

## Research Paper

# Local foods as an Impetus for Strengthening Leisure, Recreation and Sustainable Tourism in East Africa

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**Abstract:** Leisure and recreation are relatively young fields of study in East Africa; as such, there is a scarcity of published information in these fields. Tourism on the other hand, has been extensively studied in this area. However, studies have focused on economic benefits of tourism. Food is considered to be a central component in all three fields but only a handful of studies have focused on the contribution of local food in the field. This study proposes that promoting local food can enhance leisure, recreation and tourism management leading to sustainability of parks and protected areas in the region.

**Keywords:** Food, leisure, recreation, tourism, parks and protected areas

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## Introduction

This article discusses the relationship between local food, leisure, recreation and tourism and the rationale for promoting local foods as a means of stimulating and promoting leisure, recreation and sustainable tourism in East Africa. The recreation and tourism industry in particular, has long been viewed by many scholars and international agencies as having the potential to contribute significantly to community development (Higham, 2005; Seetanah, 2011; UNWTO, 2007). In recent years, the world has witnessed unprecedented growth of tourism leading to major economic and social cultural changes in many developing countries (Staff, 2001). Correspondingly, these changes have increased the focus on tourism for some countries and have raised significant concerns on how agriculture, particularly

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local food productions, can be strengthened through increased tourism demands (Richards, 2002). The literature on tourism has shown that local foods have the potential to promote tourism in specific destinations due to their authentic and distinctive character (Cohen & Avieli, 2004).

Food is considered to be an essential component of our daily lives not only from physiological and nutritional point of view but also from psychological, sociological, economic and cultural perspectives. It is argued that “we are what we eat” (Bell, 1997), and that we normally choose to eat particular types of foods and discard others to be what we aspire to be, to satisfy our own personal internal motivations and/or for the purpose of impressing our significant others (Richards, 2002), with Valentine (1999) contending that we are caught between such discourses of self-control in relation to food, and the pleasurable, hedonistic, and social aspects of eating, which are related to identity, bodily pleasures and sexual desires.

The literature on tourism has extensively linked tourism with food consumption (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Hall, Sharples, Mitchell, Macionis & Cambourne, 2003). Local food production and consumption has been widely viewed as a tool for fulfilling tourist experiences, identity formation (there is a strong relationship between certain localities and certain types of food), promoting food mobility, enhancing leisure for tourists, promoting recreation to tourists (some tourists are involved in planting, harvesting and processing local foods), enhancing cultural capital, promoting localisation to counterbalance the effects of globalisation, spreading the local taste and culture, selling the local destination, promoting local food production, creating employments and boosting the local economy in general (Boniface, 2003; Hall & Sharples, 2008; Hall et al., 2003; Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Telfer & Wall, 2000).

The relationship between food consumption and tourist expenditure is interesting in its own right, with some scholars arguing that expenditures between a quarter and a third of tourist expenses are attributable to food and beverages (see for example, Hall et al., 2003; Telfer & Wall, 2000). It has also been argued that in some niche markets, this rate may be even higher (Robinson & Clifford, 2012). Correspondingly, various scholars have shown that food and wine tourism is emerging as an increasingly important component of rural diversification and development (Hall, 2000a, 2000b) and that tourists visiting rural areas for the purpose of experiencing local foods and favourite wines consider such experiences as part of their leisure and recreation (Alant & Bruwer, 2004).

The relationship between leisure, recreation and tourism has been widely explored in the literature (e.g. Leiper, 1990; Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Mieczkowski, 1981; Murphy, 1985). Some of the latter mentioned authors have argued that specific types of tourism can be distinguished based on leisure attributes (Hamilton-Smith, 1987), while others have pointed out that tourism is a special form of leisure, having its own special characteristics (Leiper, 1990). Similarly,

Moore, Cushman & Simmons (1995, p. 68) have shown that leisure and tourism are inextricably connected and make the case that “the fields of leisure and tourism are clearly fuzzy or overlapping and creating taxonomies that separate the two is not only a difficult task but it may also obscure their similarities”. In a similar view, (Mckercher, 1996, p. 563) contended that “the line between tourism and recreation in most national parks blurs to such an extent that one is indistinguishable from the other”.

Leisure, recreation and tourism have also been described as a function of time (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Murphy, 1985). These authors have argued specifically that leisure is a measure of time, the discretionary time remaining after work, sleep, and necessary personal and household chores. Recreation, on the other hand, has been described as encompassing a wide variety of activities that are undertaken during leisure (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Murphy, 1985). Likewise, tourism has sometimes been viewed within the broader framework of leisure and recreation (Molnar, Eby & Hopp, 1996). This view is supported by Mieczkowski (1981) who described tourism as an aspect of recreation that he viewed as leisure. Smith and Godbey (1991) argued that travel undertaken in relative freedom as a pleasurable, intrinsically rewarding activity falls within most conceptualisation of leisure or recreation. Although distinctions between tourism, leisure, and recreation have often led to the development of separate strands of research, there is an increasing awareness of the linkages between the three phenomena (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Murphy, 1985). In pointing out the relationship between leisure, recreation and tourism, Smith & Godbey (1991) concluded that recreation and leisure scholars are making increasing contributions to the literature on tourism and leisure.

Despite the importance of local food in tourism, leisure and recreation, local food consumption has largely been neglected in the tourism literature, particularly in developing countries where tourism is an important contributor to the economy. This study explores the literature on local food, leisure and recreation and argues that a clear understanding of the nexus between these concepts can promote sustainable tourism, leisure and recreation in East African countries. This connection is particularly important because tourism in these countries depends primarily on natural resources such as forestry, mountain landscapes, beach and wildlife (Adger, Huq, Brown, Conway & Hulme, 2003; Thomas & Twyman, 2005; World Bank, 2000). However, the quality of some of these natural resources have been declining over time due a number of factors including climate change thus, jeopardising further tourism development. In addition to that, relying heavily on natural resources, particularly wildlife, implies that other potentials have not been fully explored and utilised. This can be attributed to lack of knowledge and experience as suggested by Tosun (2000) and Weiler & Ham (2002) as well as lack of understanding of the connection between tourism, leisure, recreation, park and protected areas.

Local food consumption in the tourism industry is not only a means of generating revenue, but is also an integral part of the overall tourist experience (Boniface, 2003; Hall & Sharples, 2008; Hjalager & Richards, 2002). Local food consumption can therefore be one of the motivating factors for tourists to visit and revisit the destination, particularly if the food and the related services are of high quality. Literature on tourism shows that locally distinctive food can be important both as a tourism attraction and in helping to shape the image of a destination (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Hall et al., 2003; du Rand & Heath, 2006). This paper focuses on three main research questions: What is the tourist demand for local foods? What is the link between local food and parks/protected areas? What is the role of local food in, tourism, recreation and leisure settings?

### Methodology

A literature review was carried out between January and June 2014 via electronic search using online scientific databases such as African Journals Online (AJOL-3 articles), Google Scholar (35 articles), Springer (7 articles), Elsevier (10 articles), SagePub (6 articles), ScienceDirect (5 articles), and Tandfonline (20 articles). The research questions and keywords such as “local + food”, “local + food + tourism”, “local + food + leisure” and “local + food + recreation” were used in this study to construct search strings for use with the electronic databases. These databases were chosen because they contained most of the information required for this review. A thorough appraisal of articles was conducted and resulted in the selection of 176 articles. A further in-depth review of these articles led to a final selection of 86 articles which specifically focused on food, tourism, leisure and recreation.

During the search, preference was first given to information published in leading tourism journals such as *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Travel Research*, *Tourism Management*, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* and *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*. In order to obtain as many articles as possible for the review, the author searched the above keywords in the entire article instead of only searching from titles and abstracts. Only articles written in the English language were included in the review.

### Tourists' demands and motivations for local foods

This study draws largely from the social psychological theory of tourist motivation (Iso-Ahola, 1982). Description of why tourists travel and what their behaviours are (Crompton, 1979) and motivation's role in determining tourist behaviour (Dann, 1981) provided significant understanding and guidance for this study. Motivation studies (e.g. Crompton, 1979; Iso-Ahola, 1982), show that tourists travel because they are motivated by both internal and external (push and pull) factors. Dann

(1981) defined tourist motivation as a “meaningful state of mind which adequately disposes” an individual or group of individuals to travel. The pull and push factors are considered to be one of the major factors motivating tourists to taste local food and other products (Kim, Goh & Yuan, 2010).

Quan & Wang (2004) argued that food consumption constitutes a primary activity, attraction, and “peak” experience which motivate tourists to travel and visit a particular destination. According to Hall et al. (2003), food plays a significant role in the decision-making process when tourists are choosing a destination and that it is becoming an increasingly essential component in tourism and tourists’ motivation.

However, “the precise approach one adopts to understand the nature of tourism demand is largely dependent upon the disciplinary perspective of the researcher” (Hall & Page, 2006, p. 84). For instance, geographers view demand in a uniquely spatial manner as “the total number of persons who travel, or wish to travel, to use tourist facilities and services at places away from their places of work and residence” (Mathieson & Wall, 1982); thus, for geographers, demand is related to space and motivation. From economists’ point of view, tourist demand is considered as “the schedules of the amount of any product or service which people [tourists] are willing and able to buy at each specific price in a set of possible prices during a specified period of time”. Similarly, “psychologists view demand from the perspective of motivation and behavior” (Cooper, 1993, p.15). It is clear from these three perspectives that motivation is one of the major constructs in defining demand.

Literature shows that there are many factors motivating tourists to travel to various destinations during holidays. These include a desire to escape from a mundane environment, the pursuit of relaxation and recuperation functions, an opportunity for play, the strengthening of family bonds, prestige, gain social enhancement among peers, social interaction, educational opportunities, wish fulfilment as well as shopping (Ryan, 1991). Hall & Page (2006) argued that probably one of the most useful conceptualisation of tourism motivation is that of Dann’s (1981) who simplified the principal elements of tourist motivation into: travel as a response to what is lacking yet desired, destination pull in response to motivational push, motivation as fancy, motivation as classified purpose, motivation typologies, motivation and tourist experiences, motivation as definition and meaning. Similarly, Cohen (1972) distinguished between four types of travellers on the basis of their motivation and experiences to travel: the organised mass tourist, the individual mass tourist, the drifters and the explorers. Research has shown that local food is part of a social and cultural lifestyle that many tourists seek to experience during their trips (Mak, Lumbers & Eves, 2012). The quest to experience local food has been increasing in recent years and has been associated with a number of pull and push motivational factors such as culture (Nield, Kozak & LeGrys, 2000), social (Torres, 2002), variety-seeking (e.g. Quan & Wang, 2004; Chang, Kivela & Mak, 2011),

exposure effect and past experience (Richards, 2002; Cohen & Avieli, 2004) and motivational factors such as pleasure (Kivela & Crotts, 2006; Kim, Eves & Scarles, 2009; Kivela & Crotts, 2009; Chang, Kivela & Mak, 2010).

In relation to sustainable tourism, literature suggests that local food can have an important role to play in sustainable tourism as a result of its ability to satisfy a complex range of demands – from producer concerns about the importance of reducing food miles to tourist demands for iconic products that appear to say something about a region's place and culture (Sims, 2009). It has been argued that it is important to recognise the benefits that local food can offer to tourists as much to the actions of producers, suppliers and restaurateurs in influencing tourist behaviour (Sims, 2010).

### **Food in Parks and Protected Areas**

Local food production and consumption can play a direct and/or indirect role in the sustainability of parks and other protected areas. However, issues related to foods and conservation of protected areas has received scant attention in the literature. In most cases, attention has been paid to the conflict between protected areas and the surrounding communities. The development and implementation of alternative livelihood projects such as Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDPs) by donor agencies and conservation organisations has been one of the most commonly applied management prescriptions to alleviate conflicts between protected areas and the local community (Goodwin & Roe, 2001). The rationale behind these projects is to create financial incentives through tourism and thus, reduce the dependence of local communities on protected area resources.

Parks and protected areas provide many opportunities for tourists and recreationists to partake diverse activities such as sightseeing, hiking and biking among others. Some of these areas have eateries where local food is served. The revenues obtained from these facilities are indirectly utilised to support conservation of these resources. Similarly, tourists on their way to and from these resources tend to buy local food from the surrounding communities, which technically reduce the pressure from the local communities whose livelihood depend on these protected areas in one way or the other. Because these communities derive direct benefits from park visitors, they tend to support many conservation activities proposed by park authorities or the government. Increased poaching activities in many protected areas provide a clear example of the lack of local community support for conservation initiatives (Duffy, 2001), particularly in areas where local communities do not get direct benefit from such protected areas. Similarly, some scholars (e.g. Hjalager & Richards, 2002), have contended that local food advertise the identity and culture of local destinations and create a great opportunity for local food producers to add value to their products by creating a special experience for tourists. It can be argued

therefore that local food promote and protect resources in the protected areas (e.g. wildlife) and that indirectly contributes to the sustainability of these areas.

Several scholars have argued that food, and in particular, sustainable modes of food production, can actually, in many situations bridge the gap between the three sustainability dimensions (Gössling, Garrod, Aall, Hille, & Peeters, 2011). For instance, in some protected areas, governments allow some forms of sustainable harvesting in certain periods of the year (e.g. hunting for meat in authorised blocks and quotas). This provides a clear example where protected areas are contributing to the sustainability of food and the community at large. Game harvesting is considered to be an essential source of protein for many people in Africa, where animal husbandry is limited by environmental conditions and the success of conservation efforts depends on providing benefits to the people (Carpaneto & Fusari, 2000). Literature shows that sustainable exploitation of wildlife is a common practice in some tropical countries especially in East Africa, Western and central Africa, South America and Southeastern Asia (Caro, Young, Cauldwell & Brown, 2009). It is contended that sustainable exploitation of wildlife provides assurance of food supply for local people and encourages economic development without a decline in the flora and fauna or affect biodiversity (Caro et al., 2009; Carpaneto & Fusari, 2000). For instance, Caro et al., (2009) showed that in Tanzania, residents can get a permit that allows them to shoot a total of 22 species of wildlife for meat in some designated areas. In six of these species, only males are legally hunted but for the other 16 species, animals of any age or sex can be shot.

Similarly, literature shows that organised hunting of wild animals for sport can have considerable conservation benefits (Lewis & Jackson, 2005; Lindsey, Roulet & Romanach, 2007). It is contended that areas set aside for hunting big game animals protect many areas that otherwise could have been turned into agricultural land (Pelkey, Stoner & Caro, 2000). Another benefit that is derived from sports hunting is that tourist hunters are mainly interested in the trophy while the meat from the killed animals is normally given to the community as a source of protein or sold to generate revenues. Thus, it can be argued that sports tourism does provide a direct support to resource sustainability as well as indirect support to food sustainability.

Likewise, literature shows that the protected areas approach to conservation can generate significant social, economic and environmental benefits and has undoubtedly helped to ensure the survival of many species and habitats (Steiner, 2003), which in turn provides a direct source of livelihood to many adjacent communities, particularly in developing countries. Several scholars have indicated that protected areas have been fundamental in providing wild food products, particularly to the poor, for whom securing access to such resources is important for sustaining their livelihoods (see e.g. Roe & Elliott, 2004; Rijsoort, 2000). According to Grivetti & Ogle (2000), wild species provide a broad range of micronutrients and in some geographical areas,

reliance upon such species is critical, especially during months preceding the harvest of domesticated field crops. Such species also play prominent roles in sustaining humans during periods of social unrest and military conflicts, as well as during droughts and other natural catastrophes (Grivetti & Ogle, 2000). Thus, it can be contended that hunting and gathering constitutes an important component of the livelihood of communities living adjacent to parks and protected areas.

The establishment of protected marine reserves (PMRs), is another good example of how protected areas throughout the world contribute sustainably to food production systems. Literature indicates that the establishment of PMRs offers a viable alternative when other forms of fisheries management have proven to be impractical or unsuccessful (Bohnsack, 1990). According to Bohnsack (1990), the potential benefits that may be expected from the establishment of marine reserves include (i) protection of spawning biomass/ stocks, (ii) providing a recruitment source for replenishing fishing grounds in surrounding areas, (iii) supplemental restocking of fished areas through emigration, (iv) maintenance of natural population age structure, (v) maintenance of areas of undisturbed habitat, (vi) insurance against management failures in fished areas, and (vii) enhancement of catches in adjacent unprotected areas through emigration.

Literature shows that marine resources in different parts of the world play a substantial role in contributing to food security and sustainable local livelihoods (Roe & Elliott, 2004). A research conducted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN, 2003) indicated that approximately one billion people in Asia rely on fish for their primary source of protein and that in general, the global fishing industry employs approximately 200 million people. Studies indicate that approximately 1.7 million km<sup>2</sup> (or 0.5%) of ocean in the world is designated as protected areas (Chape, Blythe, Fish, Forx & Spalding, 2003). Likewise, it is contended that in addition to the direct benefits of food and other goods, conservation of areas such as water catchment forests and flood plains is vital to sustain delivery of ecosystem services such as water supplies and flood control to urban centres (Roe & Elliott, 2004).

Correspondingly, parks and protected areas in the USA have been linked to food production and consumption. A good example of this is the oyster farming in Drake's Estero at Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS) which is located just north of San Francisco in California (Watt, 2002). Both the oyster production and the commercial fishery operations in that area have a long history and it is contended that because of their public values, these operations were allowed by the National Park Service planners to continue under the national seashore status. However, oyster farming in this area has been very controversial over the years because it is considered by US National Park Services (USNPS) to be against the Wilderness Act

of 1964, which defines wilderness as “untrammelled landscape where the nonhuman forces of nature are to be given free rein.” (Watt, 2002, p.56).

### **Food in Recreation and Leisure Settings**

Numerous studies have described the role of food, wines and related activities (e.g. food preparation, eating out etc.) on leisure, recreation and tourism (Hall & Sharples, 2003; Hjalager & Johansen, 2013; Leahy, 2007; Lund et al., 2008). Food is inherently part of our daily lives whether we travel or not and it is an integral part of leisure activities and social events. For instance, during events such as weddings, teambuilding courses and sports competitions (Lund et al., 2008), food is always included as an integral component. Similarly, in rural settings, food may provide an opportunity for excursions with friends or family and enhance the enjoyment of the setting and narrative associated with the products (Hjalager & Johansen, 2013). Similarly, the growing popularity of food trails in some parts of the world has been found to enhance flow experiences for recreationists (Boniface, 2003; Hjalager & Richards, 2002).

It is argued that food does not simply consist of edible items for sale but rather all processes involved in bringing the food to the table (Hjalager & Johansen, 2013). Such processes may involve a myriad of activities such as sowing seeds, weeding, harvesting crops, milking, cooking, roasting, fishing and gardening among others. Literature review shows that it is not uncommon for visitors to participate in food related activities particularly when visiting rural areas (Leahy, 2007). Some visitors partake in these activities not because they are obliged to find their own food but as a form of recreation and leisurely experience. A study conducted by Lund et al., (2008), reported that activities such as foraging for foods such as nuts, mushrooms, berries, herbs and fruit, indeed enhanced the meaningfulness and value of the visitor's experience, whether the products were eaten on location or taken home. These activities were considered as a form of recreation and leisure at least to some visitors. Similarly, a three-year study conducted by Leahy (2007) indicated that when travelling, 17% of leisure travellers engaged in culinary or wine-related activities, with Hall & Sharples (2003) contending that dining in restaurants is frequently described as the most frequent leisure activity of travellers and represents the second largest daily expenditure in travel and tourism.

Eating out as a leisure activity has become a common occurrence in the lives of most people in recent years, especially in developed countries where people have more discretionary income. A study conducted by Travel Industry Association of America (1998) indicated that more than 67 million travellers (48%) said that they dined out when travelling, and that dining out was the most popular [leisure] activity planned after tourists arrive at a destination. Most people consider dining out as a form of leisure and entertainment rather than just a matter of filling their stomach.

It is contended that much of dining out has to do with self-presentation and the mediation of social relations through images of what is currently valued, accepted and fashionable (Finkelstein, 1989). Dining out, like other contemporary leisure activities, demonstrates a strengthening of the consumer ethic and the importance of commodities in the mediation of interpersonal relations (Finkelstein, 1989). Dining out is also considered to be an important factor in relation to facilitating family leisure, family functioning, including family interaction and communication as well as family bonding and cohesion (Shaw & Dawson, 2001). More specifically, family leisure is seen as encouraging positive interaction between family members, both between siblings and between parents and children (Shaw & Dawson, 2001).

Similarly, the relationship between food preparation, leisure, recreation and gender, has also been explored in the literature. It has been argued that in developing countries, most people, particularly women, spend much of their time in preparing and cooking food and indulging in other household chores and thus, they hardly have free time to participate in various leisure activities [leisure as defined from a free time perspective]. However, Khan (1997) showed that despite rampant poverty and hard work, women still enjoy recreation in their own unique ways. Khan argued that “leisure and recreation seem to be a part of women day-to-day survival strategies and that in response to their busy schedule, women have developed the skills to carve out pleasure from their meetings during every day work, their social visits and festivals, their handicrafts, and their dressing and food preparation”.

The findings in the literature suggest a relationship between food and body image; people generally tend to limit themselves in terms of what they eat in order to maintain a particular body shape. Concerns with weight and appearance among young people, particularly among women, in developed countries are well documented (see for example, Nowak, 1998; O’Dea & Abraham, 2000). Concerns about body image, body dissatisfaction and current trends in eating disorders in developed countries is supported by sociocultural theory which suggests that societal standards for beauty inordinately emphasise the desirability of thinness and that this ideal of thinness is accepted by most women, although it is impossible for many to achieve (Tiggemann, 2001). It is contended that adolescent girls are more vulnerable to issues related to body shape and eating disorders because adolescence is a time of establishing one’s identity, with concomitant increases in self-awareness, self-consciousness, preoccupation with image, and concern with social acceptance (Harter, 1999).

Studies suggest that although weight control is important in maintaining good health, adolescents need a food culture based on foods to eat rather than foods to avoid, and an understanding of suitable weight control measures that are compatible with their health status (Gibbons et al., 1995). There are many health and social consequences of being overweight. Some of the health consequences include diabetes

and coronary heart diseases among others (Tukker, Visscher & Picavet, 2009) while some of the social consequences may include discrimination and failure to participate in some leisure (for instance, serious leisure) and recreation activities (Lewis & Van Puymbroeck, 2008).

Similarly, findings in the literature suggest that excessive lack of food may lead to malnutrition, a condition which may severely affect an individual's participation in various leisure and recreation activities (Sirgy, 2010). Malnutrition has also been linked to social exclusion in the community. Individuals are considered to be socially excluded if they do not participate in key activities of society (e.g., employment, education, social networks, leisure, housing, access to services) and that exclusion is beyond their control (Harpham, 2009).

### **Conclusion**

Food enhances the nexus between leisure, recreation and tourism and it is a central component of our survival as evidenced and discussed in this article. Despite being vital in meeting our physiological needs, the numerous activities associated with it provide relaxation and pleasure. Food not only satisfies physical needs but also provides opportunities to enhance social relationships, excitement, learning and belonging and thus in this view, it nourishes both the body and the soul (Hjalager & Johansen, 2013).

It has also been shown that food provides an opportunity for excursions with friends or families and thus, strengthens family bonding. This is an essential component in many societies today due the fact that in the contemporary world, many people have become increasingly isolated due to constant work pressure. It has also been shown that food is central in maintaining one's body image and thus, it contributes positively to leisure and recreation. Lack of food can deter and exclude some people from participating in leisure and recreational activities especially in the developing countries. As such, individuals from many poor countries spend much of their time in searching for food and hence, do not have much time for leisure and recreational activities.

This study also showed that local food is highly valued because it is considered to be more authentic, fresh and cultural. Local food is associated with localisation, culture and identity, and is therefore, suitable for marketing local destinations. Provision of local food also provides a gateway for both visitors and hosts to learn from each other and thus enhances the quality of their lives. As tourism is becoming more and more complex, those destinations with peculiar, distinctive local cuisines may provide a competitive advantage over the ones that do not offer the same.

Food linkages and particularly, local food provide many tangible and intangible benefits including economic, environmental and social cultural which are considered

to be fundamental for the sustainability of parks and protected areas, as well as the community at large. Some of the economic benefits to the community may include provision of supplemental income, stimulating rural entrepreneurship, promoting farm multi-functionality, stimulating agricultural diversification, encourages multitasking in rural settings, promoting gender equity, provision of employment, increasing multiplier effects and leading to reduced financial leakages. From sociocultural perspectives, food linkages may provide the following benefits: link tourists with local people, promote and preserve local culture, promote local destination, enhance place identity, provide authentic experience to visitors, enhance motivation to travel, facilitate learning new culture/lifestyle, contribute to health improvements, provide a source of enjoyment and pleasure to both guests and hosts, contribute to restoration of body and mind and provide recreational benefits. From an environmental perspective, local food linkages tend to reduce carbon footprint, reduce food mileage, promote organic farming, reduce packaging materials problem and contribute to farm preservation.

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