

Ecotourism and Environmental Law

STRIKING A BALANCE IN INDIA





Introduction to Ecotourism in India

What is Ecotourism?

- Sustainable tourism that promotes environmental conservation.
- Focus on nature-based experiences and community involvement.

Importance in India

- Rich biodiversity and scenic landscapes.
- Growth in eco-friendly tourism activities.

Legal Framework for Ecotourism

Key Laws

Wildlife Protection Act (1972)

Provides legal protection to wildlife and habitats, aiming to prevent poaching, smuggling, and illegal trade in wildlife.

Forest Conservation Act (1980)

Regulates the diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes, ensuring forest preservation in ecotourism zones.

Environmental Protection Act (1986)

Establishes guidelines for protecting and improving the environment, especially in ecologically sensitive areas.





Legal Framework for Ecotourism

Regulation Focus

Conservation of ecosystems

Protects biodiversity and natural landscapes from adverse human impact.

Control on tourism in protected areas

Limits tourism in vulnerable zones to prevent environmental degradation.

Key Sustainability Challenges

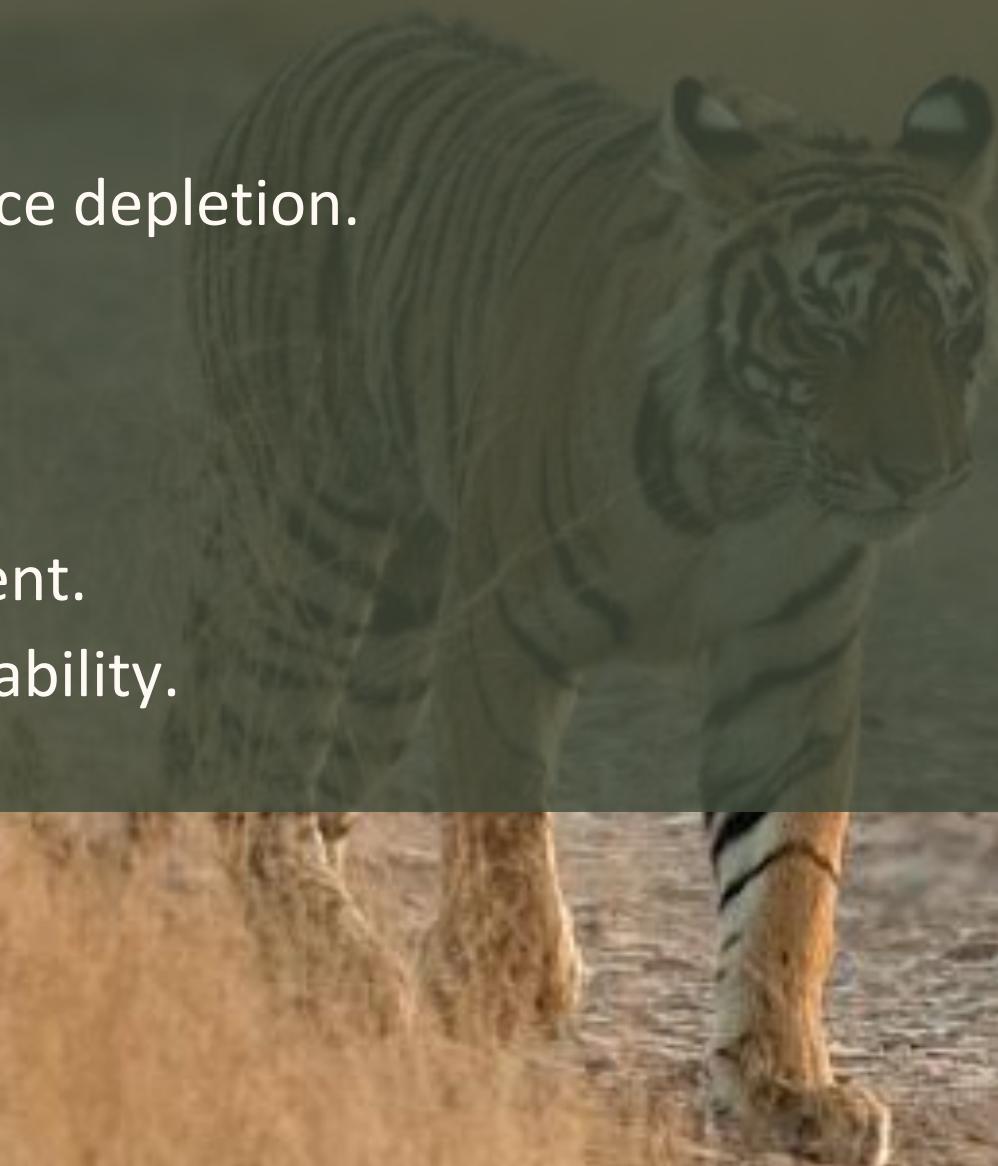
Environmental Issues

Habitat disruption, pollution, and resource depletion.

Social & Economic Impact

Over-tourism leading to local displacement.

Economic dependency and seasonal instability.



Case Studies on Ecotourism



Kaziranga
National Park



Thenmala, Kerala

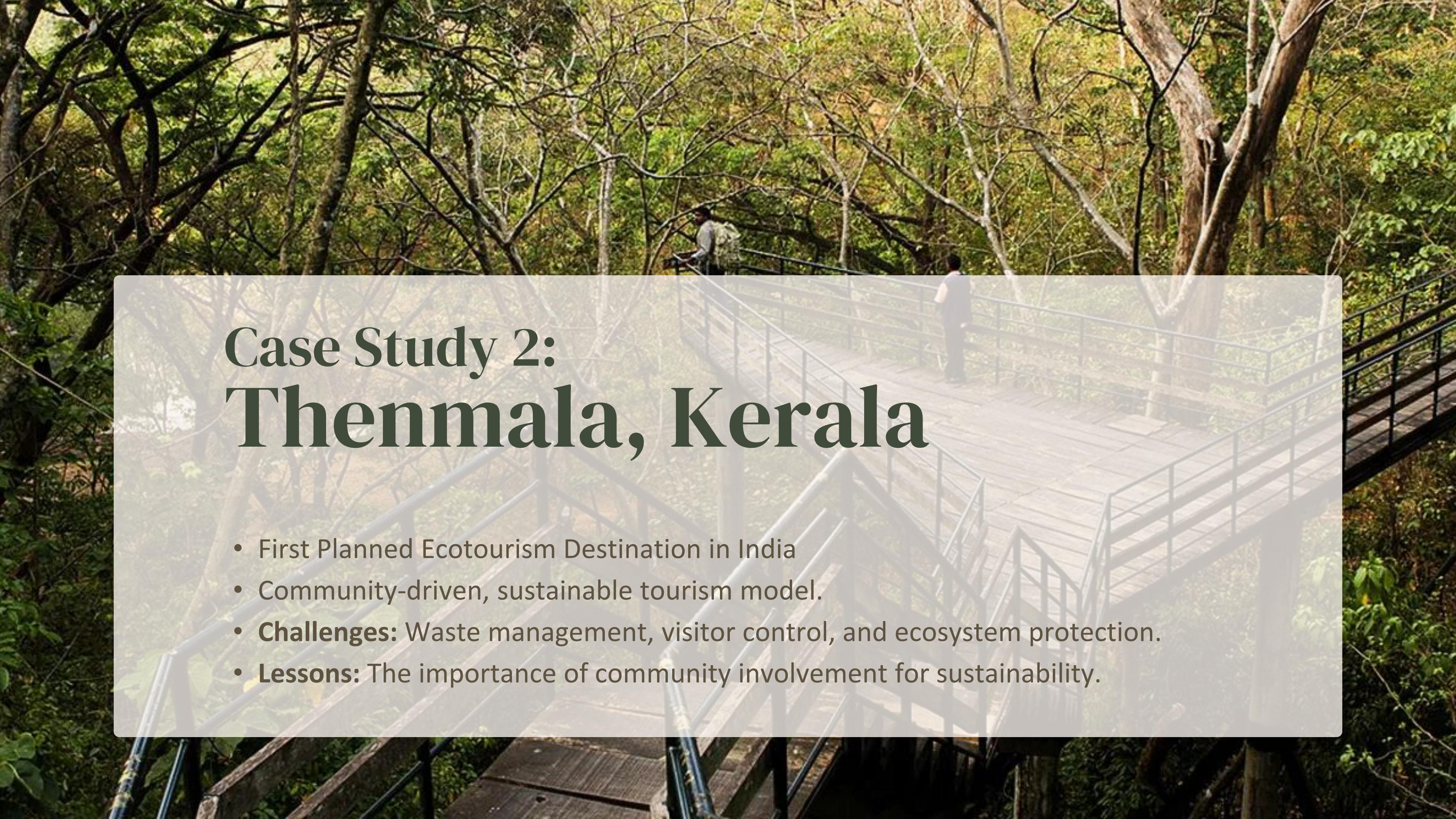


Nanda Devi Biosphere
Reserve



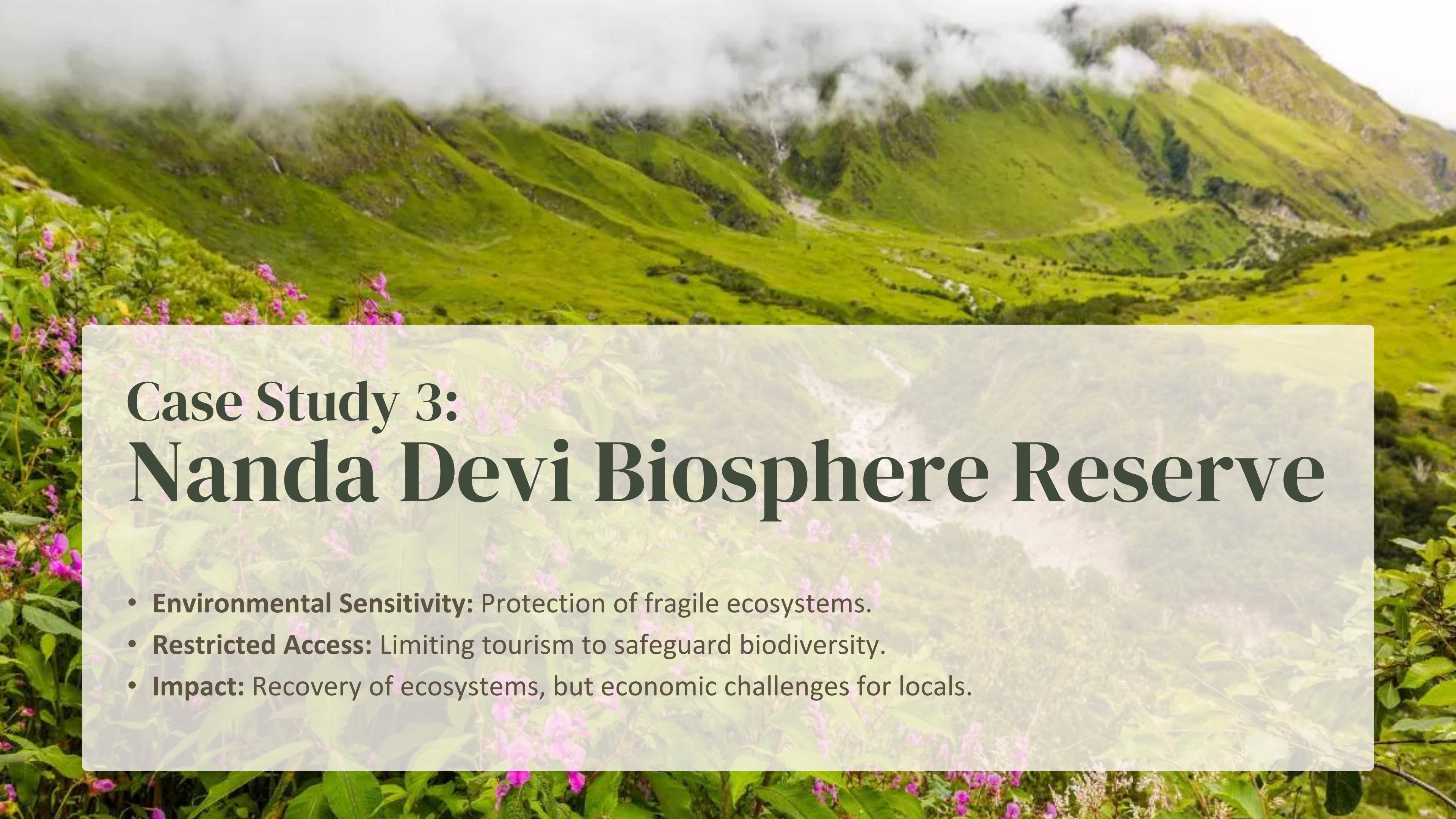
Case Study 1: Kaziranga National Park

- **Ecotourism Benefits:** Boosts local economy and conservation.
- **Challenges:** Impact on wildlife and habitats from high tourist numbers.
- **Actions Taken:** Visitor restrictions and regulated safari routes.

A photograph of a wooden boardwalk or bridge winding through a dense tropical forest. Two people are visible on the walkway: one person is walking away from the camera towards the background, while another person stands further back, looking down at something. The walkway has metal railings and is surrounded by lush green trees and foliage.

Case Study 2: Thenmala, Kerala

- First Planned Ecotourism Destination in India
- Community-driven, sustainable tourism model.
- **Challenges:** Waste management, visitor control, and ecosystem protection.
- **Lessons:** The importance of community involvement for sustainability.



Case Study 3: Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve

- **Environmental Sensitivity:** Protection of fragile ecosystems.
- **Restricted Access:** Limiting tourism to safeguard biodiversity.
- **Impact:** Recovery of ecosystems, but economic challenges for locals.

Recommendations for Sustainable Ecotourism

Strengthen Policy Enforcement

Tighten regulations and improve monitoring.

Invest in Eco-Friendly Infrastructure

Sustainable tourism facilities and waste management.

Promote Community-Based Ecotourism

Involve locals in tourism activities and decision-making.