

# ASSESSING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES IN ANURADHAPURA HOTELS: A CASE STUDY OF MANAGEMENT, SOCIO-ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

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**Abstract:** As global tourist arrival numbers continue to rise, there are noticeable shifts in demand and supply trends regarding sustainable tourism practices. The Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) is increasingly adopting and implementing sustainable tourism practices across various regions of the country. Anuradhapura, situated in the North Central province, is one such area where sustainable tourism practices have been put into effect. This study aims to examine the current sustainable tourism practices in the hotels of the Anuradhapura area. The research primarily focused on management, socio-economic, and environmental aspects, using the Global Sustainable Tourism Council Criteria (2013) as a model. The objectives included identifying the current sustainable tourism practices in the hotels in Anuradhapura, assessing the positive impacts of these practices on the local community, and determining the benefits that hotels derive from implementing sustainable tourism practices. To achieve these objectives, a mixed methods approach was employed, combining data from questionnaires to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject. The results indicate that the current level of sustainable tourism practices in Anuradhapura hotels is largely categorized as encouraging. Thematic analysis further revealed nuanced insights, shedding light on specific themes within the data, such as the positive impacts on socio-cultural and economic aspects perceived by local communities. The implementation of these practices has enabled hotels to realize benefits such as providing a safe and healthy environment for their guests and employees, as well as fostering better relationships with the local community. Consequently, this study underscores the need for increased focus by management on improving their sustainable tourism practices in Anuradhapura, located in the North Central province.

**Keywords:** Anuradhapura Hotels; Environmental impacts; Management Impacts; Sustainable Tourism Practices;