

## **Executive Summary**

Sri Lanka is emerging as one of South Asia's key tourist destinations, with the record of one million tourist arrivals to the country for the first time in history. Tourism has ranked as the fourth largest source of foreign exchange earner of the national economy in 2013. The high focus on economic benefits attached to tourism has overlooked the adverse socio-cultural and environmental impacts caused by tourism. The concept of Sustainable Tourism has emerged in response to the negative impacts that are more visible in mass tourism.

UNWTO has defined sustainable tourism as "Tourism that takes full accounts of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, and the environment and host communities". According to the literature, green tourism aims to maintain natural, social, and economic aspects, to achieve sustainability. With this concept in mind Dodds and Joppe (2001) came up with a framework which breaks down the vast area of green tourism to elements: Environmental responsibility, Local Economic Vitality, Cultural Diversity and Experiential richness. The government regulatory framework of Environmental Impact Assessment of tourism projects would carefully scrutinize the environmental, socio and economic impact of new tourism ventures.

Jetwing Vil Uyana is a nature friendly boutique hotel which was opened in October 2006 with 25 dwellings and 88 staff. The purpose of this this management case study is to assess sustainability of Jetwing Vil Uyana achieved through green tourism practices. The authors conducted eleven semi structured in-depth interviews with key informants and five focused group discussions to collect primary data. Secondary data was gathered from web resources and company publications. Case study is narrated by highlighting the key events and milestones taken place from pre 2006 to 2015.

Habitat restoration, bio diversity conservation, minimizing the negative environmental impact, and awareness creation were essential principles to manage and maintain the operations at Jetwing Vil Uyana. The hotel has been sensitive to conduct its operations in accordance with the local values and customs. Jetwing Vil Uyana has embraced the local community in to business by creating employment opportunities for rural youth, developing rural infrastructure and purchasing local products and services from the neighboring community. Jetwing Vil Uyana has integrated traditional art, craft and designs to give aesthetic appeal and tranquility to the property. High quality service, environmental designs, nature and cultural excursions enriched the visitor experience at the hotel. Since

2006 Vil Uyana has won a number of awards and accolades for its service excellence and commitment to preserve environment. Today Jetwing Vil Uyana has become an international benchmark on sustainability.

The high level of environmental responsibility has helped Jetwing Vil Uyana to gain competitive advantage in niche markets. In achieving sustainability Jetwing Vil Uyana was successful in managing the stakeholders (local community, employees and community based suppliers) through long term relationship building. The Chairman's leadership was essential to incorporate sustainability in to the work culture of the hotel. Jetwing Vil Uyana set an example to the fact that sustainability is an outcome of long term, well planned set of initiatives which may not give instance results but crucial for long term gains.