megalith Builders

The next group of people to inhabit and dominate this area is known as the Megalith Builders. These newcomers, with direct links to Chitral and Swat, introduced the art of building huge megaliths and pit grave burial. They used to practice the art of stone cutting and used copper, bronze, iron, gold and silver for making tools and other objects, which suggests economic activity. They developed terrace fields along the slopes of the mountains, which were irrigated through cutting channels from rivers and streams. Use of domesticated cattle and horses was also prevalent but not common.

1.2.2.3. Dardic People

Herodotus in his accounts of the area mentions 'Dardic' people living in the present day Northern Areas during the reign of Achaemenian Empire (4th Century BC). He mentions the subjugation of these people to the Achaemenian Empire. They paid a tribute to the empire and served in its armies along with the Gandharians and other tribes. The evidence suggests that there was some sort of political state or states of the people described as Dards or Dardic by Herodotus. These people mined and traded gold, which helped the area in becoming centre of economic and trading activities and opening of a trade route from Central Asia and China to India through this area.

1.2.2.4. Scytho – Parthians

Various rock inscriptions around Chilas suggest that the Scythians from Central Asia had established their rule in this area around first B.C. Their first king – Moga – defeated a local ruler Gopadasa, who was probably a Buddhist. The rule of Scythians resulted in the introduction of Kharoshti script and Taxila style stupas into the area and establishment of close trade relations with Taxila. The Scythian rule lasted about two generations – between 1 BC and 1 AD - followed by the Gondophares branch of Parthians. The influence of Parthians on local culture is evident from the rock carvings of this era, which has a distinct Parthian touch and depicts themes totally new to this area such as Parthian soldiers and chariots etc.

1.2.2.5. Kushans

Kushans, after extending their empire to Central Asia, Kabul Valley and Indus Valley, moved north – to establish their rule in this region – in the beginning of the 1st Century AD. The Kushans used gold, mined in the area, to engage in trade with Central Asia and China, which lead to the opening of many silk routes, at least one of them passed through the present day Northern Areas. The Kushans brought stability and prosperity to the area and Buddhism flourished under their rule.

1.2.2.6. Post-Kushan Period

In the beginning of the 3rd century AD, this area came under the control of Sassanians from Persia. A branch of Kushans – the Kidar Kushans – still ruled the area but as subordinates to the Sassanians. The culture of the area was greatly influenced by India; Gupta Brahmi gradually replaced Kharoshti script, as illustrated by the rock carvings of the period. During this period, Buddhism continued to flourish and the area was a popular route between China, India and Central Asia, used by both traders and pilgrims. Towards the end of the 4th century AD the influence of Sassanians started to wane.

1.2.2.7. Huns

The White Huns – warrior tribe or tribes from Central Asia – conquered Kabul Valley, Indus Valley and Northern Areas in the early 6th century AD. They ruled through several local Shina and Burushiki kings called ‘Rajas’, subordinate to the Hun Emperor. Huns were non-Buddhist and hence the official patronage of Buddhism stopped during their reign, but the people of the area continued to practice Buddhism.

1.2.2.8. Medieval to Modern Times

As the Hun power declined, the local rajas got independent. The area was ruled from 612 AD to 750 AD by Patola Shahi dynasty. The Patola Shahi’s were Buddhist and had close ties with Chinese empire. Patola were called ‘Pa lo la’ by Chinese and ‘Balol’ or ‘Balor’ by the Arabs who referred to the area as Boloristan.

After the Patola Shahi dynasty, most of the area came under the control of the Turks – deposed from their Central Asian home by the Arab conquest. These Turks were, most probably, fire worshippers, while the people at large still practiced Buddhism. Locals described as ‘Dards’ in the rock inscriptions ruled the northern Kishanganga valley. This is the only instance of the people of the area using the term ‘Dards’ for themselves.

Later the Skardu valley came under the control of Tibetans for sometime. The following dynasties ruled different parts of Northern Areas during Medieval times (from 7th century AD to early 19th century AD):

- m Tarkhans of Gilgit.
- m Maglots of Nagar
- m Ayash of Hunza
- m Burushai of Punial
- m Makpons of Skardu
- m Amachas of Shigar
- m Yabgus of Khaplu

A prince from Badakhshan started the Tarkhan dynasty. The Tarkhan rulers converted to Islam in early 8th century AD while the population continued to be Buddhist until they converted to Islam after a few decades through the preaching of Sufi saints from Central Asia.

The founders of Maglot dynasty of Nagar and Ayash dynasty of Hunza were both Tarkhan princess. The Makpon dynasty of Skardu originated in early 13th century AD after a long Tibetan rule. The dynasty is traced back to a local ‘Fakir’ Makpon Bokha. A conflicting account refers to Ibrahim Shah from Kashmir who established his rule in the area and started Makpon dynasty. Mir Shamsuddin Iraqi spread Islam in this area in 16th century.

In Medieval times, the area remained outside the Mughal control. Although Akbar conquered Kashmir and parts of Baltistan, Gilgit continued to have an independent status until the Northern Areas came under the control of Dogra rulers of Kashmir in mid 19th century. The British created Gilgit Agency and appointed a political agent, at the end of 19th century under a lease agreement with Maharaja Hari Singh

of Kashmir, to counter the threat of Russian empire. Gilgit was returned to Dogra Maharaja on 1st August 1947.

The people of Gilgit and Baltistan, reacting to the Dogra Maharaja's accession to India started an armed struggle against him. The struggle, led by Gilgit Scouts and Muslim officers of Kashmir State Forces, managed to take control of the areas comprising Northern Areas and Azad Kashmir by January 1, 1949 when the ceasefire was announced.

The Northern Areas became a part of Pakistan in 1949.

1.3. Archaeological Sites

Northern Areas has been influenced by various cultures and civilizations through out history. Its unique location – the main trading route between India, China and Central Asia (Silk Route) passed through the area – not only made it a meeting place for traders and pilgrims, but also attracted emperors and conquerors from Central Asia and Persia. They influenced the local culture and left their imprints in the form of rock carvings and inscriptions. Numerous sites from various periods – depicting the rich archaeological heritage - have been discovered all over the area, mainly concentrated along the silk route, while many more sites remain to be excavated and explored. The history of Northern Areas has been reconstructed based on this 'Rock Art'.

Some of the important archaeological sites and artefacts from the Northern Areas are described below:

1.3.1. Chilas

Chilas was the meeting point for the pilgrims and traders from China, Central Asia and India. Consequently, a large number of inscriptions and engravings – on various rocks and boulders – have been discovered in and around Chilas town on both sides of River Indus. The earliest engravings are from pre-historic times (around 5th Millennium BC) depicting the forms of animals, birds, humans, hunting scenes and hand and foot impressions.

These pictorial engravings and inscriptions in Kharoshti, Brahmi, and Chinese (at Thalpan) continued through different periods up to the medieval times. Gandhara, Tibet, Parthia, China and Central Asia influenced the rock art at different times. In Chilas, engravings and inscriptions from Scythian, Parthian, Khushan, Huna, and Patola Shahi periods have been discovered. In the later periods, the themes changed from simple hunting scenes to battle scenes, pictures of soldiers and kings, Buddhist monks and stupas.

The main sites of these rock carvings at Chilas are: Thalpan, Ziarat (near Thalpan) various sites in and near Chilas town on both sides of river Indus, Thor and Butogah.

1.3.2. Shin Nala

At Shin Nala (42 Kilometres from Chilas) there is Buddhist complex, complete with images of Buddha and stupas. This complex is from the early Buddhist period. Most of the carvings in the complex belong to 4th/5th century A.D.

1.3.3. Alam Bridge

There are several inscriptions on the rocks, near the Alam Bridge, in Indian script (Kharoshti, Brahmi), representing the Indian influence on the area. The figural drawings are mostly animal carvings and Stupas, showing Central Asian influence, particularly in case of animal depiction.

1.3.4. Gilgit

In Gilgit there are several archaeological sites including the carved image of Buddha (the Kargah Buddha), the Noorpur stupas and a stupa locally known as Mughal Minar. Besides the above-mentioned sites, many other archaeological remains – mostly rock carvings – can be seen in area, most important site being Keno Daas – Just outside Gilgit, towards Hunza.

Danyor Inscription is located on the left bank of Gilgit River on Gilgit-Hunza Road. It is a huge boulder bearing inscriptions from 7th/8th century A.D. It is the only archaeological site in Northern Areas, which is protected under the Pakistan Antiquities Act.

1.3.5. Hunza

The most important site of the area is called the ‘Sacred Rock of Hunza’, situated about two kilometres from Ganesh village on the KKH.

1.3.6. Skardu

One of the most important sites of the area is known as ‘Manthal Rock’ engraved with Buddhist inscriptions in Tibetan and several Buddha figures. This gigantic rock shows the influence of Tibetan rule in the area.

Similar inscriptions from the Buddhist era can be seen on the rocks near Satpara Lake.

1.3.7. Shigar Valley

Many archaeological remains, including rock carvings and walled structures have been discovered in the valley. The most important site is a Buddhist monastery, paintings and carvings. The approximate date of these remains is 4th – 5th century A.D.

1.3.8. Astor Valley

A good number of archaeological sites can be seen in this area. Though the valley is archaeologically unexplored, but the antiquities from the area confirm the presence of many grave culture sites in the area.

1.3.9. Yasin

At Yasin, there are several megalithic stone circles dating back to 1st millennium BC.

2. ISSUES AND TRENDS

2.1. Issues

2.1.1. Policy Formulation and Implementation Issues

There is an urgent need for policy formulation, planning and implementation at the local level, in consultation with all the stakeholders in Northern Areas. The disadvantage of centralized policy making system is that many issues do not get proper attention because they may not seem to be important in the broader perspective, but may be vital in the context of specific area. Although the Northern Areas Administration has notified Northern Areas Tourism Development Board as a policy-making forum, the Northern Areas Tourism Policy – prepared by Northern Areas Tourism Development Board - is still in the unapproved draft form. There are no regulations for quality control and ensuring the standards of services offered by tourism businesses.

Northern Areas Tourism Development Board can play a very effective role as far as policymaking is concerned, but there is a need for an agency, which would implement the plans and regulations formulated by Northern Areas Tourism Development Board, in the same way as in the provinces where policy formulation is done by the Tourism Departments while the provincial tourism development corporations are responsible for implementation. The members of Northern Areas Tourism Development Board are all volunteers having their own jobs and businesses to take care of. They can provide valuable input on policy level, but may not be able to carry out and supervise the implementation of the policies, since that is a full time job requiring undivided attention.

There are no standards or qualifications (knowledge of mountaineering techniques, languages, communication skills etc) for granting of licenses to mountaineering guides and selection of liaison officers, resulting in poor quality of services offered. Similarly, there is no standardization of the quality and prices of tourism related services.

There is also a serious issue of funding the tourism development programmes. The revenue generated from royalty paid by mountaineering and trekking expeditions is collected by the Ministry of Tourism, which goes to the Government Treasury and is not necessarily spent in Northern Areas. This issue needs to be discussed with the Ministry of Tourism and an appropriate system should be put in place in this regard.

2.1.2. Lack of Authentic Tourism Statistics

Planning and policy formulation in any sector, without authentic data, is very difficult and it is almost impossible in tourism sector, where policies have to be tailored according to the preferences of tourists, ascertained on the basis of actual market data. The statistical wing, Ministry of Tourism, Government of Pakistan, compiles statistics about number of international tourists and expeditions

(mountaineering, trekking etc) visiting Pakistan. Unfortunately statistics such as: number of tourists (domestic + international) visiting different districts, valleys, tourist spots etc in Northern Areas; number of tourist classified age wise, activity wise etc; number of tourists using different categories of tourist services e.g. hotels, tour operators, transport etc. is not available. This results in tourism planning which does not reflect the ground realities.

2.1.3. Inadequate Infrastructure

Although Northern Areas are connected with the rest of the country through Karakoram Highway (KKH), which is considered an engineering marvel, there is still much room for improvement as far as the condition of this road is concerned, which makes the long journey from Islamabad more tedious for the tourists.

There are no proper resting areas along the KKH with rest, food, toilet and communications facilities. However, there are a few places (hotels, PTDC motels etc) in major cities and towns along the route but they are few and far between. These facilities are not standardized, so the tourists do not know before hand what kind of services and facilities to expect.

There are two Airports in Northern Areas, one at Gilgit and the other at Skardu. These airports provide an alternative – both for tourists and local population – to the long journey by road. Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) operates daily flights on Islamabad-Gilgit and Islamabad-Skardu routes. Gilgit Airport has a short runway, which could only be used by the smaller Fokker F-27 aircraft, while for flights to Skardu Airport Boeing 737 aircraft are also used. Both of these airports lack modern navigation facilities, which make landing and takeoffs dangerous during rain or over cast weather, resulting in frequent cancellations of flights. This uncertainty about the operation of flights to Northern Areas creates a major hindrance for the tourists who have no choice but to allocate at least two days to travel by road, thus disturbing their preset itineraries.

All the major towns and cities of Northern Areas are connected with the rest of the country and the world through telephone network, but the performance is far from satisfactory. The system is frequently out of order and it becomes very difficult to communicate with the outside world. E-mail services are only available in Gilgit, with just one ISP (COMSATS) offering the service.

2.1.4. Security

Security for the tourists in Northern Areas, in particular along the parts of KKH passing outside the big towns and cities is an issue. Some of the recent incidents such as stoning of cyclists etc can create a bad image for the entire area nationally and internationally, adversely affecting tourism industry.

Opposition of religious leaders to certain tourist events, such as festivals etc can not only create an undesirable situation for tourists but can also lead to division and conflicts among the local population.

2.1.5. Marketing

For selling any product in competitive markets, a proper marketing strategy is essential. Though various tourism products from Northern Areas are marketed at

individual level by concerned government agencies, tour operators, hoteliers etc, but a coordinated product and image development and overall marketing strategy is lacking, which can, in the long run, hinder development of tourism in the area due to tough competition from other countries and regions who are selling similar tourism products with the help of an aggressive marketing strategy.

Availability of accurate information about tourist destinations and related facilities plays a vital role in choice of destination – by both tourists and tour operators. A number of brochures about Northern Areas are available at PTDC Tourist Information Centres (TICs) and with tour operators, but these brochures do not provide all the requisite information.

2.1.6. Lack of Human Resource Development

There is a lack of trained tourism professionals (e.g. guides, porters, hoteliers etc) in Northern Areas, which greatly affect the services provided to the tourists. Tourism is a services oriented industry and the quality of services offered to the tourists can have major impacts on the sector. There are no institutions/organizations catering to the capacity building of stakeholders in tourism industry. There are a few institutes at Karachi, Rawalpindi and Swat, providing training in hotel management and ticketing etc. but they are out of reach of majority of the stakeholders because of the high cost of training and their location outside Northern Areas.

2.1.7. Lack of Understanding about Ecotourism

There is general lack of understanding and confusion about the term ‘Ecotourism’ by the stakeholders. This term has become a buzzword and every activity involving nature based tourism – whether socially and environmentally sustainable or not – is termed as ecotourism. A proper understanding of the term is essential because ecotourism, if not properly planned and managed can do more harm than conventional tourism, because it deals with fragile environments and sensitive cultures. Similarly, the potential benefits that the development of ecotourism in the area can bring to the local communities, private sector and natural environment are not properly understood by the stakeholders and hence little has been done so far for development and promotion of ecotourism. There is a lack of coordination between public and private sector for development and promotion of ecotourism and local communities are not interested because presently very few benefits of ecotourism are passed on to them.

2.1.8. Environmental Issues

Tourism infrastructure development is taking place all over the Northern Areas without any land use planning and zoning, which can result in un-planned and unmanageable towns and cities and could, ultimately, destroy the natural beauty of the area, on which the whole tourism sector is based.

The tourism flow is un-regulated without any regard to the carrying capacity of a particular destination. Carrying capacities have not been calculated for any of the major tourist destinations in Northern Areas.

The large amount of solid and human waste left by the expeditions on all popular trekking routes and base camps, not only is an eye sore for the tourists, but is also

a serious threat to the natural environment. There is no proper waste disposal system (apart from occasional clean-up expeditions) in the area.

Majority of the local guides, porters, tour operators and hoteliers are not aware of the environment friendly trekking and mountaineering techniques including, proper waste management, recycling, use of alternative fuels etc. There are no guidelines and very few awareness programmes to address this issue.

2.1.9. Cultural Heritage

Northern Areas have a rich and diverse cultural heritage. Cultural events, such as cultural festivals can be used as marketing tools for culture of any area, resulting in economic benefits to the host communities and local businesses. Cultural events and festivals are held in different parts of Northern Areas but they are not properly planned i.e. the dates are not fixed in advance and information about the events is not available to the domestic and international tourists, thus the potential benefits of these festivals are not realized to its full extent.

Little attention is being paid to the protection of the unique archaeological and architecture heritage of Northern Areas. Only one of the famous rock carvings – The engraved rock at Danyor – is on the protected list of the Federal Government. The information about the archaeological sites is scattered and needs to be collated and compiled at single place for the convenience of tourists and researchers.

There is lack of awareness among the tourists about the local culture and archaeological sites due to lack of information and promotion, both nationally and internationally

There are no facilities, like rest area, food, toilets etc, at most of the archaeological sites, creating difficulties for the tourists and researchers alike. There are also no museums in the area to preserve, display and promote the archaeological and cultural artefacts of the area.

There is very little effort for linking the cultural heritage to economic benefits for the local artisans with activities like sale of handicrafts to the tourists, establishment of art galleries/display points, museums, arts and crafts festivals.

The local tourism related businesses, usually, do not promote local architecture and food.

The local languages and culture do not get due representation in electronic media (e.g. Pakistan Television)

There are few regional institutions for promotion of local culture and arts, but no central institution like NA Arts Councils, which can promote the art and artists from the entire region. There is also no institution for preservation of local literature and promotion of local languages

2.2. Trends

Much has been said and written about the potential for development of tourism in Northern Areas. Its natural assets: mountains, glaciers, valleys etc. its cultural

heritage, its built heritage and the rich archaeological heritage. However, the real challenge is to convert the tourism potential of the area into tangible economic benefits for all the stakeholders involved in environmentally sustainable manner. Unfortunately, for certain reasons, which are discussed elsewhere in this paper, this has not been fully achieved yet.

There are no official tourism statistics available for the Northern Areas, such as the number of tourists – both foreign and domestic visiting the area, the average length of stay, and the revenue generated etc. which makes it almost impossible to analyse the trends, past and present, in the sector. However, the Ministry of Tourism Government of Pakistan has compiled the following tourism statistics about international tourism in Pakistan:

	1999	2000
Total Foreign Tourists Arrivals in Pakistan	432,000	543,000
Income from International Tourism (State Bank of Pakistan Statistics)	US\$ 76.4 Million	US\$ 85.6 Million
Income from International Tourism (Tourism Survey conducted by WTO/UNDP Team)	US\$ 382.8 Million	US\$ 385.7 Million

Statistics pertaining to the foreign mountaineering and trekking expeditions to Northern Areas and Northern NWFP, compiled by Ministry of Tourism are reproduced below:

	1999	2000
Mountaineering and Trekking Royalty Received	US\$ 477,743	US\$ 592,550
Number of Mountaineering Expeditions	---	68 (with 359 members)
Number of Trekking Expeditions	---	168 (with 861 members)

Though no statistics are collected concerning domestic tourism, the Ministry of Tourism estimates that around 37 million domestic tourists travelled within Pakistan during 2000.

In 1999, there were 663 million tourist arrivals worldwide; generating \$453 billion in revenues (source: WTO). It is estimated that the total global tourist arrivals would reach one billion by 2010. It is obvious from the statistics that tourism can make a major contribution to the economic development of a country like Pakistan with great potential for cultural and nature-based tourism. However, Pakistan was destination for only 432,000 international tourists – 0.65% of the total 663 million that travelled - during 1999, which is almost negligible given the potential and tourism products that Pakistan has to offer, which, indicate major deficiencies in our tourism development policies.

As is obvious from the above, no specific conclusions can be drawn about the tourism sector in Northern Areas in the absence of Northern Areas specific tourism data. One thing is evident from huge difference between the tourism revenue calculated by the State Bank Pakistan and the WTO/UNDP Team – There are serious shortcomings in the current data collection mechanisms, which need to be rectified urgently.

In General terms it can be said that up till now the efforts have been concentrated on attracting foreign mountaineering and trekking expeditions, with little attention paid to diversification of tourism products with development of ecotourism, low altitude trekking, cultural tourism and most importantly attracting domestic tourists. These issues and some of the possible ways ahead have been discussed in relevant sections of this paper.

3. CONSEQUENCES OF INACTION

If nothing is done to address the issues identified in the previous section, there can be serious economic, environmental and social repercussions in Northern Areas, both long term and short term.

Without clear policy guidelines – which is possible only through local level consultative policy making systems and institutions – and accurate market data, the tourism sector development will remain directionless, planning would not reflect the on ground realities and the facilities and services offered by the private sector will not be based on tourist preferences, which would negatively affect the development of tourism industry in Northern Areas.

In absence of quality standards and an effective rating system, there is always uncertainty about the quality of services offered by hotels, tour operators and guides etc, which can have a bad impression of tourists and may lead to conflicts.

The frequent cancellation of flights during the tourist season, disturbing the itineraries of tourists, the not so good condition of KKH and the lack of rest facilities along the long route would create difficulties for the tourists reaching Northern Areas. Similarly, the inadequate telecommunication facilities make it difficult for tourists to connect to the rest of the world or even rest of the country from Northern Areas.

The lack of security or even the perception of the lack of security in certain areas of Northern Areas can discourage tourist from visiting the area.

Lack of proper promotion and marketing and non availability of information about the tourist destinations in Northern Areas mean that very little is known about the area and the number of tourists visiting the area would not increase over time and may even decrease.

Lack of trained tourism professionals would lead to poor quality of services offered to the tourists seriously affecting this services based industry.

All the above would make the visits of tourists to Northern Areas difficult and uncomfortable, which would ultimately discourage tourists from visiting the area, especially the foreign tourists who can visit alternate destinations, offering similar products. This will have serious economic repercussions in the form of loss in tourism revenue and loss of employment for the local people.

The haphazard and unplanned development of tourism infrastructure, and unregulated inflow of tourists without proper regulations and systems in place (land use planning, zoning etc), will result in unplanned cities and towns, which would be difficult to manage. The problem of solid and human waste left by the trekking and mountaineering expeditions – which is already a serious problem on

some popular treks – would increase and the tourists would start avoiding these places. This can result in cities with concrete structures – which do not blend with the natural surroundings – marring the natural beauty and the treks filled with filth and waste, ultimately leading to the destruction of natural beauty and environment, the very resource on which the bulk of tourism in Northern Areas is based. This would not only affect tourism industry but would have negative impacts on the local population.

The local handicrafts would face extinction if they are not properly promoted and marketed. The new generation would not be interested in learning the traditional arts if they do not see any economic benefits. Similarly, the local languages, traditions and arts would be lost if there are no systems and institutions to ensure their promotion and preservation.

The rich architectural and archaeological heritage of the Northern Areas would be lost forever if not properly documented and conserved. The conservation would only be possible and sustainable if the buildings are put to appropriate use, generating revenue and declaring the important sites and buildings as protected sites under the Pakistan Antiquities Act.

If the communities are not involved in planning and implementation of tourism related projects and programmes, it would lead to lack of ownership, jeopardizing their sustainability. Similarly, if the communities do not get appropriate economic benefits from the tourism ventures in their area, this would cause resentment against the tourist and can lead to conflicts among tourism industry and the local communities that would have serious consequences not only for tourism sector but for the society as a whole.

4. MAJOR INITIATIVES – PAST AND PRESENT

4.1. NATDB (Northern Areas Tourism Development Board)

The Northern Areas Administration notified Northern Areas Tourism Development Board in June 2000. The main objectives of the Board is to formulate policies, regulations and plans for development of sustainable tourism in Northern Areas; to promote and market the tourism products in Northern Areas and to ensure the conservation of natural environment and cultural heritage of the area.

The Chief Secretary Northern Areas is the chairman of the Board and the membership include representatives of concerned government agencies, private sector, conservation organizations and NGOs.

The Northern Areas Tourism Development Board has launched several initiatives to achieve its objectives. Some of the major initiatives are: formulation of a draft tourism policy for Northern Areas and constitution of 'District Tourism Committees' in all five districts. These committees – with representation from all the stakeholders – would work as the implementation agencies for the plans and policies formulated by the Northern Areas Tourism Development Board.

Though much still needs to be done – the issues are discussed in relevant sections of this paper – the notification of Northern Areas Tourism Development Board is a positive step towards policy formulation and implementation at local level. This has an advantage over the centralized policy making, because the members of the Northern Areas Tourism Development Board are the local stakeholders who are aware of the issues and possible solutions and are well accustomed to the local conditions and requirements.

4.2. Gilgit Conservation and Information Centre (GCIC)

The Gilgit Conservation and Information Centre of WWF – Pakistan is making valuable contributions to the efforts for sustainable tourism development in Northern Areas. The Centre has lots of information in the form of books, journals and videos on different aspects of conservation, including sustainable tourism. It also has facilities for conducting seminars and workshops including audio – visual aids and a conference room, which are available to non-profit organizations on nominal rates. GCIC and AFP had jointly conducted training on 'Ecotourism Guiding' for the local guides in September 2000, which included both theoretical and practical training. The centre has produced brochures highlighting the ecotourism potential of some of the lesser none areas and is disseminating this information with help of PTDC TICs and private sector. These brochures provide

information on how to reach the area, where to stay, whom to contact, what to see, biodiversity and the local products.

4.3. The Mountaineering Guides School

WWF Pakistan and AFP are planning to establish a training school for mountaineering guides at Gilgit. The school will impart both theoretical and practical training to the local guides with main emphasis on conservation issues. The facilities available at Gilgit Conservation & Information Centre (GCIC) would be used for theoretical training, while practical training would be conducted at Passu. Although this initiative is still at the planning stage, it can make a positive contribution to the sustainable development of tourism in Northern Areas by producing trained guides with awareness about conservation and environmental concerns.

4.4. Alpine Club of Pakistan

The Alpine Club of Pakistan has a training institute at Nilt, District Gilgit, established in 1977, which provides training in mountaineering, rock climbing and ice climbing. The institute also trains mountaineering guides, high altitude porters and liaison officers for the expeditions, with special focus on waste management and environmental issues. ACP has developed several proposals for waste management and other environmental issues and is working with Ministry of Tourism and conservation organizations in this regard. The club had also designed a detailed syllabus for guide training course at PAITHOM, Swat, but the course could not be started up till now. However, the syllabus can be useful for any similar imitative in the future.

4.5. Silk Route Festival

The Silk Route Festival, organized by the Lok Virsa in collaboration with the private sector, government agencies, NGOs and the local communities was held in September 2000. The festival, which lasted ten days, included Artisans-at-work (Gilgit, Karimabad & Skardu), Folkloric Song & Dance Ensembles (Gilgit, Aliabad, Gulmit, Karimabad & Skardu), Folk Music Groups, Exotic Craft Bazaar, Food & Fruit Fair, Polo Matches and Indigenous Sports Events, Camping Villages & Open Air Local Restaurants, Ethnic Fashion Show. The festival was a great success, as it not only boosted tourist inflow into the area but also highlighted and promoted local culture and products. It also provided an opportunity to the local artisans to promote and introduce their products to the tourists from all over Pakistan and abroad. Despite its success the local people considered the festival as not truly reflective of their culture as they were not fully involved in planning and management of the festival.

4.6. Inventory and Conservation of Cultural Sites

The Aga Khan Cultural Service – Pakistan (AKCSP) in collaboration with IUCN Pakistan has prepared a detailed inventory of all the historical buildings in Northern Areas such as forts, palaces, mosques, and traditional houses. This computerized

database has all architectural details of the individual buildings. This is the first step towards the conservation of these buildings as each of them can not be conserved at the same time, the database would help in prioritising the buildings which should be conserved first based on their historical importance and current condition.

Box 1: Baltit Fort

Baltit Fort is an example of successful self-sustaining conservation effort.

Baltit Fort – Situated at Karimabad (formerly known as Baltit) Hunza, was built in 14th century and served as the residence of Royal Family of Hunza.

The Fort was conserved and restored by AKCSP in 1996. Since then, it has proven to be a major tourist attraction contributing to increased tourism inflow to Karimabad resulting in increased tourism revenue for the local businesses.

The revenue generated through the entry ticket sales ensures the sustainability of this conservation initiative.

In the year 2000, eight thousand international and seventeen thousand domestic tourists visited Baltit Fort, generating three million rupees from entry ticket sales.

AKCSP is also working on actual conservation of several historical buildings, with the assistance of various donors. AKCSP has conserved and restored the Baltit fort, situated in Hunza, and is currently working on the conservation of Shigar Fort. These efforts of AKCSP would go a long way in documenting and conserving the vast architectural heritage of Northern Areas. AKCSP has trained several artisans, imparting traditional wood carving skills, an art used extensively in construction of traditional buildings.

4.7. Karimabad Land Use Management Plan

To regulate the infrastructure development, spurred by increase in tourism inflow into Karimabad, Hunza, Karimabad Town Management Society (KTMS) – a registered society, representing the local communities – has developed and implemented land use plan for the area, with the assistance of AKCSP. The main objective of the plan is to define and identify land use for different zones in Karimabad such as:

- m Agricultural;
- m Residential;
- m Commercial;
- m Roads; and
- m Parks, etc.

The society ensures that the construction of new buildings in Karimabad is according to the land use plan. However, the plan has no legal backing and is implemented in collaboration with the local community and it is entirely dependent on their goodwill.

Draft by-laws for the Karimabad Land Use Management Plan has been developed and forwarded to the concerned authorities for notification. Once the by-laws are approved, the plan will get legal cover. No construction would be allowed without

a NoC from KTMS, which would be issued only after ensuring that the building will be used for the activities consistent with the designation of the zone.

4.8. Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP)

IUCN Pakistan implemented a Pre-Investment Feasibility (PRIF) Project – "Maintaining Biodiversity in Pakistan" (1995-99) in Northern Areas and NWFP, funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) through UNDP. The project was undertaken in collaboration with Government of Pakistan, Northern Areas Forest department and NWFP Wildlife Department. The primary objective of the project was to promote sustainable use of natural resources through active participation of local communities. A community based trophy hunting programme was developed to provide an economic incentive for communities to conserve biological diversity. The funds generated through strictly regulated trophy hunting were distributed among Government and local community with 30% kept by the Government while 70% going to the community, thus providing an incentive to the community to conserve wildlife and their habitats.

The Successful implementation of this project led to a full scale conservation project – The Mountain Areas Conservancy Project – intended to protect biodiversity and ensure its sustainable use in Pakistan's Karakorum, Hindukush, and Western Himalayas mountain ranges through application of a community-based conservation approach. The program is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Development Agency, and the Government of Pakistan (GoP) in the amount of \$10.35M over 7 years. The executing agency responsible for overall coordination is the Ministry of Environment, Local Government, and Rural Development of the GoP. The project is implemented by the IUCN - World Conservation Union-Pakistan in close collaboration with the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and the Department of Forests, Parks and Wildlife in Northern Areas (NAs). Collaborative partners are the Worldwide Fund for Nature Pakistan, the Agha Khan Rural Support Program (AKRSP), and the Himalayan Wildlife Foundation. MACP activities are undertaken in four delineated areas totalling 16,300 square km. Two of these areas (the Nanga Parbat and Gojal Conservancies) are in NAs and two (Trichmir and Qashqar Conservancies) are located in NWFP. The program has three major components: a) to empower, organize and enhance the capacity of local communities to conserve biodiversity, b) to enhance the value of biodiversity components to the local people, and c) to create a policy, legislation, and financial framework conducive to community-based conservation.

MACP is promoting sustainable tourism activities through providing technical support and capacity building for community based trophy hunting programmes, the formulation of environmental regulations and quality standards for tourism and identifying the potential for and promoting ecotourism activities.

4.9. Karakoram Area Development Organization (KADO)

KADO is implementing several projects related to cultural heritage conservation and sustainable tourism development in Northern Areas, in collaboration with the

local communities, such as:

- m Karakoram Handicraft Development Programme (KHDP)
- m Hunza Environmental Committee (HEC).
- m Hunza Arts & Cultural Forum (HACF)

4.9.1. Karakoram Handicraft Development Project (KHDP)

The KHDP was started in 1996 as a tripartite Action Research project between KADO-AKCSP and SDC. The project promotes culture-sensitive and environmentally sustainable micro-enterprises creating village-based income and employment opportunities for artisans, small producers, women, the disabled members of the community and other disadvantaged groups.

At present around 2,300 women artisans work for the projects from their homes. Another 60 women work at 7 workshops daily and produce finished products. The products are marketed under the brand name of Thread Net Hunza through retail partnerships with around 18 local and national retailers. Tourists are the prime market for these products. Local and national exhibitions are held to promote these products.

The project provides Product Design, Training and Marketing services and is involved in trading between the producers, artisans and retailers.

KADO has recently entered into agreement with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) - PAN-Asia Networking Singapore on E-commerce; promotion and selling of local handicrafts of Thread Net Hunza through the PAN Shopping Mall.

4.9.2. Hunza Environmental Committee (HEC)

The Hunza Environmental Committee (HEC) was formed in December 1997 as a project of KADO. It is a community based solid waste management system. The clients that include tourism businesses, various organizations and a few households in Hunza, pay their service fee to the management of HEC, for disposal of solid waste generated by them. The HEC manages the whole operation in close collaboration with the communities, private sector and concerned government agencies.

Initially funded by AKF-UK/EU and NORAD through AKCSP, and mobilization of local resources to create an endowment fund, the project now sustains operations through user-fees, utilizes local resources, and collaborates with local institutions for awareness raising programmes, independent of any external donor support.

4.10. Hunza Arts & Cultural Forum (HACF)

The forum, established with the initial funding from AKCSP, works for preserving the local art of making musical instruments by training the artisans and marketing their products. The products include rubab, sitar, dorya, dadang, damal, surnay, tutek, gabi etc.

The products are being marketed under the brand name of Kasb-e-Kamal through the handicraft dealers in Karimabad, Gilgit and down country, using the existing Thread Net Hunza retail partners.



5. THE STAKEHOLDERS

5.1. Tourists

Tourists are the main stakeholders as the whole industry revolves around, and is dependent on them. There are four main categories of tourists visiting Northern Areas including the institutional tourists (using the services of international tour operator with set itineraries); the non-institutional tourists (independent tourists using local tourist services); mountaineering and high altitude trekking expeditions; and domestic tourists (WWF, 2001).

5.2. Ministry of Tourism, Government of Pakistan

Ministry of Tourism Islamabad is responsible for over all policy formulation and implementation of tourism related rules and regulations. It grants mountaineering and trekking permits for Northern Areas, conducts briefing/debriefing of foreign tourists, collects royalties, controls the licensing of tourism services and compiles tourism statistics.

5.3. Transporters/Airlines

Pakistan International Airlines is the only airline operating flights to Northern Areas. It operates daily flights to Gilgit and Skardu, using the Fokker F-27 aircraft for its Gilgit operations and Boeing 737s for Skardu.

Northern Areas Transport Corporation (NATCO) is the biggest provider of road transport to Northern Areas, through its fleet of busses, coaches, vans and jeeps. It offers services on Rawalpindi – Gilgit, Rawalpindi – Skardu, Rawalpindi – Khunjerab Pass and various routes, within the Northern Areas. NATCO was established in March 1974 and was the first company to provide motorized transport system in Northern Areas for general public and tourists. Apart from NATCO several private sector companies including Silk Route Travels, Masherbrum also operate on these routes.

5.4. NATDB (Northern Areas Tourism Development Board)

The Northern Areas Tourism Development Board (Northern Areas Tourism Development Board) was established through a notification by the NA administration in June 2000. The board comprises of representatives from public sector, private sector and civil society. The objectives of the board are to work for marketing, promoting, regulating and sustainably developing the tourism industry in Northern Areas.

5.5. Concerned Departments of Northern Areas Administration

Several Departments of Northern Areas Administration are responsible for providing and maintaining basic infrastructure in Northern Areas, like Northern Areas Public Works Department which is responsible for proper maintenance and up keeping of road network and provision of electricity and the Planning & Development Department Northern Areas, which is responsible for formulation of plans and projects for development of all sectors including culture and tourism sector.

5.6. World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) – Pakistan

Pakistan office of the WWF was established in 1970. It has a staff of over 120 people based in the Lahore headquarters, a network of 6 regional offices in Gilgit, Islamabad, Karachi, Muzaffarabad, Peshawar and Quetta and in 5 project offices in Ayubia, Chitral, Jhangar, Sonmiani and Zhob.

WWF-P contributes towards conserving Pakistan's unique natural diversity in a way that takes into account the future needs of its people. Along with the rest of the WWF global network, WWF-Pis working to achieve the conservation of nature and ecological processes by:

- m Preserving genetic, species and ecosystem diversity
- m Ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable both now and in the longer term
- m Promoting actions to reduce pollution, and wasteful exploitation and consumption of resources and energy

WWF-P Gilgit Office is working on capacity building, awareness raising and promotion of ecotourism in Northern Areas through Gilgit Conservation and Information Centre (GCIC).

5.7. Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC)

PTDC is a public limited company, established in 1970; it is managed through Board of Directors, Managing Director being the Chief Executive. The objectives of PTDC are:

- m To develop tourism infrastructure on all Pakistan basis.
- m To act as agent on behalf of the Federal Government for the production of tourist literature and publicity for tourism both domestically and internationally.
- m To act as catalyst to encourage the private sector to play a more active role in tourism development.
- m To undertake tour operations and provide ground handling facilities for group tours.

PTDC has the following main departments:

- m Planning and development/engineering department.
- m Publicity and promotion/marketing department.

- m Associated Hotels of Pakistan which manages the hotels under PTDC management.
- m PTDC Motels Ltd. Which manages 31 PTDC motels.
- m Pakistan Tours Ltd., which provides ground handling and transport facilities to the tourists.

In Northern Areas PTDC operates 6 motels, located at Gilgit, Skardu, Hunza, Sust, Astor and Gupis. It also operates tours to Northern areas through PTL. All the PTDC motels have information centres, which provide tourist information about the area. PTDC also organizes special tourist events such as Karakoram Car Rally etc.

5.8. Aga Khan Cultural Services Pakistan (AKCSP)

Aga Khan Cultural Services – Pakistan is working for preservation of the cultural heritage of Northern Areas with initiatives like documentation and conservation of built heritage of Northern Areas, training of local artisans and facilitating the implementation of Land Use Planning.

5.9. Regional Cultural Associations

There are various regional associations working for promotion and preservation of local arts, crafts, literature, folklore etc. Some of the organizations are Halqa Arbabe Zoq, Gilgit Arts & Cultural Council, Baltit Heritage Trust, Karakoram Arts and Welfare Council.

5.10. Adventure Foundation of Pakistan (AFP)

Adventure Foundation Pakistan is a non-commercial, non-government organization. Its main objective is to promote outdoor activities and adventure tourism among the youth with special focus on conservation of nature. It has three divisions: Training Division, Aerial Division and Young Explorers Division. It is actively involved in promotion of environment friendly adventure tourism in Northern Areas. It also arranges training programmes for the stakeholders and organizes cleanup expeditions.

5.11. Frontier Works Organization (FWO)

The Frontier Works Organization is responsible for provision of communication infrastructure in Northern Areas. FWO has constructed, and is responsible for maintenance, of many roads in the area including the Karakoram Highway (KKH).

5.12. Alpine Club of Pakistan

Alpine Club of Pakistan (ACP) was established in 1974, as national mountaineering association, registered under the companies Act. ACP works under the aegis of Ministry of Tourism, in close collaboration with FWO of Pakistan Army. Its objective is to promote mountaineering and related activities in Pakistan by launching mountaineering expeditions, providing liaison officers to

mountaineering expeditions, acting as advisor to the Ministry of Tourism in matters relating to mountaineering and providing training. Its management structure includes an executive council, a president, five vice-presidents, honorary secretary and honorary treasurer. Any Pakistani, with interest in mountaineering can become a member of ACP. The Secretariat of Alpine Club of Pakistan is located in the FWO Headquarters at Rawalpindi.

Northern Areas are the main area of operation for the ACP and the majority of the members of the ACP also belong to Northern Areas.

5.13. Karakoram Area Development Organization (KADO)

KADO is a community-driven local intermediary organization working to promote sustainable development in mountain areas in northern Pakistan. KADO was established in 1995 (initially known as Karakoram Handicraft Promotion Society-KHPS) and incorporated in February 1998 in Gilgit under the name of KADO as a company limited by guarantee.

KADO promotes culture-sensitive and environmentally sustainable micro-enterprises creating village-based income and employment opportunities for artisans, small producers, women, the disabled members of the community and other disadvantaged groups.

It is also involved in environmental awareness raising and solid waste management, promotion of arts and cultural activities and have recently involved in promoting the knowledge and use of Information and Communication Technology in rural and mountain areas.

Current projects related to promotion of sustainable tourism development and promotion and preservation of cultural heritage of Northern Areas include:

- m Karakoram Handicraft Development Programme (KHDP)
- m Hunza Environmental Committee (HEC).
- m Hunza Arts & Cultural Forum (HACF)

Most of the activities are supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)/Aga Khan Cultural Service Pakistan.

5.14. Special Communications Organization (SCO)

The Special Communications Organization of Pakistan Army, established in 1976, is responsible for development and operation of all telecommunication facilities in Northern Areas and Azad Jammu & Kashmir. All the telephone exchanges working in Northern Areas are managed by SCO.

5.15. Tourist Services Providers

There are several tourists services providers including hotels, tour operators, guides and porters from both public and private sectors, operating in Northern Areas.

6. THE WAY AHEAD

The following are the recommendations for addressing the issues identified in the previous sections:

6.1. Policy Formulation and Implementation

The importance of policy making in any sector is obvious. Without a well defined policy and clearly stated objectives, the whole development process can become disorganized and directionless. Although an overall policy for development of tourism in Pakistan is formulated and implemented by the Ministry of Tourism, it is imperative that every region with its own distinctive requirements should have its own decentralized tourism policy formulation mechanisms, inline with the specific requirements of the area, within the broad framework of Federal policy. The Northern Areas Tourism Development Board has prepared a draft tourism development policy for Northern Areas. It is recommended that the draft policy should be approved and adopted by the competent authority, after a debating and discussing it in detail with all the stakeholders involved. It is also imperative that the NATDB remains active, holding regular meeting for discussing policy related matter and fulfilling its primary objective of monitoring and regulating tourism development in Northern Areas.

The role of the Government in tourism development should be clearly identified and stated in the tourism policy, which should be confined to policy making, providing infrastructure and regulating the tourism industry. The Government should not indulge in running tourism businesses and competing with the private sector; rather it should facilitate and regulate the tourism industry.

Financing Tourism development in Northern Areas is an important issue, as no development is possible without appropriate financing mechanisms. One of the possible sources of financing tourism development in Northern Areas is the royalty generated from

Table 3: Royalty Rates for Peaks in Pakistan

Peak	Royalty
K-2	\$12,000
8001 – 8500 meters high peaks	\$9,500
7501 – 8000 meters high peaks	&4,000
7001 – 7500 meters high peaks	\$2,500
6000 – 7000 meters high peaks	\$1,500

mountaineering and trekking expeditions, which presently goes to the Government Treasury. A proper mechanism may be negotiated with the Ministry of Tourism – Something like 70-30 sharing of royalty – with 70% going to Northern Areas for spending on development of tourism in areas where the revenue is generated, while 30% can be kept by the Ministry of Tourism for its services (promotion, regulation, registration of tourists). The environmental cleanup fee - \$200 collected from every expedition – should be spent entirely in the Northern Areas on relevant activities.

Strategies and plans formulated for development of tourism are not of much value, if they are not properly implemented. For implementation of the policies and plans formulated by the Northern Areas Tourism Development Board an implementation agency at local level – which may be called ‘Northern Areas Tourism Development Corporation (NATDC)’ – should be established, which would act as an implementation wing of the Northern Areas Tourism Development Board. This organization – a public sector corporation – would be registered under the Companies Act. Its affairs would be overseen through Board of Directors, headed by a local advisor – with relevant experience and qualifications – to be appointed by the Northern Areas administration and with equal membership from public sector, private sector, concerned NGOs and local communities. Professional staff, with proven background in development and promotion of tourism in Northern Areas, should be hired to manage NATDC; otherwise it would not be able to serve its purpose properly. In order to achieve maximum level of harmonization and avoid duplication of efforts, NATDC would work in close coordination with PTDC and other provincial tourism development corporations. The mandate of the NATDC would include:

- m Market and promote sustainable tourism in Northern Areas through publications, websites and information centres to be established, initially in all district headquarters and eventually in all tourist destinations of Northern Areas.
- m Conduct market research and collecting data regarding tourism industry in Northern Areas.
- m Regulate the tourism industry in NA, by monitoring the maintenance of standards (of hotels, tour operators etc) through rating systems and ensuring compliance with environmental guidelines through the joint committees with representation from NATDC, private sector and conservation organizations
- m Awareness raising of the stakeholders about the sustainable tourism practices, through seminars, workshops and other events.
- m Facilitating the organization and marketing of cultural events in collaboration with private sector, PTDC and other concerned stakeholders.

To ensure the standard of services provided to the tourists a rating system of tourism businesses (hotels, tour operators etc) operating in Northern Areas should be operationalised. The rating, would be based on the facilities offered, cleanliness, quality of food, service etc. To avoid conflicts and ensure its proper operation, Department of Tourism Services (DTS), Northern Areas Tourism Development Board and the tourism business associations (Tour Operators Association, Hoteliers Association etc) should jointly develop and implement the rating system. The associations will rank their members according to the rating criteria, and fix prices for different categories of services offered, while Department of Tourism Services (DTS) and Northern Areas Tourism Development Board will monitor the whole mechanism ensuring proper compliance. Once the rating system is in place, it will lead to standardization of services offered and the tourist will know before hand what kind of services and facilities to expect from a particular business and would be paying according to the services offered, thus conflicts between tourists and tourism businesses would be avoided.

The rules for granting licenses to the mountaineering guides may be revised, making it compulsory that any one applying for a mountaineering guide license should have the required qualifications like basic mountaineering skills,

communication, first aid, basic knowledge of waste management. Refresher courses for those licensed mountaineering guides who are already working may be arranged with the help of Alpine Club of Pakistan, which have the requisite expertise for this purpose. Once this system is in place, it should be strictly monitored and implemented by the Department of Tourism Services (DTS) and Northern Areas Tourism Development Board, ensuring the best quality of services offered by the guides.

Unnecessary rules and regulation, which create difficulties for the tourists, should be discarded/changed. The briefing and debriefing of foreign tourists should be held at all major tourist destination for convenience of the tourists, because if the tourists want to extend their stay in Northern Areas, they are discouraged by the fact that they have to go to Islamabad for debriefing and come again to Northern Areas. It is also recommended that Tourism Operations Branch (TOB) of Ministry of Tourism should establish branch offices in Northern Areas, issuing trekking permits on the spot, thus saving the tourists and tour operators/guides from a lot of trouble. There are many different agencies which collect and keep all the details of the foreign tourists visiting Northern Areas for security purposes, and various checkouts have been established at different points for this purpose, which is a major nuisance for the tourists. It is recommended that only one agency should be given the task of collecting the requisite information. It should be the responsibility of the tour operator/guide, to provide the required information who should be responsible for its authenticity without any direct contact between the tourists and the concerned agency. This way, the government will get all the necessary information without any difficulty for the tourists. The outdated rules like restrictions on photography of bridges, have lost its meaning in the age of spy satellites, but manage to create major irritant for the tourists. Ministry of Tourism should review and revise this and other similar rules in consultation with the stakeholders.

A Cultural Heritage & Sustainable Tourism Roundtable or Interest Group may be established with representation from all the stakeholders in cultural heritage & sustainable tourism sector of Northern Areas. This would be an advisory body with the mandate to review, discuss and debate the policies and plans related to the sector and advice the concerned authorities on their efficacy or otherwise. The secretariat can be provided by any of the stakeholders or the Northern Areas Tourism Development Board itself and the members should be nominated in consultation with all the stakeholders. Once operational the Roundtable or Interest Group can develop its own membership criteria and ToRs etc. This would ensure a wider stakeholder participation in policymaking and generate debate and discussion on the important issues concerning the sector.

6.2. Tourism Statistics and Data Collection

Tourism planning and management without appropriate statistical data is almost impossible. Long term tourism plans, must take into account current trends such as, number of tourists visiting each valley/ and district, place of origin of tourists, types of tourists (institution/non-institutional) types of tourism activities, types of facilities used/required by tourists (hotels, camping, public transport, airlines), average amount spent in each area and on various services by tourists.

Unfortunately, this data is not available for Northern Area, which makes analysis of the current situation and planning for the future extremely difficult. Non-availability of statistics may result in plans and policies, which do not reflect the realities and needs of the sector. It is therefore essential that the requisite statistics are collected and compiled. In the short term, the lead role can be played by the statistical wing of Ministry of Tourism (NATDC, can takeover the responsibility later), by collecting the available data from its own sources (number of expeditions etc) hotels, tour operators and any other source, and compiling, analysing and publishing it. In the long run, NATDC should identify the type of data needed but currently not available and should set-up appropriate mechanisms in consultation with all the stakeholders for collection and compilation of required statistics.

6.3. Human Resource Development

Tourism is a services-oriented industry, requiring skilled workforce, therefore, the importance of human resource development and capacity building is obvious; lack of trained manpower results in poor quality of services offered to the tourists and makes the maintenance of standards difficult. Given the potential and role of Northern Areas in development of tourism, it is recommended that a tourism-training institute should be established at Gilgit, eventually opening branches in all districts. This institute should offer, degree, diploma and certificate courses in subjects like tourism management and planning, hotel management, tour operations with main focus on mountaineering & trekking and guiding as it is the main tourism resource of the Northern Areas. The courses offered should have an emphasis on 'sustainable' tourism practices. This institute would not only provide the people of Northern Areas the opportunity of tourism training in their area, but would also help the industry in creating and maintaining the service and quality standards through the professional trained staff.

The Alpine Club of Pakistan should be involved in the designing of syllabus for the mountaineering guides, porters and liaison officers, with special emphasis on conservation, as it has already done considerable work in this regard.

The conservation organizations (WWF, IUCN, AFP, Alpine Club of Pakistan etc) in collaboration with the businesses associations should also arrange short-term, on the job training and awareness-raising events, with main emphasis on conservation related issues, for the stakeholders such as guides and porters, who for various reasons, may not get an opportunity of formal training.

6.4. Communication and Transport

By enabling the tourists to reach their destination communication and transport play a central role in development of tourism. The Northern Areas are linked with the rest of the country through KKH, considered eighth wonder of the world. The condition of KKH can be improved a lot through proper maintenance. The Frontier Works Organization (FWO) should be provided requisite funds for this purpose, so that the KKH is maintained according to the international standards. More roads should be constructed/upgraded to various tourist destinations within Northern Areas and the jeep road from Chilas to Naran via Babusar Pass may be upgraded and linked with the Mansehra – Naran – Jalkut Highway, presently under

construction. This would not only increase tourist inflow into the area but would also provide an alternative link to the rest of the country.

Air travel to Northern Areas is – at best – unreliable due to frequent cancellation of flights because of weather conditions. Gilgit and Skardu airports should be upgraded by installing modern navigational equipment, which would help in operation of flights under all weather conditions. The possibility of upgrading the Gilgit Airport should be studied in order to allow the operation of high capacity all weather aircraft. Private Airlines should be encouraged and provided incentives to operate flights to Gilgit and Skardu and start helicopter services to tourist destinations within Northern Areas.

The telecommunication network in Northern Areas leaves much to be desired. Though all major cities have telephone facilities, communication with the rest of the country through telephone is almost impossible as it takes hours before a call is connected. Special Communications Organization (SCO) should be provided proper funding for upgrading of telecommunications facilities at Northern Areas. The very slow data transfer speed of internet service – available only in Gilgit – should be increased and the cost of using internet should be brought down at par with the rest of the country. Internet services should also be provided in other major tourist destinations in Northern Areas, so that the tourist can stay in touch with their home in efficient and economic way.

6.5. Efficient Marketing and Product Development

Availability of accurate and easily accessible information plays a central role in the choice of destination by the tourists. The tourists usually do not consider a destination for a visit if information such as places of interest, how to reach there, facilities available, people, climate etc is not easily available. It is therefore, essential that PTDC in collaboration with the private sector develop brochures and booklets on all tourist attractions in Northern Areas and disseminate them locally through Tourist Information Centres, hotels and tour operators and internationally through Pakistan embassies. More, properly equipped, TICs should be established by PTDC in all major tourist destinations for convenience of the tourists. A comprehensive Northern Areas website with the information about history, culture, climate, tourist attractions, cultural events, hotels, tour operators, transport, airlines and links to other websites on Northern Areas should be launched. Initial investment can be provided by PTDC, later it can be maintained and regularly updated by Northern Areas Tourism Development Board through contributions from private sector.

Currently the marketing strategy for Northern Areas is based on attracting foreign tourists, mostly mountaineering and trekking expeditions. It is important to develop a market for domestic tourism, because it provides a base for tourism industry and can contribute significantly to the development of tourism sector, as the inflow of foreign tourists is very much affected by international events beyond the control of tourism industry – amply demonstrated by the events of 9/11 and its aftermath. Market research is needed to ascertain the requirements of domestic tourists. Some of the measures for increasing domestic tourism in Northern Areas would include provision of tourism related information in Urdu, promotion of low altitude trekking and development of camping sites since these activities are

preferred by majority of Pakistani youth who currently go to Galliat and Kaghan Valley for this purpose. Naltar or any other suitable place should be developed as skiing resort, which – based on experience of Malam Jabba Ski Resort in Swat – would attract a large number of domestic tourists, this would also help in extending the tourism season into the winter.

Northern Areas Tourism Development Board, in collaboration with private sector and other relevant stakeholders, should develop a tourism events calendar, listing the main cultural and tourist events for the next three years with dates' venues and other relevant information. This would help the tourists who are planning their visits to the Northern Areas to accommodate such events in their itineraries.

To counter the negative image of Pakistan and publicize the actual situation in Northern Areas, PTDC in collaboration with the tourism businesses should arrange familiarization trips for foreign travel writers and journalists to the area.

6.6. Tourism Friendly Environment

The issue of security of the tourists is becoming a major threat to development of tourism in Northern Areas. An isolated incident of stoning of a cyclist may not seem to be a big issue, but a few incidents like that can harm the tourist friendly image of the area beyond repair. Similarly, the forceful opposition of certain cultural and tourist events also contribute to propagating the negative image. The issue is linked to the broader fundamental question of whether the people of Northern Areas want tourists in their area or not. If tourists are not welcome than all the planning should be stopped, as that would be just a waste of time and resources. But if tourism is desirable, then the people need to understand that tourist – who spend their own money and time and take the trouble of leaving their homes – want a few days of relaxation in peace and in peaceful places. They need to understand that tourists come from a culture that is different from our own and that they do not need to be like us. More importantly, they need to understand that throwing stones at tourists is not a very good way of promoting tourism in the area.

Committees comprising, tourism industry representatives, concerned government agencies, religious leaders and representatives of communities need to discuss and debate this issue and come up with a solution at the earliest. The people of the area should be made aware about the importance of tourism and tourist for the economy of the area. Information about tourism and tourists should also be disseminated through schools.

6.7. Parks and Protected Areas

National Parks and other protected areas apart from serving their primary purpose of conserving biodiversity and natural habitats can also play a major role as tourist destinations. There are four National Parks (see table in the box) of various categories in the Northern Areas, offering a marvellous opportunity for development of ecotourism, which can be realized if following measures are taken:

Proper access roads should be constructed/upgraded to facilitate travel to these destinations.

A buffer zone, just outside the limits of the protected areas should be created, where strictly regulated tourism infrastructure including souvenir shops, restaurants offering local food, small lodges, camping areas, tourist information centres and car parks should be developed in partnership with the local communities and private sector. This infrastructure should be in harmony with the surroundings, both aesthetically and environmentally and should be within the carrying capacity of the area.

National Park	Size (ha)
Central Karakoram	973,845
Deosai Plains	363,600
Handrap Shandur	51,800
Khunjerab	227,143

Source: WWF - Pakistan

Camping sites should be developed at appropriate locations inside the protected areas or in the buffer zones, wherever feasible. Sustainable tourism activities like hiking and wildlife watching should be promoted in these areas.

Information about these protected areas and the ecotourism activities offered should be made available to the tourists – locally and internationally – through information centres and websites.

6.8. Development of 'Ecotourism'

Though the precise definition of ecotourism remains ambiguous even within the circles of tourism experts but the simplest and most widely accepted definition of Ecotourism, developed by the Ecotourism Society, USA is: "Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well being of local people".

Thus, ecotourism as distinct from other forms of nature-based tourism (adventure tourism, mountaineering, rock climbing) appreciates nature for its own sake (intrinsic value) and not because of the thrill or challenge that it present. The Tourists interact and learn from the nature and culture of the area, accepting both as they are and without demanding anything from either the people or environment of the area. Eco-tourists, usually, travel in small groups in order to have minimum impact on the environment and try to give maximum possible benefits to the local community by using local guides, food, lodging camping facilities and transport etc.

Some of the community based ecotourism activities that can be promoted in Northern Areas are:

- m Low altitude trekking and camping, conducted through local guides. The local community provide tents and/or camping sites on rent.
- m Wildlife watching and community based trophy hunting programmes.
- m Village guesthouses or lodges: where the accommodation is provided to the tourists in clean, properly maintained local houses, offering some basic facilities and local food.

The first step in development of ecotourism is awareness raising and capacity building of the stakeholders about the basic concepts, planning and management techniques of ecotourism projects. The conservation organizations like WWF, IUCN, ACP and AFP can play a major role in this regard, as they have the requisite

information and expertise. An environmental code of conduct needs to be developed for the communities, private sector and tourists, listing the responsibilities of each stakeholder in reference to ecotourism.

Once the stakeholders understand the concept, private sector and the community organizations can jointly develop and implement ecotourism projects. The tour operators would be responsible for promotion and marketing of the ecotourism products and bringing the tourists into the area, where they would use the facilities offered by the local community. Interested NGOs and financial institutions can provide green credit lines on soft terms to the communities for buying camping and trekking equipment and establishment of community guesthouses. The right of use for some of the treks should be given to the local communities i.e. anyone using the treks should pay a fee to the local village organization/CBO, which would be used for developmental activities in the village by the local communities themselves.

Since the main objective of the eco-tourists is to contribute to the conservation of their destination, they should be briefed about the desirable conduct at the destination, encouraged to recycle the waste and may be involved in activities like clean-up operations.

The biggest advantage of the ecotourism is that it links environment with economics. All the stakeholders involve try their best to preserve the nature and culture of the area, since these are the very resources on which ecotourism and hence their income and livelihood depends.

6.9. Environmental Issues

The tourism in Northern Areas is to a large extent based on the natural resources and environment, therefore the protection and preservation of environment and making all tourism activities 'sustainable' is of paramount importance.

The first step in this direction should be awareness raising of all the stakeholders involved. They have to be made aware of the measures required to make the tourism industry environmentally sustainable. To achieve this, sustainable tourism guidelines need to be developed for and in collaboration with all the stakeholders. The guidelines already developed by various agencies can also be adopted after modifying them to reflect the conditions specific to Northern Areas. This participatory approach will ensure the ownership of the guidelines by the stakeholders. The various associations should adopt these guidelines and should ensure that their members comply with them.

Solid waste left by the tourists in all major tourist destinations and popular treks pose a serious threat to local environment and can have a negative impact on the image of the area. Trash and human waste left by mountaineering and trekking expeditions has become a serious issue especially on the more popular routes like Baltoro and Concordia.

The issue can be tackled through a three-pronged approach; in the big cities and towns the LB&RD Department should develop and operationalise a proper solid waste management system. In villages or treks outside the main towns, local

community committees should be established for the purpose that would be responsible for collection and recycling/disposal of solid waste in their area, monitored by LB&RD Department. Guides and porters should be involved to collect and bring back waste left at high altitudes for possible recycling or disposal. At remote locations, where it is difficult and expensive to bring back the waste, incinerators should be installed for on the spot disposal – as is being done in some other countries. The local communities and guides/porters would be paid for their services from the environmental cleanup fund – \$200 collected from every expedition – through the LB&RD Department, which will monitor and supervise the whole operation. Alpine Club of Pakistan may be associated in this initiative as it has already studied the problem and has developed several proposals for the solution of this problem.

Waste management on the glaciers is a difficult task, where normal waste management techniques cannot be applied. This is a major problem for some of the widely travelled glaciers in Northern Areas such as Boltoro. This problem needs to be thoroughly studied by the experts so that practicable solutions may be found before the problem becomes unmanageable.

Land Use Planning and Zoning is another important tool for development of sustainable tourism. It is important that haphazard development of tourism infrastructure is discouraged, that would ultimately result in mismanaged, dirty towns and cities, which has lost all natural beauty with concrete buildings everywhere looking out of place in the natural surroundings. This would not only discourage tourism but will create immense problems for the residents. Land use of different zones (agriculture, forests, residential, commercial) should be defined for all major towns and cities through Land Use Planning. The Karimabad Town Management Society has developed and to a large extent, successfully implemented a Land Use Plan for Karimabad with the assistance of AKCSP. However, the plan lacks legal cover and depends entirely on the goodwill of the community. The Northern Areas administration should provide legal cover to the plan by notifying the By-Laws and similar plans should be developed for the other cities and towns.

To take off pressure from some of the highly visited area, the lesser-known tourist destinations should be properly promoted and marketed.

6.10. Northern Areas Polo Festival

To promote one of the popular local sports – the original free style polo – an annual polo tournament should be held in Gilgit or any of the suitable polo grounds in Northern Area, on the pattern of Shandur Polo Festival, where polo matches between the teams of Northern Areas and Chitral would be played. Thus the tournament would be held twice a year, once in Shandur, as is already being done, where the team from Northern Areas visits to play the Chitral team, and then in Northern Areas with the Polo team from Chitral paying a return visit to play with the local teams. Later on polo teams from other areas of Pakistan and abroad may also be invited to play against the local teams. This event should be held on the fixed dates every year and should be vigorously publicised and promoted. It can be organized in partnership between local administration, PTDC and private sector,

with NATDC taking the lead role once it is established. This will not only help in popularising and preserving this local game, but the event would also attract a large number of local and foreign tourists.

6.11. Linking Cultural Resources with Economic Activities

Linking the cultural assets of an area with the economic activities, which bring tangible economic benefits for the communities concerned, is the best way to preserve it. One way of doing this is through cultural festivals, which not only help in promoting the local culture but can also lead to revenue generation for local tourism businesses and artisans. Though several traditional cultural festivals are held every year, in different parts of Northern Areas, it is essential that these festivals are properly managed and promoted in order to derive maximum benefits for all concerned. The dates of the festivals should be fixed i.e. they should be held on the same dates every year so that the tourists can plan their visits accordingly as the itineraries are sometimes finalized years in advance (in case of foreign tourists). There is also an urgent need for properly marketing and promoting these events as no one will participate in the festival if they don't know what is being offered and how and when to be there. The concerned stakeholders e.g. PTDC, local tourism related businesses like tour operators and hoteliers etc, CBOs, NGOs and later NATDC should coordinate their efforts and pool their resources to vigorously market such events through brochures, print and electronic media and websites.

Although the 'Silk Route Festival' which was organised by the Lok Virsa with active participation of the stakeholders, was a huge success and contributed positively to the promotion of tourism in Northern Areas, the local people were not fully involved in planning of the event. In future all such events should be planned and arranged at local level in decentralized manner, with full participation of local people at all levels, so that it is truly reflective of diverse cultures of the people of the Northern Areas. The Silk Route Festival should be made an annual event held on fixed dates

Production and sale of handicrafts is another way of generating economic activities through local cultural practices and preserving local arts and crafts. Artisans should be organised at the community level through various NGOs and RSPs for production and marketing of their products. The initial financing can come through micro finance facilities offered by financial institutions and RSPs (e.g. AKRSP), or grants from interested donors. The local artisans can then be linked with businesses, nationally and internationally, on mutually beneficial terms and conditions, for sale of their products. They can also display their products in hotels etc and may even open their own display centres in major tourist destinations, if feasible. When the economic benefits of this activity are visible, more people will learn the art, thus preserving local craftsmanship. Karakoram Handicraft Development Programme (KHDP) is doing a great job, by training and organization artisan from Hunza and marketing their products nationally and internationally. KHDP should look into the possibility of expanding their programme into other regions of Northern Areas.

6.12. Artisans Village

To promote and market local crafts and artisans, an 'Artisan Village' should be established at a proper location on pilot basis. The basic idea of an artisan village – which is a recommendation of the Sarhad Provincial Conservation Strategy (SPCS) – is that the local craftsmen, making different handicrafts can all sit under one roof, preferably, in a building representing the local architectural style, where they make, display and sell their handicrafts to the tourists. The tourists buy a ticket to enter the artisan village where they can see various kinds of handicrafts being made by the artisans at work. If they like, they can also buy the handicrafts at the display centre. The main attraction for tourists is that they can not only buy all the local handicrafts at one place but can also see them being made. The initial investment for setting up the artisan village can be provided by the Ministry of Culture or interested donors, which would not be much if the artisan village is established in an existing building. The operational costs can be met through the ticket sales. The artisans would use the space free of cost and would generate income for themselves through the sale of handicrafts and entry tickets. If the pilot artisan village is successful, the idea can be replicated in other places.

6.13. Architectural Heritage

The rich architectural heritage of Northern Areas including forts, palaces, traditional houses and mosques need to be conserved not only for its own sake but also as potential tourism assets. The first step in this direction is preparation of an inventory of all the important historical buildings. AKCSP with the assistance of IUCNP has already developed a database of the architectural heritage of Northern Areas; this information should also be printed in a form of booklet and published on a website. As all the sites cannot be conserved at the same time due to financial and other constraints, the important sites, which need immediate conservation, should be identified and prioritised.

The next step would be the actual conservation of the identified buildings. AKCSP can play a major role in this regard, by providing technical expertise and negotiating with donors for financing the conservation projects as it has done a great job by rehabilitating the Baltit Fort at Hunza. National Fund for Cultural Heritage (NFCH), Government of Pakistan is one possible source for financing some of the projects; the concerned organizations should approach NFCH in this regard. To ensure the sustainable conservation of the architectural heritage of Northern Areas, they should be linked with commercial tourist activities, which will ensure their continued maintenance. The historical buildings can be used as museums, art galleries, guesthouses and restaurants. This would not only generate revenue, as tourists would like to visit/live in traditional, rather than modern buildings but would also contribute to the promotion and conservation of the architectural heritage of the area.

PTDC and tour operators should also print a non – technical version of the information about the historical buildings for the tourists in the form of brochures and booklets.

6.14. Local Languages Promotion Authority or Academy

To promote and preserve the unique diversity and richness of the local languages, an institution for its preservation and promotion should be established with the primary goal of preserving all the material regarding local languages and literature and facilitation of research in this regard. Ministry of Culture can establish 'Northern Areas Languages Authority' or more appropriately, the institution can be a part of the proposed Karakoram University as Northern Areas Languages Department.

6.15. Northern Areas Arts Council

To promote the local performing arts and culture, the Ministry of Culture in collaboration with Lok Virsa should establish Northern Areas Arts Council, which should be managed by the local people having sufficient knowledge of local culture, traditions and performing arts. The Northern Areas Arts Council would support the regional arts and cultural organizations and promote the local arts and artists. In the short term, it should construct an auditorium with all the required facilities, initially at Gilgit and in the long term in all districts. This would provide a permanent place for the local artists for performing their arts. The Arts Council should regularly hold various festivals such as drama festivals, musharias and other cultural events in collaborations with the regional organizations and launch programmes for the support of local artisans in collaboration with relevant agencies/organizations.

6.16. Pakistan Television Centre, Gilgit

Currently there is little representation of the culture of Northern Areas on national electronic media, especially the Pakistan Television. Pakistan Television, currently have five centres in Karachi, Lahore, Quetta, Islamabad and Peshawar. These centres telecast different programmes in regional languages of their respective areas, representing the local culture.

Pakistan Television should establish a centre in Gilgit, with local language transmission. It would not only highlight the local culture, traditions and languages but would also promote local artists (writers, actors, singers etc).

6.17. Protection and Promotion of Archaeological Sites

Northern Areas have a large number of culturally and historically important archaeological sites, well documented by various expeditions and experts who have conducted research here, but this information is scattered in different journals and books and needs to be compiled at one place. The Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan should initiate this activity, which would be of great help to the researchers and tourists alike.

To prevent the archaeological sites from destruction due to human activities and ensure their proper maintenance, it is essential to give legal cover to their protection

by notifying the sites as 'Protected Sites' under the Pakistan Antiquities Act. Currently only one site – rock inscription at Danyor – is on the protected list. The Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan, should carry out a study to determine the sites that need to be notified as protected sites and then initiate necessary action for doing so.

Some of the sites, especially the rock carvings are of global significance and can be nominated to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural organization (UNESCO)'s "World Heritage List'. UNESCO maintains this list, where the cultural and natural sites, of global importance, are listed. Once listed, the sites are eligible for receiving technical and financial assistance for conservation and rehabilitation from "World Heritage Fund" of UNESCO. The Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan, in consultation with the experts and UNESCO Islamabad Office, should identify the sites that fulfil UNESCO's criteria, and should nominate them to the World Heritage List. Once a site is nominated, UNESCO sends its experts to determine whether the site fulfils the criteria, and if it does, it is inscribed on the list. Currently six sites from Pakistan (none from Northern Areas) are on the UNESCO's World Heritage List.

To fully exploit the tourism potential of the archaeological sites, publicity material such as brochures and booklets should be developed by PTDC in collaboration with Department of Archaeology. Facilities such as resting area, food stalls etc may be provided at some of the frequently visited archaeological sites and monuments in collaboration with the private sector. Signboards, with name and a brief description of the site should be installed at all important archaeological sites, especially along the KKH, for the convenience of the tourists.

6.18. Museums

There are no museums in Northern Areas to display and promote the artefacts and relics discovered from archaeological sites in the area. A museum should be established by the Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan in Gilgit in the first phase. Later, more museums should be established in all important tourist destinations. Efforts should be made to house these museums in historical buildings (forts, palaces, houses etc). This way the conservation and sustainable use of these buildings would be ensured and it would also provide an appropriate setting for the museum.



ANNEX 1:

IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN NA

District	Archaeological Sites
Gilgit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nawpura Stupas, the site of the famous Gilgit Manuscripts 2. Kargah Buddhist Settlement, above Kargah rock Buddha 3. Kargah Buddha, Rock Carvings 4. Hanzel Stupa – standing monument near Hanzel adjacent to the main Gilgit-Gahkuch Road. 5. Yashpur Khand (Hanzel) (Proto-Historic graves) 6. Sharot, proto-Historic graves. 7. Buddhist Stupa at Jutial known as Mughal Monument in Gilgit 8. Konodas Rock Carvings (Near the Government College Konodas) 9. Danyor Rock Carvings known as "Danyor Royal Inscription" in the late Brahmi Script of 7th-8th Century AD. 10. Partab Bridge Group of Rock Carvings 11. Pari Group of Rock Carvings 12. Sultanabad Proto-Historic Cemetery 13. Naltar, proto-Historic Graves 14. Alam Bridge Group of Rock Carvings containing inscriptions in Kharoshti and Brahmi with petroglyphs. (The famous Kharoshti inscription where Dardialins are mentioned is on these rocks) 15. Sacred Rock of Hunza at Ganesh containing inscriptions in Kharoshti/Brahmi and Chinese scripts
Ghizar	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Bubar (Prot-Historic Graves) 17. Gahkuch Rock Carvings and graves of Pre-Historic period and Buddhist period stupas, carvings and inscriptions in late Brahmi script 18. Hatoon Royal inscriptions (in Brahmi) 19. Hatoon Rock carvings of Pre-Historic era 20. Hatoon Pre-Historic Graves 21. Hatoon Megaliths 22. Chtorkhand Proto-Historic graves 23. Gupis Rock Carvings and Inscriptions 24. Daen Proto-Historic Graves 25. Salehrang Megaliths 26. Yasin Taus Proto-Historic Graves 27. Yasin Pir Qila proto-Historic Graves
Diamir	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 28. Chilas, Thalpan, Ziarat (Prehistoric and Buddhist Sites)

	<p>29. Shing Nala Buddhist Stupas and Inscriptions in Brahmi/Kharoshti Scripts</p> <p>30. Gas Pre-Historic Carvings and Proto-Historic Graves</p> <p>31. Hodur Carvings of late Buddhist period and Proto-Historic Graves</p> <p>32. Shomri (Tangir)</p> <p>33. Minargah</p> <p>34. Mainyar</p> <p>35. Thore</p>
Baltistan	<p>36. Basho Rock Carvings</p> <p>37. Manthal Rock Buddha Inscriptions (Skardu)</p> <p>38. Kachura Rock Carvings</p> <p>39. Kharpucho Fort (1550 AD)</p> <p>40. Shigar group of Rock Buddhas (Three Rock Buddhas)</p> <p>41. Buddhist Monastery at Shigar</p> <p>42. Lupa Group of Carvings (Stupas and inscriptions of 7th-8th Century AD)</p> <p>43. Theor Rock Carvings</p> <p>44. Gol Group of Rock Carvings (Stupas and inscriptions in Brahmi Script, late 8th century AD)</p> <p>45. Mehdi Abad Group of Rock Carvings (stupas in traditional Tibetan styles carvings of Bodhisattva with Tibetan features)</p> <p>46. Sermik Rock Painting – Depicting a hunting scene, late Buddhist period 9th-10th Century AD</p> <p>47. Yogo Group of Rock Carvings (Stupas and Inscriptions)</p>
Ghanche	<p>48. Kharpucho Group of Rock Carvings</p> <p>49. Ghertse Group of Carvings</p> <p>50. Ghanomour (Chenken) Tibetan Inscription</p>

Source: Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan

ANNEX 2:

IMPORTANT ARCHITECTURAL SITES IN NA

The details of these sites are available at <http://www.northernareas.gov.pk/akcsp.htm>.

District	Architectural Sites
Gilgit	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sacred Rock of Hunza, Rock carvings site in Hunza-Haldeikish, Gilgit District, close to the KKH.2. Danyore, Historical monument, displaying official inscriptions of the Patola Shahis in Danyore village, Gilgit, in the property of Habib Mazhar, s.o. Ali Madad.3. Minar of Taj Moghal, Stupa building 1000 ft above Gilgit – Jutial, on a mountain ridge.4. Naupura, Kargah, Site of Buddhist monastery and stupa; rock relief of a standing Buddha in Kargah, near Gilgit.5. Henzal Stupa, Stupa near Henzal village, Gilgit District, close to the road.
Baltistan	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Shigar Ruins, Primary Buddhist site in the Shigar valley.7. Skardu – Mantal Buddha, Manthal village and Satpara Lake, located south of Skardu, Baltistan.
Diamer	<ol style="list-style-type: none">8. Chilas/Thalpan complex, Rock carving sites, ruined settlement sites.9. Chilas 2, Rock Carving on the entrance to Gilgit which connects to Bunji, a village in the neighborhood of Chilas.10. Shing Nala, Rock carving site on East of the mouth of the Shing Nala, Diamer Distr., east of Chilas at the ancient route between Thalpan.
Ghizer	<ol style="list-style-type: none">11. Buber Buddha, Private property in Buber Punyal, Ghizer District.12. Hatun Rock, Rock inscription in Hatun village, lower Ishkoman Valley, Ghizer District.
Ghizer	<ol style="list-style-type: none">13. Altit Fort, Historic monument fort is located in Altit a historic village on the eastern side of Karimabad.14. Baltit Fort, Historic monument is located in Karimabad.
Ganche	<ol style="list-style-type: none">15. Khaplu Fort / Palace, Historic Monument located in Khaplu village, Ganche District.16. Shigar Fort / Palace, Historic Monument located in Shigar valley.

Hunza

17. Heritage enclave consisting of Karimabad (Baltit), Altit, Ganish scared rock and outstanding natural elements, Mixed site (heritage enclave) in Hunza.
18. Altit Hunza, Out standing historic settlement and place of immense beauty in Altit Hunza.
19. Karimabad (Baltit) Hunza, Out standing historic settlement and place of immense beauty in Karimabad Hunza.
20. Ganish Hunza, Historical settlement at Ganish Hunza.
21. Gulmit Qalah, Gojal, Historic settlement in exceptional natural surroundings. A combined work of man and Nature in Gulmit, Gojal, Hunza.
22. Upgarchi Gojal, Historic village in natural setting in Upgrachi Gojal Hunza.
23. Thol Nagar, Historical settlement in exceptional natural surrounding. A combined work of nature and man presenting a homogenous whole in Thol Nagar.
24. Altit Entrances, the Covered and uncovered spaces, A 'place' of great cultural and architectural significance at Altit Hunza.
25. Altit Jataq (Common Spaces), A 'place' of great Heritage significance in Altit Hunza.
26. Ganish - Jataq or Common Open Space, A 'place' of immense cultural significance in Ganish Hunza.
27. Ganish - Water Reservoir and Surrounding Buildings, A 'place' of cultural significance, Ganish Hunza.
28. Shahbaran/ Polo Ground & the Bazaar; Karimabad, A site of cultural and religious significance, housing traditional cultural activities and adapting to contemporary needs of the community in Central Hunza.
29. Thol – Biak, A Place of great cultural significance at Thol, Nagar Valley.
30. Mamorokutz Mosque, Historical Building at Ganish, Hunza.

Skardu

31. Halpapa - Shigar Valley, Historical settlement in exceptional natural surroundings in Shigar Skardu.
32. Chinpa- Shigar Valley, Historical Settlement in Shigar valley.
33. Skardu, Baltistan, Historic City in Skardu.
34. Amburiq Mosque, Shigar valley is sited at a height of 6900 feet, located on the North side of the Skardu town at a distance of 19 miles. The Amburiq Mosque is located in Amburiq settlement and it is at a two minutes drive from the main road of Shigar valley.

Source: AKCSP, 2002.

ANNEX 3:

STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

Detailed individual meetings were held with the following stakeholders, to discuss the issues and recommendations presented in this background paper:

Mr. Essa Khan	Aga Khan, Cultural Service, Pakistan (AKCSP), Gilgit Office	August 17, 2001 at AKCSP Office, Gilgit
Mr. Sheristan Khan	Manager, Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Motel, Gilgit	August 17, 2001 at PTDC Motel Gilgit
Mr. Irshad Khan Abbasi	Head, Gilgit Office, World Wide Fund for Nature, Pakistan (WWF-P)	August 17, 2001 at WWF-P Gilgit Office
Mr. Ghulam Murtaza Jajari	President, Gilgit Arts & Cultural Council, Gilgit	August 16, 2001 at Hotel Riveria, Gilgit
Dr. M. Nasim Khan	Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar.	Several times, at Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar
Mr. Mohammad Bahadur Khan	Deputy Director, Sub Regional Office, Peshawar, Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan.	September 13, 2001, at his office in Peshawar
Col (R.) Manzoor Hussain	Secretary, Alpine Club of Pakistan	October 4, 2001, at his office in Rawalpindi

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Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (www.macp-pk.org)

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (www.tourism.gov.pk)

The Ecotourism Society (www.ecotourism.org)

Web Site of Dr. John Mock and Kimberley O'Neil
(www.monitor.net/~jmko/karakoram/default.html)

World Tourism Organization (www.world-tourism.org)

World Wide Fund for Nature – Pakistan (www.wwf-pk.org)



IUCN–The World Conservation Union

IUCN is a world leader in developing knowledge and understanding for effective conservation action.

A unique worldwide partnership, IUCN brings together states, government agencies and NGO members, and some 10,000 scientists and experts from 181 countries in a global web of networks to provide a neutral forum for dialogue & action on environment & sustainable development issues.

IUCN Pakistan has five programme offices in cities from the north to the south, multiple field offices, a large portfolio of projects and a staff of 250. It is one of the 6 Country Offices of IUCN's Asia Programme, covering 17 countries with a workforce of nearly 500.

The UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme represents a new approach based on dialogue and stakeholder cooperation where planning for tourism and heritage management is integrated at a destination level, the natural and cultural assets are valued and protected, and appropriate tourism developed. Vision. World Heritage and tourism stakeholders share responsibility for conservation of our common cultural and natural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value and for sustainable development through appropriate tourism management. Mission. In the path towards sustainable tourism highlight true examples of sustainable tourism, experiences that prove that a sustainable future is possible. They are the new sustainable tourism lighthouses that are appearing across the planet; places that have already proven this to be a feasible option, sustainable tourism case studies and success stories that can become models to be replicated or from which learnings may be extracted towards the development of viable solutions at different scales. 17 sustainable tourism examples. Gijón, Example of Sustainable Destination

CULTURE AND TRADITION: Gijón is a city rooted popular values and with plenty of activities and museums that allow tourists to experience firsthand the history and local customs.