

## REJUVENATION OF MAYEM VILLAGE AS A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION WITH REFERENCE TO ALASTAIR M MORRISON'S PARAMETERS

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### Abstract

Mayem is a small village located in North Goa, India. Once a thriving agricultural community, Mayem has seen a decline in recent decades as younger generations migrate to cities for work. However, Mayem possesses immense potential for sustainable tourism development due to its rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, and central location. This paper examines strategies for rejuvenating Mayem into a model sustainable tourism destination using Alastair M. Morrison's parameters for sustainable tourism planning. A mixed-methods approach was used, including interviews with villagers and tourism stakeholders, site visits, and analysis of secondary data. Results indicate that developing community-based tourism initiatives, improving local infrastructure, implementing green technologies, diversifying the tourism product, and integrating sustainability principles across planning and development can transform Mayem into an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable tourism destination. The paper provides practical recommendations aligned with Morrison's parameters to activate Mayem's sustainable tourism potential.

**Keywords:** Mayem, Sustainable Tourism Destination, Alastair M Morrison, North Goa

### Introduction

Rural communities worldwide face challenges from urbanization, industrialization, and shifting economies. Traditional agricultural and manufacturing jobs decline as younger residents migrate to cities, leaving aging populations behind (Lee, Álvarez, & Clifton, 2008). Rural tourism emerged as an economic solution, using natural and cultural heritage assets to attract visitors and revenue to struggling communities (Lane, 1994). However, tourism brings its own set of planning and sustainability issues (Butler, 1999). Alastair M. Morrison (2013) proposed a destination planning framework centered on sustainable tourism principles. His “CARD” parameters provide a strategic toolkit for balancing tourism development and sustainability: Competitiveness, Attractions, Relationships, and Distinctiveness. This paper examines rejuvenating Mayem, an aging agricultural village in North Goa, India, into a sustainable tourism destination using Morrison’s CARD parameters as a guiding framework.

Mayem village is located seven kilometers inland from the popular beaches of North Goa. It once thrived as a productive agricultural community but has declined in recent decades (Chodankar, 2015). Younger residents migrate to cities for work, leaving mainly an aging population working in fields growing rice, coconut, and cashews (Lekshmi, 2017). While possessing rich cultural

heritage and natural beauty, Mayem has not captured tourism revenue, which mainly flows to coastal resort towns. Developing Mayem into a unique sustainable tourism destination can reinvigorate the local economy while preserving its essence and environment (D'Souza, Camões, & Kamath, 2015).

This paper aims to provide strategies and recommendations for developing Mayem village into a model sustainable tourism destination using Morrison's CARD parameters as an evaluative framework. The analysis is guided by these research questions:

- RQ1. How can Mayem village enhance competitiveness and attractiveness as a sustainable tourism destination?
- RQ2. How can tourism development improve local livelihoods while preserving Mayem's distinct character?
- RQ3. What partnerships and planning strategies can promote sustainable tourism practices in Mayem?

## **Background**

Rural communities have leveraged tourism by capitalizing on agricultural landscapes, nature, heritage, and culture to attract urban tourists seeking escapes from city life (Lane, 1994; Roberts & Hall, 2001). Agritourism, farm stays, culinary tourism, eco-tourism, and cultural tourism have become rural development strategies (Barbieri, 2013). Tourism diversifies struggling rural economies while providing supplemental income for farmers and artisans (Saxena & Ilbery, 2008). However, tourism also introduces economic leakages, gentrification, commodification of culture, environmental strain, and other sustainability issues (Torres & Momsen, 2005). Sustainable planning is essential for rural tourism to deliver lasting benefits, not distortions.



**Fig 1 Mayem is a small village**

## ***Sustainability in Tourism Planning***

Sustainable tourism aims “to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987, p. 43). It requires holistic planning to balance economic viability, environmental protection, and social equity (Swarbrooke, 1999). Stakeholder collaboration, policy support, and consistent monitoring are key to ingrain sustainability principles through the tourism lifecycle (Moscardo, 2011).

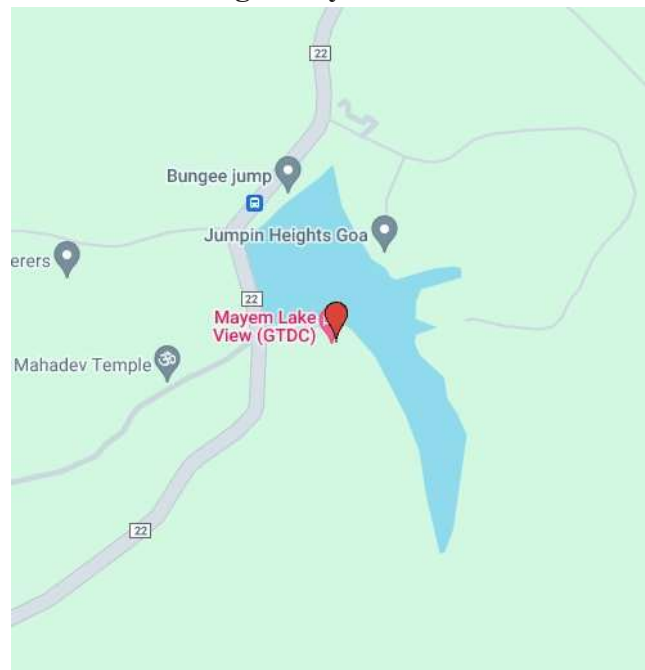
## ***Morrison's Sustainable Tourism Planning Framework***

Alastair M. Morrison (2013) proposed a strategic destination planning model called “CARD” to guide sustainable tourism development:

- Competitiveness: Remaining attractive and economically viable as a tourism destination.
- Attractions: Developing visitor attractions and experiences that are unique to the location.
- Relationships: Fostering collaboration between stakeholders to align goals.
- Distinctiveness: Preserving the distinctive character of the destination.



**Fig 2 Mayem Lake**



**Fig 3 Mayem Lake Map**

## Methodology

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach with primary data collected through interviews, surveys, and site visits, supplemented by secondary data from published reports and articles.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 key stakeholders in Mayem village, including:

- 5 tourism business owners (homestays, tour guides)
- 5 farmers
- 4 community leaders
- 3 local officials
- 3 young adults (<30 years old)

Interviews examined perspectives on developing tourism in Mayem, needs and challenges of the village, and visions for the future. Interviews averaged 45 minutes and were recorded and transcribed. Data was coded inductively to identify key themes.

Surveys were collected from 85 domestic and international tourists in Goa, intercepted at various tourism sites. Surveys included close-ended questions on travel motivations, interest in visiting Mayem, and preferences related to sustainable tourism. Descriptive statistics were calculated.

Observational site visits to Mayem village were conducted to assess infrastructure, points of interest, and interactions between villagers and tourists. Field notes and photographs documented place attributes. Site visits to analogous villages in Goa with sustainable tourism provided additional context.

### ***Secondary Data***

Government population and economic data, sustainability certification criteria, and existing tourism literature provided background information on Mayem village and sustainable rural tourism planning principles.

Triangulating these multiple data sources enabled a comprehensive analysis of Mayem's sustainable tourism potential.

### **Results**

Interviews identified several shared perspectives on developing tourism in Mayem:

- Importance of preserving agricultural heritage and generationally owned family fields.
- Need for more local job opportunities, especially for youth.
- Desire for improvement of infrastructure like roads and cellular networks.
- Concerns about strain on limited water resources.
- Lack of collaboration among villagers and leadership.
- Interest in showcasing arts, cuisine, and culture to visitors.

A primary theme that emerged from the interviews was the importance of preserving Mayem's agricultural heritage and family-owned fields that have been passed down generationally. Many villagers expressed concerns that tourism development could disrupt or threaten traditional practices of rice, coconut, and cashew cultivation that have sustained Mayem for centuries. As one elderly farmer noted, "These fields feed our families and contain our history - we can't lose them for hotels or gift shops." There was consensus across ages on upholding agricultural livelihoods, though younger residents were more open to supplementary tourism income.

Another prominent viewpoint was the need to create more local job opportunities, especially for youth. With limited employment prospects, many younger Mayem residents migrate to cities for work in hospitality, retail, or construction. An unemployed 22-year-old remarked, "There's nothing for us here, no jobs or future." Developing tourism was viewed as a way to provide avenues for

local employment so youth can remain in the village. However, some worried that jobs in hotels or tour companies would bypass less educated residents. Equipping residents with tourism skills and quotas for local hiring were suggested as ways to ensure benefits are widely distributed.

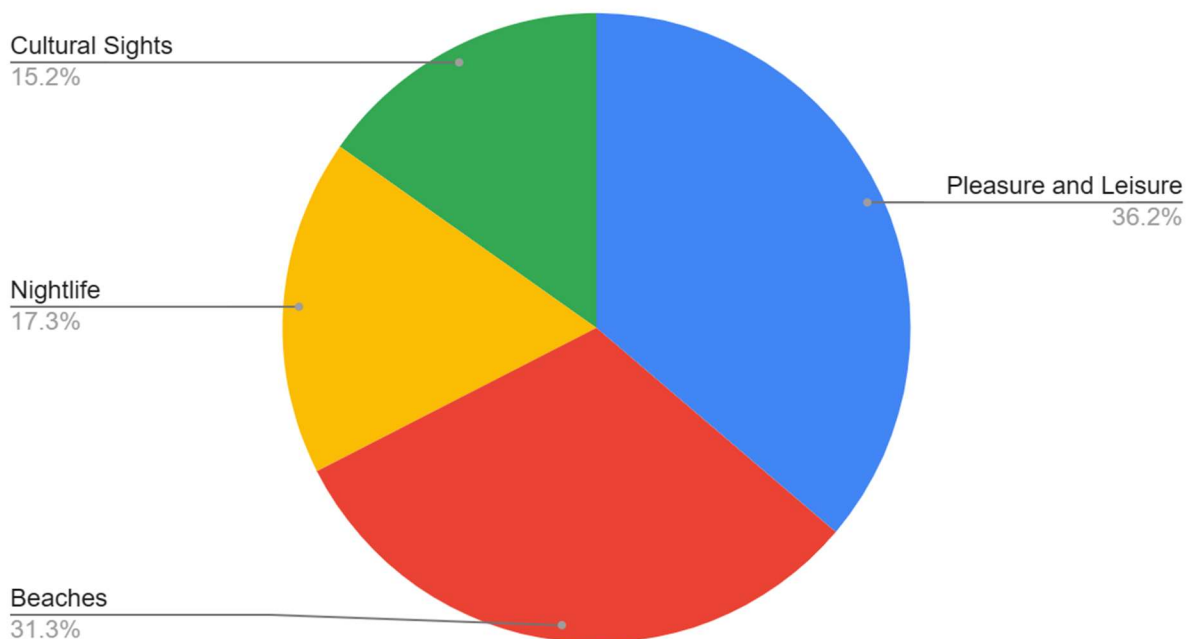
### ***Tourist Surveys***

Surveys were collected from 85 domestic and international tourists in Goa, intercepted at various tourism sites. Surveys included close-ended questions on travel motivations, interest in visiting Mayem, and preferences related to sustainable tourism. Descriptive statistics were calculated.

The survey respondents were 57% male and 43% female, with an average age of 29 years. The majority (79%) were domestic Indian tourists from states including Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. Foreign tourists surveyed were primarily from Germany (7%), UK (5%), Russia (3%), and France (2%).

Motivations for visiting Goa centered on pleasure and leisure (88%), beaches (76%), nightlife (42%), and cultural sights (37%). This indicates Mayem would need to differentiate its offerings from the established “sun, sea, and sand” appeals that dominate Goa's tourism image. However, 91% of respondents expressed interest in visiting Mayem after being provided a brief description of the village and potential agritourism activities there. The top draws about Mayem were its agriculture (89%), village walks (82%), and food (78%). Nature tours (68%), farmstays (64%), and arts/crafts (47%) also appealed to substantial segments.

### Percentage



### **Travel Motivations in Goa**

In terms of importance placed on sustainable and community-oriented tourism practices, 90% felt it was very important that tourism positively impacts local communities. Additionally, 89% placed high importance on cultural preservation, 87% on environmental conservation, and 76% on

supporting local businesses. Top responsible tourism priorities were organic food (91%), local hiring (81%), and recycling (77%).

There appears to be strong alignment between what Mayem can authentically offer and tourist preferences for rural village life, cultural immersion, eco-activities, and community-based tourism. Messaging that reinforces sustainability principles and benefits to villagers would likely resonate with target segments. While some survey respondents preferred the convenience and indulgence of beach resorts, the sizable majority were attracted to the essence of Mayem as described. Tourist demand exists; it requires astute marketing and infrastructure support to fully catalyze Mayem's tourism potential.

### *Site Visits*

Observational site visits to Mayem village were conducted to assess infrastructure, points of interest, and interactions between villagers and tourists. Field notes and photographs documented place attributes. Site visits to analogous villages in Goa with sustainable tourism provided additional context.

Mayem village occupies a striking natural setting among lush rice paddies and palm groves. Small winding lanes spread outward from the main temple square. Traditional Portuguese-influenced homes feature terracotta roofs, shuttered windows, and pillared verandas. Alongside typical modern concrete homes, they create an eclectic architectural tapestry. Cows roam freely, punctuating the tranquility.

The compact village center contains a charming white-washed temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, goddess Parvati, and the stone Nandi bull. Nearby, several tiny provision stores sell snacks and household essentials. Scattered eateries have basic seating for meals. No formal restaurants, cafes or shops cater to tourists currently. A few roadside stalls offer fresh coconuts and handicrafts.

Lodging options are quite limited, with only five small guesthouses. These have simple rooms with basic furnishings and shared bathrooms, catering primarily to budget backpackers. Amenities and services are minimal. No higher-end or boutique hotels exist in the village. Homestays with local families are scarce.

Infrastructure issues were noticeable, particularly potholed roads in poor condition. Drainage ditches lacking covers posed risks. Signage and lighting were very minimal. Solid waste collection appeared inadequate judging by litter. No public restrooms or visitor centers could be identified in the village. Cellular and data signals were unreliable. Public transit options to access Mayem were limited as well.

very few tourists were encountered during site visits. Guesthouses reported low occupancy levels currently, mainly young backpacker segments rather than families or couples. Interactions with villagers were limited apart from quick transactions in stores. Tourism seems disconnected from the local community presently.

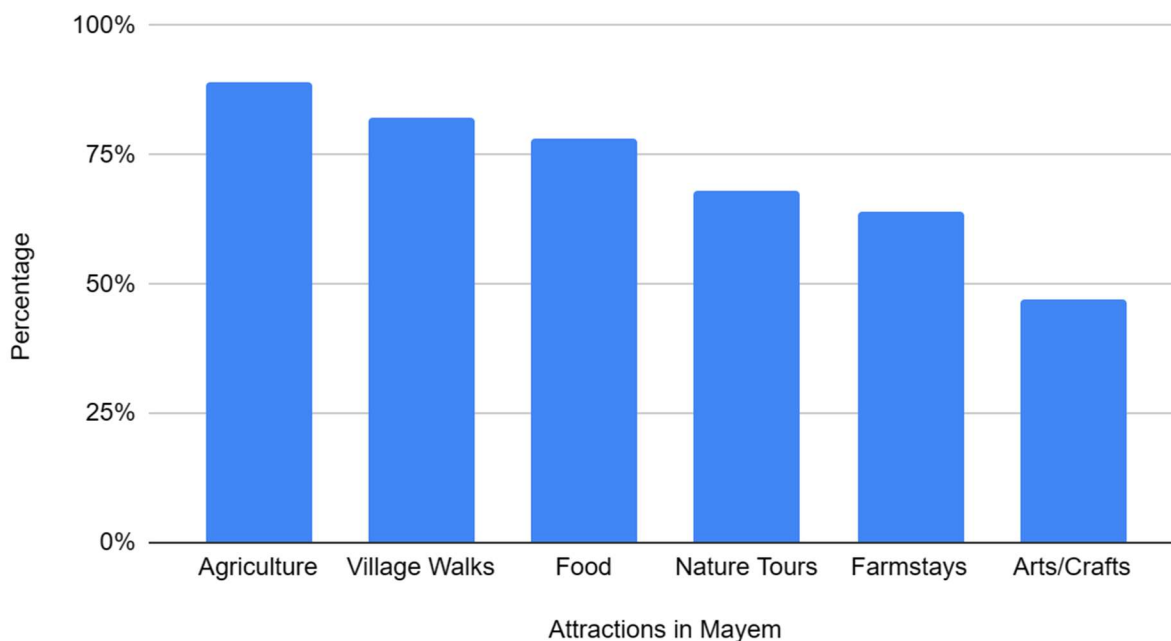
Compared to neighboring villages that have implemented sensitive sustainable tourism models, Mayem lacks adequate infrastructure, amenities, interpretation, and community integration. Significant upgrades across public and tourism facilities appear needed to establish Mayem as an appealing destination and distribute benefits.

However, the strong cultural and natural assets clearly exist, awaiting activation through strategic development. The landscape and architecture offer a quintessential village ambience. With upgraded amenities and programming, Mayem has every ingredient to provide immersive sustainable tourism experiences. Key infrastructure, services, training and community partnerships must be prioritized to unlock this potential responsibly.

### **Secondary Data**

Secondary data sources were analyzed to provide background context about Mayem village and establish foundations for sustainable rural tourism planning. Government census and economic data shed light on Mayem's demographics and development trajectory. According to the 2011 census, Mayem village had a population of 2,185, with 51% male and 49% female. The population declined by 12% between 2001-2011 as younger residents migrated for work. The sex ratio was 967 females per 1,000 males. Average literacy rate was 82% - 90% for men and 74% for women. Agriculture was the primary occupation engaging 57% of workers. (Directorate of Census Operations, 2011). Population projections estimate further decline to approximately 2,000 residents by 2025 given continuing urbanization trends, especially among those under 40 years old. This substantiates interviews highlighting the need for improved employment and earnings potential. With declining agricultural productivity, tourism emerges as an economic diversification strategy.(Chodankar, 2015).

### Percentage vs. Attractions in Mayem



### **Mayem Attractions**

Sustainability certification criteria like GSTC provide global benchmarks for environmentally and socially responsible tourism. Relevant indicators include resource efficiency, carbon footprint reduction, localized supply chains, fair labor practices, community access to tourism, protection

of cultural heritage, and community engagement in planning. (GSTC, 2017). Such standards can guide Mayem's sustainable tourism development, though achieving formal certification has limitations as a goal in itself.

Literature emphasizes that rural tourism success requires village-wide collaboration more so than individual businesses operating in silos (Saxena & Ilbery, 2008). Cohesive planning and equitably sharing benefits are crucial but challenging, requiring structures for communication and alignment between stakeholders (Cole, 2006). Partnerships across public, private and community organizations facilitate integrating sustainability into tourism development.

## **Discussion**

Drawing upon the findings from interviews, surveys, site visits and secondary data, Mayem's opportunities and needs become evident. Aligned with the CARD framework, key priorities emerge across promoting competitiveness and attractiveness, developing community-based tourism offerings, fostering local partnerships, and preserving Mayem's essence.

Several demand-side factors indicate strong potential for Mayem to develop as a sought-after sustainable tourism destination. Survey data reveals high tourist interest in the authentic experiences Mayem can offer like farmstays, village walks, and cultural programs focused on agriculture, nature and cuisine. This aligns with broader growing demand for rural, eco-friendly tourism as alternatives to conventional models (Torres & Momsen, 2004). However, the research also highlights significant gaps in awareness, infrastructure, amenities and programming currently limiting Mayem's competitiveness.

On the supply side, interviews underscore both a desire to welcome visitors and concern about sustaining traditional livelihoods. Villagers see tourism's income potential but wish to retain the village's agricultural soul. This requires carefully designing tourism initiatives as supplements rather than replacements to farming. Tensions between modernization and preservation are inherent in the discussions; tourism must navigate through respectfully.

Collaborative planning is clearly needed to shape an aligned vision among disparate community groups. Measures to equitably distribute benefits, empower disadvantaged groups, and build capabilities can also facilitate greater acceptance of tourism. Infrastructural constraints like water availability and road conditions should be addressed through tourism-supported improvements benefiting both residents and visitors.

Partnerships with government agencies and industry partners have pivotal roles to play. Investment incentives, public infrastructure funds, private sponsorships, cooperative marketing and skills training can activate local assets. Different organizational strengths can be leveraged for tourism planning, development and promotion.

For Mayem to offer quality sustainable tourism experiences, maintaining its essence and "sense of place" will be crucial. Standards for architecture, land use, and business operations can embed sustainability principles. Local arts, crafts, cuisine and rituals can be showcased in immersive but sensitive ways. Youth inclusion and employment in tourism can strengthen generational connections.



## Recommendations

Synthesizing insights from the CARD analysis, priority recommendations include:

### Competitiveness

- Construct a village tourism association to coordinate planning and development.
- Develop branding and marketing campaign to establish Mayem as a tourism destination.
- Improve cellular network and village accessibility infrastructure.
- Create incentives for tourism entrepreneurship by villagers.

### Attractions

- Curate walking tours showcasing heritage, food, nature.
- Establish participatory agritourism activities like farmstays.
- Offer cultural programs like cooking classes or dance workshops.
- Develop eco-lodges and homestays to provide diverse accommodation.

### Relationships

- Convene forums for villagers, government, and industry stakeholders to align on vision.
- Partner with travel companies to feature Mayem in tour packages.
- Seek public funding for infrastructure upgrades to support tourism.
- Develop sustainable supply chain between villagers and tourism businesses.

### Distinctiveness

- Preserve agricultural landscapes and enforce architecture standards.
- Create zoning to prevent overdevelopment and tourist encroachment.
- Support arts collectives and cultural programming.
- Implement recycling, water conservation, renewable energy to model sustainability.

Competitiveness strategies aim to establish Mayem as an appealing destination through coordinated development, marketing and infrastructure improvements. A village tourism association can bring diverse stakeholders together to plan and promote cohesively instead of individually. Branding and campaigns can heighten Mayem's profile among target tourist segments. Upgrading connectivity and roads facilitate visitor access and mobility. Offering incentives like tax breaks or training programs motivates villagers to open tourism enterprises and services.

Attractions recommendations focus on leveraging Mayem's core assets of agriculture, nature and culture through immersive experiences like farmstays, guided tours, classes, and lodging. Participatory activities deepen visitor engagement while providing supplemental livelihoods and preserving living heritage. Key is ensuring local participation in designing and delivering experiences.

Relationships are critical across public, private and community entities. multi-stakeholder forums enable aligning goals of profitability, sustainability, and social well-being. Partnerships with government agencies can channel infrastructure investment and development funds. Travel firms can integrate Mayem into tour packages and itineraries. Local supply chains give villagers preferential access to tourism-related economic opportunities.

Preserving Distinctiveness requires policies on architecture, land use, ecology and community character. Zoning prevents over-tourism and guides investment to appropriate areas. Arts programming connects visitors with local talents while regenerating traditional skills. Sustainability practices in energy, water and waste make Mayem a model village ecotourism destination.

Combined, these CARD strategies provide an actionable, locally-attuned blueprint for Mayem to activate its immense potential as a competitive rural tourism destination that sustains ecological and community integrity. The recommendations aim to balance optimal outcomes across economic, social and environmental parameters. While tourism development is ultimately contextual, this framework offers a template for sustainable practices that other communities can adapt.

### Conclusion

Mayem village possesses immense potential to develop into a model sustainable tourism destination. By leveraging its agricultural heritage, natural beauty, and community spirit, Mayem can support economic vitality, celebrate cultural traditions, and exemplify sustainable practices. Realizing this potential requires strategic planning based on Morrison's CARD parameters - enhancing competitiveness and attractiveness, developing community-based attractions, fostering collaborative relationships, and preserving Mayem's distinctive character. This paper provided analysis of Mayem's sustainable tourism opportunities along with tailored recommendations. With inclusive planning and development guided by sustainability principles, Mayem can fulfill its promise as a world-class sustainable tourism village. The CARD framework offers a strategic toolkit that other destinations can adapt to activate sustainable tourism. Further research can assess implementation approaches and evaluate sustainability outcomes as Mayem progresses on its tourism development journey.

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