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## SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND THE IMPACT OF ECOTOURISM IN AURORA PROVINCE IN THE PHILIPPINES

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### ABSTRACT

Sustainability was defined as the goal of meeting present needs without affecting future generations' capability to fulfill their own. With the growth of tourism economy, sustainability is an increasing concern in tourist destinations like Philippines. This study correlates the socio-demographic and socio-economic profile of the respondents towards sustainable environment practices and the impact of ecotourism. Using purposive sampling and mixed methods design, 168 individuals from municipalities of Aurora province positively implied on the use of renewable resources, ecosystem protection, pollution control, and the concept of reduction, reuse, and recycling. Locals have positive attitudes toward conservation as they believed that there is an established system for conservation and initiated conservation practices. Pearson Correlation found that there was no significant relationship between the profile and their sustainable environmental practices. Moreover, a weak negative relationship between age and the perceived impact of ecotourism was determined indicating that age decreases with the increasing perceived impact of ecotourism on the measured parameters. The impact of ecotourism on community has its advantages and disadvantages. It generates work opportunities, making the residents self-sufficient, yet to improve ecotourism and preserve the environment, innovations are needed. The impact of ecotourism was also prominent as Indigenous Peoples are displaced due to commercialization, increased local migration in the area, and locals adopting different cultures brought by ecotourism. The cultures and sustainable practices of the Indigenous Peoples are valuable and needs to be preserved the same with the environment. Hence the people and the government should be united and proactive in promoting sustainable ecotourism.

**Keywords:** Ecotourism, Sustainability, Environment, Philippines.