

Agri-tourism in Peri-urban Mumbai and Pune

Ecological Citizenship and Rural-Urban Linkages

in the Global South

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Abstract

Post structuralist research is increasingly influencing environmental knowledge – feminist/post-colonial authors have led the path for incorporating subjective and lived experiences of human-nature interactions into environmental discourses. In India's southern context, however, environmental literature, policy and governance are still dominated by structuralist discourses; hence wider environmental knowledge and governance remain detached from everyday life. Using a theoretical framework of "sustainable development" and "ecological citizenship", this PhD aims to rectify this literature gap through a qualitative analysis of agri-tourism in Maharashtra. Within peri-urban Mumbai and Pune, industrialization and urbanization are transforming the agrarian landscape. Although urbanization is displacing farmers from cultivation, it is also creating new opportunities through markets, education, employment and connectivity. These contribute to agriculture's transformation into serving multiple roles beyond food production – towards higher levels of multifunctionality.

Agri-tourism is a form of agricultural multifunctionality. Farm owners provide urban visitors with accommodation, activities and entertainment on their privately owned farms. As a rural service, agri-tourism provides urban visitors a flavour of rural life and culture through recreation, farming activities and rural products. While revenue and jobs are created, there are also new opportunities for rural and urban interactions and environmental learning. Even though the news-media often portrays agri-tourism as "sustainable" and a low impact alternative to mainstream tourism, these claims have not been tested on the ground.

Through fieldwork in three agri-tourism farms, this research unpacks how sustainability is interpreted in agri-tourism. It analyses how agri-tourism stakeholders (farm owners, urban visitors, employees and villagers) perceive notions of environmental responsibility and entitlements in the farm. Using narratives from over eighty semi-structured interviews, the analysis draws wider connections with neo-liberal policies in India. The study concludes that the most significant factor in shaping people's attitudes and values towards the environment is how they perceive "rurality" and "urbanization" in everyday life.

To Ayona

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List of Abbreviations

ADTB	Agricultural Development Trust Baramati
ATDC	Agri-Tourism Development Cooperation
EC	Ecological Citizenship
GCA	Gross Cropped Area
Ha	Hectares
HVC	High Value Crop
HYV	High Yield Variety
LAA	Land Acquisition Act, 1894
LAAR	Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013
MART	Maharashtra State Agri and Rural Cooperative
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
MIDC	Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MMR	Maharashtra Metropolitan Region
NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
NWDPRA	National Watershed Development Project for Rain fed Areas
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RGS	Rural Goods and Services
SEZ	Special Economic Zone

List of Terms

Adivasi	A person belonging to the tribal caste
Auto-rickshaw	A three wheeler form of hired transport
Ayurveda	A form of traditional Indian medicine now considered an alternative form of medicine
Bail-parao	Bull Worship
Bajra	Pearl millet
Bhajan	Devotional song
Bhakri	Flat round unleavened bread
Bharud	A form of folk art of rural Maharashtra characterized by singing and recital
Brinjal	Aubergine
Bund	A small dam made with stones or concrete
Chapati	Flat bread usually made from wheat flour
Cheeku	A tropical fruit also known as Sapodilla
Chulha	A wood stove for cooking
Deshmukh	Belonging to the caste of landowners (see Zamindar)
Desi	Indigenous
Dhajji-floor	Traditional decorative coating of cow-dung and mud
Dhoti	Traditional unstitched garment worn by men around their waist
Gajar	Carrots
Gobar	Cattle dung
Gobhi	Cauliflower
Godown	A storage facility
Groundnut	Peanut
Haldi	Turmeric
Jagaran	A community worship session where prayers led by the priest are carried out through the night; the name literally translates as "staying awake"

Jowar	Sorghum or white millet
Kharif	A crop grown during the monsoon season
Krishi Paryatan	Agri-tourism
Leepa-poti	Traditional decorative coating made with a mix of cow dung and mud
Mausam	Weather
Mirchi	Chilli peppers
Mogra	A white flower similar to jasmine
Mooli	Radish
Nachni	Ragi or Millets
Paddy	Rice cultivation
Panchayat	The village council consisting of five elected representatives
Patang Mahautsav	Kite festival
Poha	Flattened rice dish traditionally eaten for breakfast
Powada	A traditional form of Marathi poetry
Rabi	A crop grown during the dry winter season
Sabzi	Vegetables
Sarpanch	Chair of the village council or panchayat
Shendri	Biological fertilizer
Taal Bhajan	A devotional song to a beat
Taluka	Sub-district
Tube well	A ground water well made by boring a steel pipe into the aquifer, usually fitted with an electrical or diesel operated pump
Upla	Sun dried cakes made from dung used as cooking fuel
Upma	A breakfast dish from South India made into a porridge using roasted semolina
Zamindar	Belonging to the caste of land-owners (see Deshmukh)

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Introduction: Agri-tourism in the Global South

We provide them with breakfast.. *poha* or *upma*.. we serve them Maharashtrian food.. after having eaten breakfast.. they relax a bit.. then he [the husband] takes them along for swimming.. boating... then we do trekking etc.. no first we go for trekking.. [...] that also we purposely take them through the village.. we don't cut that village part (walk through the village).. we make the point that they should see the structure of village or how they paint it with cow dung.. if you want I'll show you.. we show them how people used to live before and still the old houses are there.. no one stays.. it's a different part.. that the houses are there.. so we show them these houses and how the cattle are kept inside it... and suddenly they have some.. *desi* hens etc.. and we cross through the village and go to the river..

Madhu: agri-tourism owner near Sahyadri farm

In December 2011, when I began fieldwork in Sahyadri farm¹, what really struck me about agri-tourism was how the most ordinary experiences of everyday rural life, such as eating *upma* and *poha*, and *leepa poti*, the painting of houses with cow dung – experiences which I had grown up with during the 1970s, and common till the early 1990s, were now being manufactured as "unique", out of the ordinary, and special. In the decades when I had left India for the UK to pursue higher education, what had changed was that urban people appeared to be far more disconnected from rural life. It was increasingly clear that urban life is now highly detached from processes and life within the countryside. In a country which is urbanizing very rapidly² (McKinsey, 2010), there is an increasing sense of separation from the rural. This lack of understanding of "the rural" is having profound implications on the environmental behaviour of not only urban people, but also the rural is changing. The character of the rural is no longer unaffected by the exponential

¹ A farm located in the hilly Konkani village on the Koyna backwaters near Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra, India. All names have been changed to preserve anonymity.

² According to the McKinsey Report in 2008, 30% of India's population was already urban, and it estimates that by 2030, 40% of India's population will be urban. Further, currently Maharashtra's population is 44-45% urbanized (McKinsey, 2010).

urban growth which has occurred within cities – cities are growing in size, but also the environment within the rural itself is becoming increasingly urbanized in parts. In other words, people in the city and countryside close to the city often have little understanding and awareness of rural life.

During my fieldwork, I was often struck by the lack of knowledge especially amongst "urban"³ people, about the consequences of their increasingly modernized and consumptive lifestyles on the environmental processes within the rural countryside which supports their needs. Processes which produce the food, grains, the milk we buy and consume from shops in polypack cartons, or even the bricks which makeup our urban built fabric, are all associated with production and are largely invisible to the increasingly urbanized lifestyles. The impact of this erasure of the productive countryside from our urban consumptive consciousness is highly significant across multiple levels of decision making which affects everyday life. We are increasingly detached from the impacts of our consumption choices on the wider countryside, including on the lives of rural farming communities. Moreover, the consequences of wastage and pollution on the countryside remain hidden from our isolated urban lifestyle. Also, with far more profound and widespread impact, the detachment from the invisible countryside also seeps into the decision making process followed by policymakers – this has consequences of underrepresentation of the interests of the countryside in policy decisions. In the context of the rapidly urbanizing global south, tackling the lack of environmental awareness has become an acutely urgent problem, especially due to the increase in affluence and consumption capacities of urban populations.

³ The urbanized, I argue in this study are located not only within the city, but also within parts of the countryside.

The detachment of the rural from urban life produce higher impacts due to the hiding away of environmental processes, but the increasing rates of urban consumption themselves also affect the way that people outside the city perceive urbanization itself. Since urban areas are the focus of economic activity, employment is therefore increasing affluence; the perception of the "urban" in the mind of people living outside the city becomes associated with aspirations – the "urban lifestyle" signifies progress and development. The availability of education, employment, material objects, and generally higher standards of living within the city are significantly higher for those living here, compared to those living in the countryside – consequently the sense of detachment and alienation of the countryside is also now rapidly increasing.

Although there is stark disparity between the urban and rural patterns of consumption and pollution, the "urban" cannot be simply defined as a state which remains confined within the definitive boundaries of the city. The pressures on land within the city from consumption are so high that the traditional functions spill beyond the physical boundaries outside of the city itself (Torreggiani et al., 2012). In fact, the boundaries between the urban and rural are becoming increasingly blurred. The transforming physical characteristics, enhancing rural-urban connectivity, infrastructure, transport and communications, contribute to a state of rural-urban hybridity. In conceptualizing hybridity, this study borrows from Akhil Gupta's (1998) theorization of the hybrid landscape. The author describes the hybrid landscape as an analytical canvas that is messy and complex: it consists of multiple interrelated social, economic and environmental processes that cannot be analysed through binary and artificial constructs such as "modern-traditional" or "indigenous-foreign"

categories⁴. The three agri-tourism case studies in which I carried out most of the fieldwork for this research, I argue, all fall within this "hybrid zone", which cannot be defined purely as rural or urban. In purely physical terms, this landscape has been referred to as the "peri-urban" by several authors (Lerner and Eakin, 2011, Arabindoo, 2009, Allen, 2003, Shaw, 2005). It became clear during the course of my fieldwork, that in the peri-urban zone, communications, services and lifestyles are being rapidly transformed. The internet plays an increasingly important role in the lives of people, and mobile phone networks are providing people with lifelines to communicate and create business opportunities – in all the agri-tourism case studies, nearly all the bookings are made this way. A significantly higher number of people, both rural and urban now own motor vehicles: nearly all visitors to agri-tourism sites travel through the means of privately owned vehicles. Moreover, the money from farming is no longer the primary source of income within the peri-urban fringe since employment is diversifying (Mukherjee, 2001, Rigg, 2006). In other words, urban lifestyles are now flourishing in the space which was occupied by once rural activities of farming and food production to construct new hybridized spaces within the peri-urban fringe which extend deep within the rural countryside.

Within the city (and in parts of the hybridized countryside in the peri-urban zone), alongside increasing affluence of some, there is also a growing sense of frustration with the lack of "nature". While urban life tries to normalize the removal of "nature" and "space" from everyday life in the city, often the lack of these attributes increases the sense of desire within urban people to experience the rural. The narratives constructed by numerous news media articles,

⁴ This post-colonial conceptualization of the hybrid landscape is also echoed in Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan (2000).

commonly portray the concreted city as highly polluted, lacking "greenery" and openness of the countryside, and therefore as being an unhealthy environment (MM, 2011, Nunes, 2013, ATDC, 2011). Moreover, internet connectivity has contributed to the urban imagination; images of the countryside: of space, nature, greenery and traditions are flooding websites and other mediums of advertising, to promote the countryside as an escape from the harsh urban environment. This consequently leads to a reversal of ambition with urban people who now seek to experience "nature" as an escape from the urban environment. Within this environment of increased consumption, mobility, harsh urban life devoid of space, it is normal that the countryside become a commodity of consumption for urban people to be able to escape. Coupled with increasing mobility through car ownership and road improvements, the countryside has increasingly become a commodity for urban consumption. This is visible in the billboards along the Mumbai-Pune expressway advertising homes, holidays, and recreational activities within the countryside.

But the commodification of the rural also takes place within the farm itself. The agricultural farm becomes a unit of consumption through agri-tourism. Simple activities such as *leepa poti* and the preparation of the traditional breakfast of *upma* and *poha*, which originally were a part of everyday life of the city and farm, have now become objectified within agri-tourism as what Urry (2011) would call the "extraordinary" .

Figure 1 Billboards on the Mumbai-Pune expressway advertising country homes.



Figure 2 Billboard selling the "rural dream".



0.1. The Research Problem

Agri-tourism is defined as providing urban visitors a service in the form of accommodation, activities and entertainment in rural or peri-urban farms. It is a form of agricultural multifunctionality⁵, which enables rural farmers to provide urban visitors a flavour of rural life – through recreation, farming activities, rural products, farmers are promoting and conserving certain values, and earning additional income (Sonnino, 2004, Barbieri and Mshenga, 2008, Bernardo et al., 2004, Bruch and Holland, 2004, McGehee et al., 2007, Tew and Barbieri, 2012, Veeck et al., 2006). For farmers to carry on farming is increasingly difficult as they are facing harsh neo-liberal policies in the context of market reforms and capitalism. Firstly, unpredictable commodity prices in the markets are combining with the rising input costs to make farmers' access to credit crucially important for farming. Secondly, the pressure on land from industry, housing and other uses is raising land prices within the peri-urban region, and often this makes farming non viable altogether (Munster and Munster, 2012). Thirdly, also, the policies are increasingly favourable to industrial development at the cost of the agricultural sector, and this is leading to a shift of the employment base from farming into manufacturing (Roy, 2009). In this context, agri-tourism is viewed, by policymakers and academics alike, as a way of diversifying farming incomes which enables farmers to potentially remain in agriculture. At the same time, authors have argued that agri-tourism's motivations go beyond being purely economic – that they are also incentivized by desires to preserve the cultural and environmental heritage (McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006), and also

⁵ Agricultural multifunctionality has evoked a wide range of interpretations in policy and academic literature. In simplified terms, this study conceptualizes agricultural multifunctionality as diversifying agricultural activities to shift the goal of agriculture beyond food production, to satisfy multiple societal needs (Marsden and Sonnino, 2008). A more comprehensive discussion follows in Chapter 1.

maximize environmental benefits for the wider community and future generations. Frequently, literature around agri-tourism implies that there are several parallels between its discourse and "sustainable development" (McGehee and Kim, 2004, McGehee, 2007, Wilson, 2008).

Indeed, the idea of sustainable development arose from the need to reconcile economic development with the increasing awareness of the harm that unlimited growth could potentially wreak on the environment. The concept aimed to bring together the historically disparate discourses of "development" and "environment" by proposing that environmental conservation was not necessarily incompatible with development (Carter, 2007, Connelly and Smith, 2003, Escobar, 1995, Gupta, 1998). The concept was formally adopted by the Brundtland Commission within its report: "Our Common Future" in 1987 (WCED, 1987). It saw sustainable development as a compromise between expending the Earth's resources and adopting prudence in ensuring that the resources are conserved for future generations. This left the exact meaning of the term ambiguous, and therefore a gap within its understanding between the global north and south⁶ is seen as emerging by several authors (Gupta, 1998, Divan and Rosencranz, 2008, Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997, Slater, 2004).

In general, the emphasis in the north was on conserving the Earth's common resources, such as forests, atmosphere and water; the south argued this interferes with the provision of basic minimum standard of living for all its

⁶ It must be acknowledged that the deployment of the categories of "global north" and "global south", to describe the attributes such as development, affluence and industrialization of nation states, which have commonly been deployed by authors such as Guha and Martinez-Alier (1997), has been argued to be outdated. For example, Slater (2004) argues that the north-south, western-non-western, first-third world categorizations are binary constructs, which are changing because of the transitory nature of global politics. For this study, however, I believe employing these distinctions allows the analysis to draw upon the fundamentally divergent perspectives around the environmental discourses such as sustainable development and citizenship, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

citizens (Carter, 2007, Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997). The core disagreement from a southern perspective is about retaining autonomy and control over resources in order to relieve the plight of the poorest people (Gupta, 1998, Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997, Carter, 2007). Within the south, sustainable development is often seen as another way for the north to assert its authority, especially over issues relating to the conservation of the Earth's global commons, which are seen as issues centred around western interests (Shiva, 2005). It is argued, therefore, that an approach which is more de-centred and fits varying conditions makes more sense, as compared to operating universal rules which may or may not provide guidance on locally applicable environmental practices (Escobar, 1995).

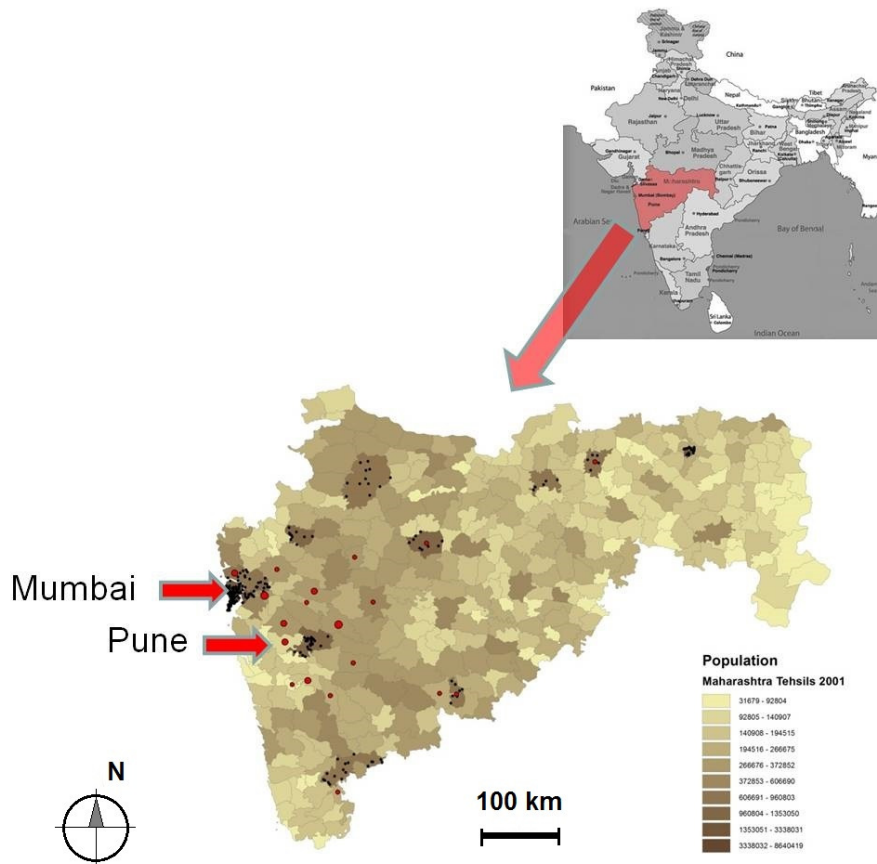
Most western authors view agri-tourism as a form of multifunctionality. In this state of agricultural diversification, "post productivity" is commonly thought to lead towards higher levels of "sustainability" (Wilson, 2007, Wilson and Rigg, 2003, Wilson, 2008). In the west this condition is conceptualized as shifting beyond intensive food production, and therefore there is greater emphasis on satisfying a range of societal needs such as recreation, environmental stewardship, and preserving the rural cultural heritage (Wilson, 2007, Wilson, 2008, Marsden and Sonnino, 2008). In northern countries, the shift towards post-productivity has partly resulted from higher levels of awareness of environmental problems associated with intensive production due to the excessive use of green revolution techniques developed in the 1950s and 60s. Instead, moves which broaden agriculture to include organic farming, a diverse range of rural activities including agri-tourism, natural stewardship and resource management, and also re-grounding and mobilizing farming income are seen as a positive development for environmental sustainability (Ploeg and Roep, 2003).

Marsden and Sonnino (2008) conceptualize the relationship between multifunctionality and sustainability on the basis of the contextual circumstances within which farmers operate. They argue that multifunctionality cannot be seen as sustainable if it is simply a pluriactive response to harsh market conditions. But rather, it is by providing employment opportunities, and serving the needs of wider society, that higher forms of "sustainability" can be attained through multifunctionality. Similarly, Wilson argues that strong multifunctionality requires "non productivist action and thought" (Wilson, 2008, p.367). In simple terms, most western academic perspectives subscribe to the notion that contexts which are reliant upon intensive modes of agricultural production, and are subject to livelihood distress, cannot host multifunctionality in a manner which may be considered "sustainable".

Consequently sustainable development's application to contexts in the global south has been problematic. Arguably, this relates to its historic connections with the north's response to the perceived problems of unlimited growth, and insecurities over the control of the global commons (Carter, 2007, Connelly and Smith, 2003). The western response, through the promotion of sustainable development as a solution to these problems was inherently unsuitable to southern environments. Not only was the concept insufficiently detailed to deal with context specific problems, but also priorities which the global south considered important, such as the needs of alleviating poverty and enhancing livelihoods were inadequately addressed (Divan and Rosencranz, 2008, Carter, 2007, Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997). Moreover, the application of sustainable development, (as an inherited theoretical discourse from the global north), to solve environmental problems within highly complex southern developmental contexts, is highly problematic. Broad-brushed approaches,

such as sustainable development, lack the finesse that is required to deal with deep social inequalities and the complexity that characterize contexts such as Maharashtra. Yet, partly as a result of the knowledge vacuum in the south, the adoption of highly structured environmental discourses within the realms of academia and policy are commonplace (Shiva, 1989, Gadgil and Guha, 1992, Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan, 2000b, Gupta, 1998). The consequence of the structured application of sustainable development on complex contexts, at the best, has led environmental knowledge and governance to remain detached from everyday life. At the worst, the discourse of sustainable development is often manipulated by powerful actors to impose their own agendas over the weak and poor, which Gupta argues amounts to a form of structural violence that is resulting in their systemic impoverishment and death (Gupta, 2012).

Figure 3 Map showing the location of Mumbai and Pune in Maharashtra (below left), and Maharashtra in India (above right).



0.2. Agri-tourism in peri-urban Mumbai and Pune

The reason why I chose Maharashtra for research is because of agri-tourism's popularity around India's most rapidly urbanizing cities of Mumbai and Pune (ATDC, 2011, MART, 2010, Gopal et al., 2008, TOI, 2009, Taware, 2009). Maharashtra is the country's third most urbanized state with approximately 44-45% of its population living within urban areas (Nijman, 2012, McKinsey, 2010). Consequently the development of road infrastructure, encouraged by the

Maharashtra State Development Plan⁷ (GoI, 2007), has been faster here than elsewhere. This has opened up the countryside to urban tourists. The rise in tourism is occurring alongside a much wider fundamental shift of rural livelihoods from a cultivation towards a non-cultivation base (Rigg, 2006). To a large extent, this is driven by a policy emphasis on industrial growth⁸, the establishment of designated industrial areas controlled by the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) and also Special Economic Zones⁹, around which urbanization rapidly follows (GoM, 2013, GoM, 2001a).

While urbanization is facilitating agri-tourism, a number of factors are also responsible for a shift towards non-farming employment and declining farming activities within the state. Like much of India, the state suffers from characteristics of unpredictable rainfall, irregular access to irrigation for farmers, inconsistent soil fertility – factors which have traditionally led to the loss of farming livelihoods (Ray, 2009). Especially since the 1990s, when India's neo-liberal turn took effect, the pressure on land and natural resources is compounding farming distress (Vakulabharanam, 2005). If farmers have not been pushed out of agriculture altogether, they are forced through structural and political factors to shift into more capital oriented and energy intensive, farming (Divan and Rosencranz, 2008, Hanumantha-Rao, 2005a, Lalvani, 2008)¹⁰.

⁷ Refer to Maharashtra Development Report (MSDR) Chapter 6: Infrastructure Development

⁸ Refer to Maharashtra Development Report (MSDR) Chapter 5: Industrial Growth, and the Industrial Policy of Maharashtra 2013.

⁹ Refer to the Maharashtra Special Economic Zones (SEZ) 2001 Policy.

¹⁰ The growing popularity of sugarcane farming in Maharashtra is an example of the state protecting the interests of politically influential farmers to the detriment of smaller farmers. Lalvani (2008) describes the socio-environmental problems arising from the disproportionate allocation of subsidies and irrigation by the government to sugarcane farmers. Several politicians, often referred to as "sugar barons", influence the decision making process of the government, which is a significant contributor to the systemic inequalities affecting farmers in Maharashtra.

These trends of disproportionate growth in Maharashtra are common across several levels, but are especially visible within the divides between the city and countryside. On the one hand, encouraged by state and national policies, industrial and urban growth is establishing the dominance of urban centres such as Mumbai and Pune at the centre-stage of investment and affluence (GoM, 2001a, GoM, 2006a, GoM, 2010, GoM, 2013); but on the other hand, as there is greater pressure on the surrounding rural areas for land, food and resources, urban areas are contributing to livelihood distress within the countryside. These urban pressures are leading to high levels of agricultural intensification and consolidation into larger farms, which are reliant on high energy inputs and credit based agriculture. Even though, with the aid of green-revolution technologies such as HYVs, artificial fertilizer, chemical pesticides, and fossil fuels, the levels of per-hectare production and farming income have risen, this is also leading to the increased dependency of farmers on credit (Gupta, 1998, Mosse et al., 2002, Mohanty, 1999). The distress within agriculture from higher risk, brought about from unpredictable markets and agri-climactic uncertainties, have exposed farmers to such an extent that there has been a documented surge in the number of farmer suicides in eastern Maharashtra (Vaidyanathan, 2006, Mohanty, 2005, Gruere and Sengupta, 2011).

Higher levels of agricultural multifunctionality (and agri-tourism) are being brought about, not simply because of agricultural distress alone: also high levels of urbanization in the peri-urban areas around Mumbai and Pune create favourable conditions for this to happen (Andersson et al., 2009, Seuneke et al., 2013, Kalamkar, 2011). Mumbai is one of the world's most populous cities, and together with Pune, these two cities are responsible for rising land prices,

especially within the peri-urban fringe around the dense urban areas or located along the linear transport corridors. As pressure builds up on land within the city, the traditional urban functions relocate into the urban periphery or the countryside (Torreggiani et al., 2012, Isserman, 2005, Hugo et al., 2003). Increasing trends of counter-urbanization are resulting in the growth of commuter and holiday homes within the peri-urban areas, along with increased connectivity through the growth of transport linkages into the city (Halfacree, 2001). Other activities such as industry, the service sector, education and commercial offices are relocating into these areas to take advantage from cheaper land, resources and infrastructure. These systemic shifts in the control of land are also connected with visual changes, which are increasingly apparent within the landscape. The increasing levels of population-density and construction in this region, makes the peri-urban visually almost indistinguishable from the urban itself (Torreggiani et al., 2012).

The net result of the rapid changes to Maharashtra's agri-urban environment, brought about through the wider forces of global capitalism which translate into neo-liberal policies, are having a profound impact on rural agricultural livelihoods. A large number of farmers are selling their land and moving out of agriculture altogether, or resorting to non-cultivation activities. Within this context, what is the potential of agri-tourism to relieve livelihood stress? Through its potential of generating additional revenue, can agri-tourism provide farmers an alternative way to offset falling incomes?

While the proximity of the city causes several problems for farmers, such as rising land prices, shortages of water, labour, and natural resources; can the city also bring about livelihood benefits? For example, can the desire of the upwardly mobile middle class to escape the harsh urban environment translate

into real life economic opportunities for farming communities? How does this increasing tourism (partly resulting from urban transformations), improve the livelihoods for the wider rural community? What are the connections between improving rural-urban linkages and the opportunities for agri-tourism? How are improvements to infrastructure and roads, the availability of skills and education, the new network of opportunities such as mobile phones and the internet, related to the growing popularity of agri-tourism?

While agri-tourism may have the potential of generating additional revenue for farmers, it draws from the social and natural environment to support its practice. Several authors have advocated agri-tourism as a form of development which has the potential of conserving natural resources – its lower environmental impact compared to mainstream tourism, according to these authors is a significant advantage for the environment and rural community (McGehee, 2007, Tew and Barbieri, 2012). The process of bringing tourists to a relatively less built up zone in the peri-urban or rural environment, even if it is carefully managed, is not likely to be entirely free from environmental impacts. For example, agri-tourism relies upon infrastructure for bringing tourists, goods and services to the countryside. Whilst the infrastructure is unlikely to be developed exclusively for agri-tourism; is its growing popularity likely to result in significantly increasing the volume of rural traffic? How will the increased consumption (of water, fuel, food, and other natural resources), as a result from visitors being accommodated on the farm, affect the rural community? Moreover, how are the deeply stratified divisions and power inequalities within existing rural communities affecting the diversion of natural resources, and who are they benefiting? Also, can the presence of the visitors at the rural site itself constitute a form of nuisance for the village community? Moreover, will the

needs of accommodation, food, recreation and learning from the visitors require changes to the local environment in the form of buildings, landscaping, roads, infrastructure, services and different planting patterns? To summarize, in what ways, and to what extent, will agri-tourism impact the local environment within which it is set?

Agri-tourism is commonly believed to increase cultural awareness and enhance learning – several authors highlight these as important benefits associated with its practice (Kizos et al., 2011, Bernardo et al., 2004). On the ground, environmental and contextual conditions vary between sites; how do these contextual variations change the way that cultural and educational benefits are realized from agri-tourism? Increasing rural-urban interactions are thought to lead towards greater environmental awareness (Tew and Barbieri, 2012, Comen and Foster, 2009, Nilsson, 2002); then, can this enhanced awareness, transform the attitudes and behaviour of individuals undertaking or providing agri-tourism? But how will the site specific variations between different sites affect these interactions and environmental awareness? Moreover, as Mawdsley (2004) argues, the rising middle class aspirations are related to increasing consumption and environmental harm; are there similar harms associated from agri-tourism's practice?

Raising these questions reinforces that there are several layers of discourse which affect how agri-tourism is viewed by academics, policymakers, the urban consumers, and those providing agri-tourism as a service on their farms. How is agri-tourism then embedded within environmental narratives of conservation, consumption, poverty alleviation, consumerism, development and climate change? These questions also lead towards asking how agri-tourism itself is perceived as a form of sustainable development. How does it

reinforce/contradict the wider politics of sustainability itself – for example the disagreements between the global north and south over sustainable development? Moreover, how do stakeholders understand the meaning of sustainable development in its local application to specific agri-tourism cases? In a context of livelihood distress, where agri-tourism is likely to be a means of poverty alleviation, how are the stakeholders prioritizing and valuing various elements of the environment? This study will therefore need to focus on how agri-tourism's local practice is a part of the micro-politics of everyday life, but also how it relates to wider environmental aspects which affect these local interactions.

There are several complex and multiple dimensions of how sustainability informs the discourse of agri-tourism, and given the constraints of time and space of this research, it will not be possible to comprehensively cover all of these aspects. In the context of rapid urbanization in Maharashtra, however, there are two dimensions of sustainable development which arguably have greatest impact on agri-tourism, and consequently stand out in terms of importance. Firstly, agri-tourism's local practice is embedded within the processes that connect the city to the rural – the rural-urban flows of knowledge, labour, materials, information, skills, goods and services connect agri-tourism to the city, and to the wider environment. Within this level of analysis, there are a number of significant relationships which are related to and affect environmental sustainability: for example the supply and demand of agri-tourism as a service affects the consumption of natural resources or their conservation. The flows of knowledge affect the learning and responsibility of individuals towards the environment. Moreover, the generation of employment

within agri-tourism is a material consideration to the livelihoods of rural communities, and therefore affects their attitudes towards the environment.

Secondly, an important dimension of environmental sustainability within agri-tourism relates to the micro-politics of learning and individual responsibility which is enacted at the local level of the farm itself. Through the local level interactions at this scale between the main stakeholders in agri-tourism: the farm owners, the employees, the urban visitors, and the villagers, the attitudes and perceptions of individuals practicing agri-tourism becomes material in shaping environmental responsibility. The interactions between these groups of stakeholders are a site of knowledge production and learning about environmental processes, and this becomes the most important aspect of how individuals interpret and locally enact sustainable development. Interactional learning within agri-tourism has the potential of bringing the rural and urban together to enable local stakeholders attain higher levels of environmental awareness and responsibility. The manner, through which individuals conduct their interactions with each other, is affected by their constraints and capacities which makes for complex local circumstances within which stakeholders operate. In order to understand how stakeholders are interpreting sustainable development locally, therefore, it is imperative first to understand these complex set of local circumstances which shapes the behaviour and interactions of individuals in the first instance.

0.3. Research questions and methodology

In response to these contextual issues in Maharashtra, and given the constraints of time and space, this study sets out to examine agri-tourism through the following main research questions:

- 1. How do interactions between development goals, environmental governance and agrarian ecologies shape agri-tourism's understanding and practice in peri-urban Mumbai and Pune?**
- 2. How are rural-urban linkages transforming in the face of rapid urbanization in this region, and how are they negotiated within the agri-tourism discourse?**
- 3. How is environmental sustainability subjectively interpreted by stakeholders (agri-tourism farm owners, employees, urban visitors and the wider rural community) within the locally situated everyday practices of agri-tourism? How do these practices transform ecological citizenship within agri-tourism?**

This research examines the connections of agri-tourism with the environment at various levels of influence and interaction, and especially how sustainable development is interpreted within its local practice. The widest scale of environmental influence is from neo-liberal policies which not only steer agri-tourism's local practice directly, but are also responsible for the creation of wider circumstances which favour agricultural multifunctionality. At the next intermediate level, agri-tourism is also influenced by the flows and processes which connect the city to rural areas – such as the linkages of people, skills, education, infrastructure and products (Tacoli, 2006). The final and most important level of influence are the interactions between owners, employees, visitors and the villagers, where at the local level the power politics between unequal social groups and subjective interpretations of sustainability combine in complex ways for the practice of agri-tourism to emerge.

While the layers of environmental influence responsible for constructing the discourse of agri-tourism may be more complex than the three levels highlighted, nevertheless, this simplistic conceptualization emphasises that it is impossible to disconnect the overall analysis from each of these stratifications. The research must focus on both, the detailed interactions within agri-tourism, but also the overarching environmental influences which are affecting these interactions. For example, policies influence the rural-urban processes, which in turn influence the local level interactions between stakeholders. To examine detailed aspects of local practice alongside the wider context, the analysis in this study is therefore carried out at multiple levels through a combination of different (but complementary) research methods.

Firstly, the research uses the method of ***policy analysis*** to understand how sustainable development is constructed within policies at the global, national and state levels, to assign priorities to various aspects of development in order to address the "sustainability agenda". Secondly, the study uses the primary method of ***semi-structured interviews*** to explore the multiple and complex local interactions between the stakeholders to interpret sustainable development locally. Especially since sustainable development is often subjectively manipulated by individuals to forward their own political agendas (Escobar, 1995), it is important to embed its practice within the complex and varied sites of individual interaction. The interviews highlight the attitudes of stakeholders towards the consumption of natural resources, the role of learning, the creation of "value" within the landscape into the constructed "commodities" which are produced and consumed, attitudes towards the welfare of employees, and several important processes within agri-tourism.

While semi-structured interviews are a useful way to co-construct knowledge with the participants, it is also important to embed the learning into the complex circumstances of the local environmental settings to ensure that the knowledge produced is well grounded. Therefore, the method of writing comprehensive fieldnotes through observations was adopted to record detailed circumstances within the agri-tourism farms. The fieldnotes recorded not only the circumstances surrounding each interview, including the participant's attitudes and behaviour which is not possible to capture within each recording, but also fieldnotes are useful in collating the personal impressions of the environment and workings of each farm. Also observations and fieldnotes are highly significant since the study adopts a multi-case approach by selecting three farms with different environmental circumstances. This strategy enables connections to be drawn between local processes and the wider environment, but also makes it possible to comparatively analyse findings between parallel sites.

0.4. The thesis structure

The thesis is structured into seven chapters (not including this introduction). The first part of the thesis consists of three chapters, which provide the reader with an introduction to the study and its theoretical framework of sustainable development. Chapter one reviews the literary stances, politics and positions around sustainable development. Chapter two, sets out the methodology of the research. Chapter three offers the reader with an overview of the wider policies affecting agri-tourism, and therefore deals with the first research question. The second part of the thesis combines the empirical evidence and analysis (chapters four, five and six). Chapter four

contextualizes the three case studies within an overview of Maharashtra's agrarian and urban context. Chapters five and six present the narrative extracts from the stakeholder interviews and fieldnotes to combine the empirical evidence with the analysis; thereby answering the second and third research questions highlighted above. The third part of the thesis consists of the concluding seventh chapter which summarises the findings around each research question. Based on these findings, it then provides theoretical and policy recommendations.

Chapter one, "*Sustainable Development: Literary Stances, Politics and Positions*" reviews the literary perspectives and the politics of sustainable development in order to highlight the implications of adopting sustainable development as a theoretical framework for the study. By focusing on the specific case of agricultural modernization (an important aspect of agrarian transformations which is directly linked with agri-tourism), it sets the scene for various environmental positions on how "nature" is valued and prioritised. It argues that literature which deals with the environment in the global south, has so far been dominated by structuralist perspectives, which are inadequate in dealing with the multiple layers of complexity in southern environments. It argues that by offering perspectives on the environment which are locally grounded within the everyday life of agri-tourism stakeholders, this study fills this gap. By doing so, sustainable development can be more sympathetic to the priorities of poverty alleviation and environmental justice, which are more relevant in the southern context of Maharashtra.

Chapter two, "*Research Methodology*" offers insights into the epistemological considerations of researching a social context dominated by highly unequal power relationships. It highlights how these informed the

research methods adopted by this study, and also the limitations of using these methods. The examination of agri-tourism as a phenomenon connected with wider discourses and local interactions, and its consequent focus on multiple levels of analysis, requires a multiple methods approach. It therefore combines policy analysis, semi-structured interviews, observations and fieldnotes to construct knowledge which is well grounded within the local environmental context. Moreover, three case studies ensure that the analysis is multi-sited and the findings are contextualized within specific sets of local socio-economic and political circumstances. The overall epistemological approach adopted is to conduct a research which focuses on sustainable development through the priorities of the global south, which is contextually embedded within multiple sites, rather than the overarching traditional meta-narratives which are often common in environmental studies in India (Gadgil and Guha, 1995, Mies and Shiva, 1993, Shiva, 2000).

Chapter three, "*Policy Discourses on Sustainability in India*" (the first analytical chapter which directly addresses the first research question), examines how policies at multiple levels – from India's global commitments towards climate change treaties, the national policies determining the country's development trajectory, and also the state policies which favour neo-liberal capitalistic growth, affect sustainable development within agri-tourism. The policy directives claim to alleviate poverty through economic growth, but based on a mode which favours increasing agricultural productivity by adopting intensive methods of farming. Also the increasing rates of urbanization, brought about by the privatisation of industries and setting up of Special Economic Zones (SEZ) are to a large extent the result of these neo-liberal policies. While they are succeeding in making Maharashtra an economic focus within the

country, but as the safety net of subsidies is removed from farmers, they are also having devastating consequences for small and marginal farming livelihoods reliant largely on cultivation. The emphasis on intensification also leads to adoption of Green Revolution technologies¹¹ and high levels of inputs, which expose farmers to higher levels of indebtedness and risk (Mosse et al., 2002, Conway and Barbier, 1988, Cleaver, 1972, Evenson and Gollin, 2003). In these circumstances, therefore, this chapter examines if multifunctionality can become established in a way that can be seen as sustainable development.

Chapter four, "*Maharashtra's Agrarian and Urban Context*", sets out the unique context of the Mumbai-Pune city regions as a part of Maharashtra state, which has been subject to rapid urbanization in recent years. This chapter sets out the overarching circumstances of climate, geology, physical and urban environmental characteristics, which together produce agricultural patterns that contribute to the precarious and risky nature of farming livelihoods within this region. It demonstrates how Maharashtra's agrarian livelihoods become risky, not only due to the scarcity of water (due to an arid climate combined with unpredictable rainfall), but also because of rapid urbanization, brought about by capitalistic tendencies. It argues that this results in livelihood distress and the consequent shifting of jobs from cultivation to non-cultivation employment. This chapter critically lays the circumstantial foundations of risk and livelihood distress within which agricultural multifunctionality becomes operationalized in the Mumbai-Pune regions.

Chapter five, "*Perceptions of Rurality and Urbanization in Agri-tourism Citizenship*", examines the interpretation of sustainable development by

¹¹ The Green Revolution refers to the adoption of "scientifically enhanced" agricultural technologies with the use of high-yielding varieties (HYV) combined with high inputs (fertilizers, chemicals and irrigation) to increase agricultural yield per acre. A detailed discussion follows in the next chapter.

individuals through the lens of environmental responsibility as a form of ecological citizenship in the context of the agri-tourism farm. This chapter, with the help of empirical evidence of stakeholder narratives, argues that it is through individual perceptions of the categories of "urban" and "rural" to fulfil various political objectives that sustainable development is enacted within agri-tourism. It argues that in agri-tourism "rurality" is the most fundamental commodity which is locally constructed and consumed by the urban visitors. This process of construction, marketing and consumption brings to the fore wider politics of entrepreneurship, profitability and circumstantial distress which influence these processes. It argues that the states of being seen as "urbanized" or as being "rural" are locally constructed, and underpin the manner in which agri-tourism is practiced and therefore ecological citizenship is enacted.

Chapter six, "*Learning and Citizenship in Agri-tourism*", examines interactional learning as the mode through which stakeholders enhance environmental awareness, and thereby potentially become responsible citizens. Using the narratives from stakeholder interviews, this chapter tries to understand the processes which affect these stakeholder interactions, especially how politics and local circumstances affect stakeholder's motivations to learn through interactions. It analyses the micro politics of interaction, and tries to understand how power relationships and social inequalities affect the way that interactional capacities are transformed. It examines how the pressures of livelihood stress and entrepreneurial motivation of profit making affect the manner in which interactions and environmental learning take place, thereby impacting ecological citizenship.

Chapter seven, the last concluding chapter, "*Theorizing Citizenship in Agri-tourism*", summarises the main findings in this study based on each research question. It starts by discussing the overarching implications of agri-tourism being situated within a context of agricultural decline, which results from Maharashtra's policies and unique environmental circumstances. It then summarises the consequences of how stakeholders in agri-tourism perceive the "rural" and "urban", and finally, it summarises the capacities and responsibilities of individuals and their relationships with sustainability. Thereafter, this chapter sets out the overarching findings on the politics of boundary construction. It sets out how rural and urban boundaries are connected to the perceptions of "rurality" and "urbanization". This study argues that this process is fundamental to the construction of agri-tourism within its local practice, which thereby affects consumption and citizenship. Finally, the last section concludes the thesis by offering insights into the main theoretical and policy implications of this research, and also offers suggestions for further avenues of research.

Chapter: 1 Sustainable Development: Literary Stances, Politics and Positions

Global environmental thinking has been substantially shaped by "sustainable development" – a discourse which invites multiple and varied stances. This chapter reviews how these stances have percolated into multifunctionality and agri-tourism literature. It also examines the implications of sustainable development literature into the domain of the individual's environmental responsibilities and entitlements through a framework of ecological citizenship in agri-tourism. Since its adoption by the Brundtland Commission in 1987, sustainable development has invited divergent perspectives from the global north and south (Escobar, 1995, Redclift, 2005, WCED, 1987). Disagreements over conserving the global natural commons and questions over the autonomous control of nation states over their own resources have been debated. To an extent, the disagreements between the north and south have arisen because of highly structured thinking on environmental issues, and the existence a mostly rigid epistemologies of environmental literature which are desensitized to contextual limitations on a case-by-case basis (Gupta, 1998). Post-structuralist epistemologies, however, are gaining dominance over structuralist writing. This is because they offer a more flexible and situated understanding of environmental issues. Consequently, in analysing the suitability of sustainable development and agricultural multifunctionality to southern context of Maharashtra, this chapter argues that it is necessary adopt a post-structuralist and flexible epistemological approach along the lines of authors such as Gupta (1998) and Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan (2000a).

Agri-tourism is a form of agricultural multifunctionality that enables rural farmers to provide visitors a flavour of rural life through recreation, farming activities and products, promote and preserve certain values and earn additional income (Barbieri and Mshenga, 2008, Bernardo et al., 2004, Bruch and Holland, 2004, McGehee et al., 2007, Tew and Barbieri, 2012, Veeck et al., 2006, Sonnino, 2004). While agri-tourism is a way of generating employment (Hegarty and Przeborska, 2005, Kizos and Iosifides, 2007, Kizos et al., 2011, Barbieri and Valdivia, 2010), as with other forms of development, agri-tourism's impacts on the environment, including the consumption of natural resources and pollution, must be acknowledged. Just as sustainable development, a discourse which some argue has been promoted to reconcile the disparate goals of environmental conservation with the use of natural resources (WCED, 1987, Carter, 2007, Connelly and Smith, 2003); is agri-tourism also a means of justifying environmental degradation to create employment and income? In southern contexts, a key developmental issue associated with the use of the natural environment is how benefits and impacts transfer across the highly divided terrains of social stratifications (Gadgil and Guha, 1995, Martinez-Alier, 2002). The key question, therefore, is how expending natural resources (through agri-tourism) translates into the improvement of livelihoods of those directly (or indirectly) involved in agri-tourism.

The agrarian landscape forms the backdrop for agri-tourism, and the environmental transformations that take place along with literary stances on these, are an important part of this literature review. The most important agrarian transformation in some parts of India has been the Green Revolution (Conway and Barbier, 1988, Pimentel et al., 1973, Cleaver, 1972). This chapter therefore, uses the stances on Green Revolution as a starting point to discuss

various standpoints, conflicts and arguments in environmental literature generally.

The Green Revolution began with the adoption of "scientifically enhanced" agricultural technologies with the use of high-yielding varieties (HYV) combined with high inputs (fertilizers, chemicals and irrigation) to increase agricultural yield per acre. But since its start in the 1960s, it has been critiqued by scholars for its heavy cost on the environment (a detailed discussion follows in this chapter). Several authors criticized the agricultural modernization brought about by the Green Revolution as being a new form of capitalistic imperialism that richer communities and nations have perpetuated over the south to achieve economic dominance (Cleaver, 1972, Shiva, 2000, Sawyer and Agrawal, 2000).

The problem with this literature, and also of early environmental literature generally, has been binary thinking and the rejection of complexity within its theoretical arguments. For example, several authors have claimed that "development" is a discourse perpetuated by the west to further its own interests over the south and to undermine "indigenous" knowledge (Scott, 1985, Scott, 1998). The alternate viewpoint, however, favours "development" by interpreting it as a "scientific" modernization strategy for the south: a way of improving living standards and utilizing natural resources efficiently, in the process also preventing environmental degradation (Hanson et al., 1982). However, both these perspectives fail to acknowledge the disparate effects of "development" on stakeholders – the fact that situations on the ground are complex, and that transformations depend upon individual social, physical and political circumstances.

More recently, in the post-productivist agrarian era, a shift towards agricultural multifunctionality has been a significant contributor in bringing about

agrarian transformations within the landscape (Ploeg and Roep, 2003, Barbieri et al., 2008). Agricultural multifunctionality is theorized as broadening the goals of farming, as beyond simply producing food, to satisfying wider societal needs. It originated in the west, partly as a response to the environmental problems associated with agricultural modernization, and it tries to encapsulate agricultural practices which are more "sustainable". Agricultural multifunctionality has also been associated with sustainable development because of its perceived benefits in reviving farming livelihoods (Marsden and Sonnino, 2008, Wilson, 2008).

Agricultural multifunctionality is associated with the production of goods and services in rural areas – a general term which encapsulates a number of "value" creating processes (or services) embedded within the agrarian landscape (Wilson, 2007, Wilson, 2008, OECD, 2001, Overbeek, 2009, Marsden, 1995, Marsden and Sonnino, 2008). What is common to these services (including agri-tourism), is that those providing these, in the process, are making subjective decisions related to what they consider as "environmentally sustainable". For example, it is common to find western perspectives on multifunctionality which believe that shifting away from intensive food production corresponds with higher levels of sustainability (Wilson, 2008, Wilson and Rigg, 2003, Phillip et al., 2010). Can we, however, generalize this to contexts where livelihood struggles and food-security are more urgent priorities, as compared to environmental conservation? Also, some western perspectives on agri-tourism consider the presence of agriculture as pre-requisite to its "authenticity" (and by implication, also to its sustainability) (Phillip et al., 2010, Fleischer and Tchetchik, 2005, Nilsson, 2002, McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006). Can this emphasis on the "authentic" representation of

nature, and the notion of "honesty" to tourists, be applied to other contexts, or even globally? If so, then, are there any issues which arise from the political assumptions made by those deciding on what constitutes as "authentic" in the first place? The literature on agri-tourism offers an extensive understanding of how various aspects related to environmental sustainability have been prioritised, but with respect to the priorities and problems arising within western contexts, where these studies have been mostly carried out. Besides providing a wider understanding, this literature lacks applicability to specific issues and problems which arise within multiple and varied contexts elsewhere, especially within the global south, to contexts such as Maharashtra.

To understand how agri-tourism relates to environmental sustainability, a detailed and grounded understanding of how individuals carrying out agri-tourism in specific sites in Maharashtra are interpreting "sustainable development" is required. While the literature review on sustainability is useful for establishing a wider understanding of various environmental stances, this cannot compensate for a detailed analysis of interactions and perceptions of the stakeholders (farm owners, employees, urban visitors and villagers) who participate in the running/working/consumption of agri-tourism. Specifically, this knowledge relies on understanding how stakeholders are making decisions around consumption, environmental stewardship, learning and responsibility within the everyday practices of agri-tourism, or in other words their "ecological citizenship" (EC) (Dobson, 2003, MacGregor, 2009). Although citizenship involves the agency of stakeholders and occurs within the private domain, it cannot be separated from the wider structural shifts in Maharashtra's context, towards capital dominated policies, governance and landscape transformations.

This chapter therefore reviews the relevance of EC literature and how it may be adapted to suit the specificity of Maharashtra's southern context.

This chapter begins with understanding how the Green Revolution and modernization have transformed agrarian landscapes and discusses the contradictory and competing environmental viewpoints on this subject. It also discusses how these viewpoints connect with the wider discourse of sustainable development. Thereafter, it examines agricultural multifunctionality as a response to agricultural modernization, discussing the implications of adapting this into the southern context. The review then discusses how sustainable development can be interpreted in the form of individual responsibilities and entitlements within the realm of ecological citizenship (EC) of stakeholders. This is followed by a detailed examination of the agri-tourism discourse. The chapter is concluded with a summary on how various environmental stances, in structuralist and post-structuralist epistemologies, help or hinder the redefinition of multifunctionality and agri-tourism literature in their applicability for the global south.

1.1. Agricultural modernization and the Green Revolution

In the 1940s, the Mexican government invited the Rockefeller Foundation to improve its corn, wheat and bean varieties. This event marked the beginning of the agricultural "modernization" programme – the "Green Revolution" that spread across much of the south in the decades which followed. It was based on "scientifically enhanced" agricultural technologies that used high-yielding varieties (HYV) in combination with high inputs of fertilizer, chemicals and irrigation, to increase the agricultural yield per acre. The enhanced production had unforeseen and serious social, ecological, economic and political

consequences that have been thoroughly discussed within environmental literature from as early as the 1960s (Carson, 1962, Cleaver, 1972, Conway and Barbier, 1988, Evenson and Gollin, 2003, Pimentel et al., 1973, Leach, 1976), including by researchers who focused on South Asia (Gadgil and Guha, 1994, Gadgil and Guha, 1992, Gadgil and Guha, 1995, Mies and Shiva, 1993, Shiva, 1989, Shiva, 2000, Bentall and Corbridge, 1996).

It has been widely agreed that the environmental consequences of HYVs have been catastrophic for crop diversity, wider eco-systems, and generally for bio-diversity. The increase in productivity was achieved by compromising on natural resilience and on the adaptability of these varieties to pests and to the tropical/arid climates in the south. Moreover maintaining "optimal" conditions by using chemical fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides and irrigation was essential for enhancing productivity (Gadgil and Guha, 1995, Maheshwari, 1985).

Productivity was achieved by combining HUVs with the efficiency of mechanization brought about by economies of scale and simple crop patterns – but this eventually led to larger sized farms and mono-cropping (Scott, 1998). The consequences of using chemicals to fertilize, nourish and maintain the "alien" varieties and of mechanization included increased energy consumption, pollution, loss of biodiversity and the loss of indigenous crop varieties (Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997, Scott, 1998, Pimentel et al., 1973, Rajbhandari, 2006).

In later years, withdrawal of state subsidies worsened agricultural employment in rural populations in much of the global south (Roy, 2009, Mohanty, 2005). In fact, smaller farmers struggling to cope with annual farming inputs were eventually forced to sell their land to larger farmers and to move out of agriculture. At the same time, the agriculture based rural sector struggled to

cope with the rising rates of unemployment within farming communities. The Green Revolution, combined with other factors such as the pressures of urbanization, construction of large infrastructure projects and special economic zones (GoM, 2001b, Levien, 2011), have contributed to the mass exodus of "environmental refugees" to the cities where slums continued to expand (Gadgil and Guha, 1995).

CRITIQUING THE GREEN REVOLUTION: EARLY ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVES

Early environmental critiques have blamed the neo-Malthusian ideology of the north as being responsible for advance of the Green Revolution in the south (Sawyer and Agrawal, 2000, Gadgil and Guha, 1995, Shiva, 2000). Specifically, they have challenged the conventional thinking that the south's problems around food security relate to its increasing population and its inability to cope with this because of the lack of agricultural "modernization" (Shiva, 2000, Gadgil and Guha, 1995). These early Indian environmental authors have highlighted how this "western" ideology, combined with individual circumstances¹², in some southern countries was used to justify the promotion of the Green Revolution to India, Pakistan and Philippines initially, and then to much of the global south thereafter, with very negative consequences for the ecology, bio-diversity, land ownership, economic restructuring and regional equity in these countries.

Socially, the Green Revolution has been deemed by earlier environmental authors to have contributed to inequalities and existing class divides between irrigated and non-irrigated regions, across richer and poorer farmers, and as

¹² In India the successive failure of the monsoon season in 1967-68 brought about a drought and the need for the country to import wheat from the USA; this was the turning point for India's state policy towards agricultural modernization (Gupta, 1998, Maheshwari, 1985).

Gadgil and Guha claim, between "ecosystem people" and "omnivores" (Gadgil and Guha, 1995). The low resilience of HYVs for arid climates made them suitable only for regions which were already well irrigated. These highly uneven geographical effects led critics of the Green Revolution to question the Indian state's flawed strategy of focusing developmental efforts away from those areas which needed them the most. Moreover, these authors claim the requirement of irrigation for the cultivation of HYVs resulted in programmes of large scale projects, such as canals and dams, which not only have been ecologically problematic, but were also responsible for large scale displacement of rural populations (FORN, 2008, Divan and Rosencranz, 2008). Inequity also occurred at the micro scale where smaller farmers were at a disadvantage because "modernization" was too expensive for them – external inputs, plants, seeds, fertilizers all required capital investment which forced smaller farmers into indebtedness (Mohanty, 1999, Mohanty, 2005).

Northern agencies such as the US Government, Ford and Rockefeller Foundation were accused by these early environmental critics of assuming that western scientific techniques were superior compared to "indigenous" methods of farming. Many argued that the US Government actively promoted "modern" farming methods via its aid mechanisms to force recipient countries to adopt its agenda of modernization. Cleaver (1972) explained that this was a new form of "capitalistic imperialism". Accomplished through the imposition of strict conditions on southern countries receiving USAID, this allowed the USA (and other northern countries) to further their own investment interests. Critics believed that this forced capitalism meant that "indigenous" methods of farming – which were sympathetic to and based on local knowledge of soil, weather, crop-varieties and geology, were all cast aside in the name of modernization.

This made farmers more dependent on external inputs and "modern science", all controlled by the north (Shiva, 2000, Cleaver, 1972, Scott, 1998, Gupta, 1998).¹³

THE POST COLONIAL NARRATIVES ON THE GREEN REVOLUTION

So far the Green Revolution and its main environmental issues outlined above have been discussed from the perspective of early literature from the 1960s to the 1990s, which was mostly produced through Marxist analysis that tended to focus on the flows of capital, economic and political structures. However since the 1990s, post-colonial and post-structuralist scholars have added a new layer of critical thought to environmental issues, which is based upon a shift from wider structures and towards considering the agency of actors and local characteristics. Akhil Gupta (1998), through ethnographic fieldwork in Alipur in rural North India, showed how farmer's lives were affected by the forces of globalization, technological change and capital flows. His rich analysis drew out the contradictions and fluid nature of traditional binary categories defining development and environmental discourses. Gidwani (2000), through ethnographic fieldwork in rural Gujarat in Western India, showed that rich data relating to local politics and social-classes were vital for understanding the real affect of the Green Revolution on local farmers. He found that the construction

¹³ While this section highlights the disadvantages of agricultural modernization, the popularity of the Green Revolution in the south must be contextualized. Poverty alleviation and food-security compelled policymakers at the time to turn towards agricultural modernization in the south. In-fact, the proponents of the Green Revolution still argue that increasing productivity in itself contributes towards environmental sustainability. Hanumantha Rao (2005) claims that the Green Revolution saved marginal non cultivated land and forests from being converted into underperforming cultivated land. Similarly providing irrigation through dams and canals, he claims helped raise productivity and therefore saved vital semi-arid and fallow lands elsewhere from being cultivated. This was critical because it was a vital common pool resource for poor pastoralists (Gidwani, 2000). Moreover, Gupta (1998) admitted that providing irrigation allowed peasants greater flexibility in timing crop cycles, thereby reducing the uncertainty of their dependence on the seasonal monsoon rainfall.

of irrigation canals had unexpected class benefits with respect to livelihoods: rather than the richer classes directly benefiting and getting richer, poor pastoralists were the unexpected beneficiaries. This resulted from a specific local ecological characteristic¹⁴ which could have not been uncovered had the author not engaged in a detailed examination of agency and local conditions.

The most prolific Indian environmental authors, such as Ramchandra Guha, Madhav Gadgil and Vandana Shiva, have been criticised because they have often relied upon rhetorical persuasion in their writings, over simplifying highly complex situations. For their critics, in the current context of globalization and non-territorial nature of environmental issues, theirs is an inadequate epistemology to frame environmental discourses (Chatterjee, 2008). For example Guha and Martinez-Alier state:

The first category of ecosystem people includes the bulk of India's rural population: small peasants, landless labourers, tribals, pastoralists, and artisans. The category of omnivores comprises industrialists, professionals, politicians, and government officials – all of whom are based in towns and cities – as well as small but significant fraction of the rural elite, the prosperous farmers in tracts of heavily irrigated, chemically fertilized Green Revolution agriculture. The history of development in independent India can then be interpreted as being in essence, a process of resource capture by the omnivores at the expense of ecosystem people.

(Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997, p.12)

Many early environmental authors have been criticised in particular for the use of binaries in their categorization of institutions, actors and subjects. The use of "omnivores" and "eco-system people" to categorise populations mentioned above is such an example. In describing conflicts over natural resources and issues around environmental justice, Gadgil and Guha claim that

¹⁴ Gidwani explains that the Green Revolution canals provided new spaces of greenery where fodder grew, thus benefiting grazing cattle and resulted in a booming milk industry which provided alternate employment for the poorer castes. This benefited the castes of Kolis and Bharwads, but not the traditionally affluent Patels (Gidwani, 2000).

the British were "the world's premier omnivores" (Gadgil and Guha, 1995, p.9) and that the systematic regimes of colonial taxes were employed to ensure that a steady supply of cheap cotton, indigo and timber was made available to industries in Britain. The resulting environmental impacts and deteriorating livelihoods of peasants were of little consequence to the "omnivores". The authors argue that a similar story has continued into the post-independence period: the space initially occupied by "imperialist omnivores" is now taken by Green Revolution farmers, elite urbanites and politicians.

In describing the problems with the green revolution, Vandana Shiva, one of India's well known environmentalist, in a similar manner relies upon the binary opposites such as the west and east, male and female, the elites and subalterns, in conveying a simplistic (albeit emotive and powerful) message. In particular Shiva claims that because women are unfairly and disproportionately on the receiving end of environmental problems brought about by modernization, they occupy a privileged epistemological position with regard to ecological issues [sic] and, therefore, must be acknowledged in environmental decision making (Mies and Shiva, 1993, Shiva, 1989).

By using simplistic categories to make claims about competing opposites, this analytical approach was rhetorically a good way to focus public attention on environmental problems, especially by appealing to nationalistic sentiments or a sense of nostalgia from environmental narratives (Rangan, 1997). But the application of rigid categories involves simplification of the problem and a rejection of the complexity and hybridity of the characteristics and issues involved. In the current environment of transformation, increasing affluence, consumerism, but also increased environmental responsibility, this mode of

analysis is no longer useful. Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan (2000b) emphasize this viewpoint:

The attempt to identify women, the indigenous, communities, or the local with the natural environment is attractive to many scholars, activists, and policymakers alike. The appealing aspects of such identifications cannot be denied, and their utility for drumming up support is evident in the passions created around them. But we must also recognize that such attempts often reduce complicated social and historical dynamics and the fraught nature of social identities to mere caricatures. The resulting simplification not only flattens the complexity of phenomenon that are thus imagined but also limits the possibility of enriching the study of environmental politics with new theoretical insights.

(Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan, 2000b, p.9)

Implicit within criticisms of the Green Revolution is the assumption that the indigenous is of value and deserves to be preserved (Gupta, 1998). However what these criticisms assume is that the value of indigenesness is universally agreed. In reality, there is often little agreement between agencies, governments, and societies about what may be considered as indigenous. According to Gupta (1998), this is a subjective and political decision, often based upon the idea that something deserves greater protection than another. In reality, it is wrong to assume that a culture is "pure" or "unique", since cultures invariably become hybridized (Gupta, 1998).¹⁵

Early environmental literature has capitalized on binaries around nationalism. For example, Shiva argues:

The American strategy of the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations differed from the indigenous strategies primarily in the lack of respect for nature's processes and people's knowledge [...] American experts spread

¹⁵ Gupta's theory of hybridized culture also finds resonance in the work of other post-colonial authors such as Stuart Hall (2001), who questions assumptions around Caribbean identity and David Lloyd (2001) around Irish nationalism and contradictions within the idea of cultural "authenticity". Hall (2001) shows how the search for "essence" is problematic because it often dictated by what gets represented as "the truth" for a culture. He claims these are "exercises in selective memory and they almost involve the silencing of something in order to allow something else to speak" (Hall, 2001, p.283).

ecologically destructive and unsustainable agricultural practices worldwide.

(Shiva, 2000, p.34)

The author employs "indigenously" and "unsustainable American practices" as two binaries, where, on the one hand, indigenous agriculture is seen as "respecting nature's processes", and on the other hand, American expert knowledge is seen as the opposite. Also by claiming that American "expert" knowledge was a corrupting influence on "indigenous" agricultural practices, the author evokes a nationalistic sentiment to promote her viewpoint.

Nationalism, in particular, comes in the way of understanding current environmental problems which are played out in the global arena and go beyond the boundaries of the nation state (Gupta, 1998). The author claims that nationalistic binary thinking is outdated and unhelpful in understanding current-day environmental problems. Tackling these would require a shift towards non-territorial problem solving and joined up thinking (Gupta, 1998). The traditional differences between the north and south, over consumption, bio-diversity and population become impossible to resolve if the barriers imposed by the nation-state hinder international cooperation. Problems such as recognizing the patented rights of seed varieties, a subject which Shiva (2000) is passionate about, will remain unresolved without joined up thinking and cooperation.

MOVING BEYOND EARLY ENVIRONMENTAL AND POST-COLONIAL CRITIQUES

The analysis of post-colonial literature above has shown how "modernity as a northern discourse" has been problematized; similarly these scholars have explained why the idea of pure indigenously is a myth. Post-colonial literature sees communities suspended in conditions of hybridity between

notions of modernity and tradition. But, Meera Nanda (2001) argues that the problem of normalizing "hybridity" is that certain practices¹⁶ that are rudimentary or inadequate become revered and untouchable (Spivak, 1988). Historically there have been practices that have been rejected, but an in-toto acceptance of the condition of hybridity may make it impossible to assume consistent position against these practices and move forward. In other words, this form of post-colonial analysis blurs the boundaries between a traditional local belief and a need for change which is universally accepted (Nanda, 2001).

Post-colonial scholars have rejected the identity of cultures as "developed" or "underdeveloped" as a wrongful acquisition from western ideology (Escobar, 1995). Because there is no consistent agreement of modernity or development in this literature, it is incapable of theorising agri-tourism as development or modernization. Rather, there are multiple modernities within post-colonial literature: in other words, the "infinite number of possible varieties in cultural patterns, beliefs, and commitments as well as in institutional specificity" require the presence of multiple conditions of modernity (Wittrock, 2000, p.31). However, this makes a clear-cut pathway for change, or a specific trajectory of transformation, for example setting the specific criterion for measuring the success of agri-tourism ambiguous and difficult to achieve. As Nanda (2001) points out, this vagueness in post-colonial studies makes measuring indices of well being in these transformations almost impossible. The idea that multiple practices that exist within their own "communities of meaning" have equal validity may make it impossible to challenge and evaluate them externally. Nanda claims that "modern values and institutions find expression in traditional,

¹⁶ The author gives the example of the Indian practice of *sati* or the practice of recently widowed women to immolate themselves on their husband's funeral pyre. The practice was banned by the British in 1829 (Spivak, 1988).

culturally accepted idioms, but, beneath all cultural heterogeneity, there is a common core of modernity" (Nanda, 2001, p.169). The author argues that the shift away from this common core of modernity leads to political difficulties and problems. Nanda illustrates this point through the example of rural farmers who own between 2.5 acres and 15 acres of land, which Nanda labels as "bullock capitalists" (Nanda, 2001p.172). According to the author, these farmers belong to a relatively privileged class, but post-colonialists would classify them in the same category as peasants. Although they do not belong to the category of elites, bullock capitalists are still in a position of power and exploit poorer classes. Using the example of farmer's movements, Nanda claims that it would be impossible for the peasants to find a common thread and unite to fight oppression against the bullock capitalists because they would be unable to unify through common ground. The post-colonial discourse, she claims, through its acceptance of heterogeneity, has the potential of encouraging far right thought and will allow them to continue their politics of oppression and religious fundamentalism by acceptance of the status quo (Nanda, 2001).

1.2. Towards a theoretical framework for agri-tourism

So far this chapter has tried to position agri-tourism within wider environmental and agrarian literature by focusing on agricultural modernization – arguably the most important transformation in 20th century agriculture, because of the scale of its impact on environments both in the global north and south. This chapter argues that earlier environmental literature is overly simplistic and generalized, often unsympathetic to local factors and farmers' agency. Often the inadequacy of post-colonial literature to take a firm standpoints on poverty, environment, development, and similar wider issues

(Nanda, 2001) has been considered as a shortcoming of these studies. The inadequacies of simplistic binaries of earlier environmental literature, and also the post colonial reluctance in adopting universal goals, require a hybrid epistemology which deals with agri-tourism in a detailed and situated, but flexible way. Because the discourse of sustainable development seeks a balance between the wider environmental ideals of development with environmental conservation, but has the flexibility to be adapted locally to specific contexts, this is an appropriate framework for this study. The next section analyses the body of literature around sustainable development and multifunctionality, the competing interpretations between the north and south of this, and the relevance of these discourses on the localised understanding of agri-tourism in the global south.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: WIDER PERCEPTIONS

"Sustainable development" was first comprehensively defined by the Brundtland Commission in the report *Our Common Future* as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987). This definition aimed to bring together the historically disparate discourses of "environment" and "development" by proposing that environmental conservation was not necessarily incompatible with development (Carter, 2007, Connelly and Smith, 2003, Escobar, 1995, Gupta, 1998). Formulated in the global north, this concept gained global popularity – some claim due to its loose definition (Dryzek, 2005) and its potential for manipulation by various players. Escobar (1995) for example, argues that sustainable development as a discourse has enabled the more powerful north to stamp its authority over the south on issues of

environmental conservation. Simply put, while the north desires to preserve the earth's common resources such as forests, atmosphere and waters, the south has argued that this interferes with the provision of basic minimum standard of living for all citizens. The core disagreement from a southern perspective is about retaining autonomy and control over resources in order to relieve the plight of their poorest people (Gupta, 1998, Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997, Carter, 2007).

A balance between conservation and the appropriate use of natural resources for the benefit of human beings – both wider communities and future generations, is one of the core principles of sustainable development. It does not prohibit the use of natural resources; rather, by accepting development, it accepts the use of natural resources as inevitable. A considered, moderate and appropriate use of natural resources is justified according to sustainable development – where the advantage from development benefits the wider community and humankind – and within the context of southern countries, this applies to alleviating poverty. Sustainable development places a limit over development and the (over)use of natural resources, but only if this were to jeopardize the ability of future generations to benefit from the environment (Connelly and Smith, 2003, Carter, 2007).

Because agri-tourism is a form of development which requires the consumption of natural resources such as fuel, land, food and water – the criticisms often levelled at sustainable development, of leaning towards development, equally also apply to agri-tourism. Owing to this use and distribution of resources within sustainable development, the tensions between environmental conservation and poverty alleviation are very relevant to agri-tourism – embedding it thus theoretically within the critiques of sustainable

development. Therefore to understand the connection between agri-tourism and sustainable development, it is important to explore various perspectives within its discourse.

Critics argue that the sustainable development discourse is unsympathetic to problems of the south. As Gupta (1998) puts it:

Is globalism, as envisioned by the Brundtland Commission and other First World environmentalists, itself deeply implicated in Western modes of knowledge, classification, and representation, a kind of moral position that makes it unviable to comprehend other perspectives, let alone address them in any way that enhances dialogue?

(Gupta, 1998, p.303)

There is extensive literature (reviewed later in this section) which shadows in some form this concern by either criticizing or rejecting the ideas behind sustainable development, which is seen as a discourse which was formulated in the north from its own perspective (Escobar, 1995).

Our Common Future opens with an image of the earth as a "fragile spaceship" where there are finite resources, polluters and consumers: "everyone is in it together" (WCED, 1987). The emphasis is on preserving the earth's natural resources, especially its biodiversity and forests, and this philosophy, very common in Indian environmentalism, has been inherited from the west. However this concept of preservation recasts national parks, reserves and forests as spaces of social exclusion. As several authors have argued, this preservationist approach, which has been inherited blindly by several southern countries, has led to the displacement and exclusion of rural communities (Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997, Gadgil and Guha, 1992, Gadgil and Guha, 1995, McGehee, 2007, Sharpley and Vass, 2006). Since it is common to find

within agri-tourism literature, which is almost entirely from the north ¹⁷, preservation of the "natural" landscape or "rural heritage" as important motivations (Kizos and Iosifides, 2007, Kizos et al., 2011, Nilsson, 2002, Das and Rainey, 2010, Tew and Barbieri, 2012), the preservationist dimension of sustainable development may be problematic as a framework to theorize agri-tourism in the south. In a context where food security is the top priority, and there is no luxury of a post-productivist mode (Ray, 2009), a different set of priorities for sustainable development and agri-tourism are needed.

In 1972 in the UN Conference of on the Human Environment in Stockholm, India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi presented the issue from the perspective of one of the leaders of the third world:

On the one hand the rich look askance at our continuing poverty – on the other, they warn us against their own methods. We do not wish to impoverish the environment any further and yet we cannot for a moment forget the grim poverty of the large numbers of people. Are not poverty and need the greatest polluters? For instance, unless we are in a position to provide employment and purchasing power for the daily necessities of the tribal people and those who live in or around our jungles, we cannot prevent them from combing the forest for food and livelihood; from poaching and despoiling the vegetation. [...] The environment cannot be improved in conditions of poverty. Nor can poverty be eradicated without the use of science and technology.

(Divan and Rosencranz, 2008, p.31)

This quotation encapsulates the position of those who claimed that southern nations should defend their sovereignty over their natural resources to improve the livelihoods of the poor. The rhetoric employed here supports livelihoods, welfare and marginalized social groups who are struggling in their

¹⁷ On agri-tourism, of the academic internationally peer reviewed journal articles studied in this literature review, a majority of them (18 articles) were from Europe, of which 5 were from the UK. This was followed by the USA which had a total of 15 articles. There were three articles from Canada. Finally Israel, New Zealand and Australia had one article each. There were no articles from the south.

day to day lives – groups that have seldom been included in the management of forests and other natural resources.

Even though this stance has been criticised for reinforcing the neo-Malthusian ideology of attributing the responsibility of environmental degradation to the poor¹⁸, it was an important starting point for a widely agreed environmental perspective – that of empowering local communities and encouraging local participation in the management of local natural resources (Gadgil and Guha, 1994, Gadgil and Guha, 1995, Gadgil and Guha, 1992, Guha, 1989, Guha, 2000, Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997, Mies and Shiva, 1993). The notion of attributing local decision-making responsibility back to local communities, as opposed to imposing externally defined and monolithic notions of sustainable development on varied and multiple contexts, has something important to contribute towards the development of a theoretical framework that enhances understanding of the nature and potential of agri-tourism. Indeed, since agri-tourism is a form of transformation (as opposed to development¹⁹) that relies upon the use of local resources, land, water and energy, it calls into question the understanding of what local communities consider as important environmental and social issues. Inevitably, such understanding is context specific, varied and complex.

In the specific case of agriculture, often sustainable development is interpreted in the form of agricultural multifunctionality. This aims to diversify farming activities beyond food production to satisfy a range of societal needs. In

¹⁸ The main criticism from the south's perspective is that the lifestyle choices adopted by the north are far more detrimental in their impact on the global commons than the impact of poor people; and fears over the south's over-population as the main cause of environmental catastrophe are exaggerated (Divan and Rosencranz 2008, Gadgil and Guha 1994, Gadgil and Guha 1995, Guha and Martinez-Alier 1997, Gupta 1998).

¹⁹ It has been argued in the previous section from the post-colonial perspective that development is a term inappropriately perpetuated by western notions of economic positioning on southern countries (Escobar, 1995).

the process it aims to offer greater protection to farming incomes while encouraging a shift toward more sustainable agricultural practices: from intensive food production towards a less intensive post-productive agricultural mode with more emphasis on recreation and environmental stewardship. Moreover, the overarching goal of preserving rural livelihoods by retaining farmers within the agricultural sector is in itself environmentally beneficial²⁰. The next section deals with the issues which connect the discourses of agricultural multifunctionality and sustainable development, and explores how these discourses overlap with agri-tourism.

AGRI-TOURISM AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH MULTIFUNCTIONALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Agricultural multifunctionality describes a very wide range of strategies that aim to diversify farming revenue, employment and livelihoods to retain farmers within agriculture²¹. According to Barbieri et al (2008) there are six broad categories of multifunctionality: (1) use of non-traditional crops or livestock, (2) tourism and hospitality, (3) adding value i.e. processing and packaging farming products, (4) new marketing and distribution strategies, (5) leasing and renting out farm resources, and (6) contracting out farming services to others. Multifunctionality, like sustainable development, has been mainly a northern response to the devastating effects on ecosystems and communities brought about by modernization, alongside the need to diversify farming

²⁰ The previous section argued that lost rural livelihoods have resulted in mass rural-urban migration – the problem of "environmental refugees". The prevention of this process through rural employment is therefore environmentally beneficial.

²¹ The overarching benefit of multifunctionality is deemed to be a betterment of rural livelihoods by ensuring that the negative effects brought about by the green revolution, such as mono-cropping, loss of diversity and increased mechanization are offset by improved prospects for employment for rural farmers. By improving farming livelihoods, multifunctionality aims to retain cultivators on their land thus reducing the number of people migrating to urban areas.

incomes. Although not explicitly stated, the underlying assumption in literature is that a shift from productivist agriculture towards multifunctionality also marks a shift towards stronger sustainability (OECD, 2001).

While agricultural multifunctionality literature is vast, there are only a few authors who express views on the link between sustainable development and agricultural multifunctionality (Wilson, 2008, Marsden and Sonnino, 2008, Ploeg and Roep, 2003). Wilson (2008) provides a system for farm classification on the basis of multifunctionality characteristics of strong, moderate and weak multifunctionality. The author builds the case for a normative understanding of multifunctionality through existing agricultural transitions and rural systems literature (Marsden, 1999, Marsden, 2003, Wilson, 2007). The key characteristic is a shift away from productivist agriculture towards an approach which incorporates current social and environmental values. Wilson (2008) claims that strong multifunctionality requires the existence of "non-productivist action and thought" (p.367). The author assumes that these are synonymous with the values of preservation and conservation, whereas the use of Green Revolution technologies are assumed to be in binary opposition and related to weak multifunctionality.

The transition pathways available to farms between modes of weak and strong multifunctionality are limited by a number of internal and external factors (Wilson, 2008). This argument is relevant to the examination of multifunctionality in farms located in southern countries because the options for them to pursue strong multifunctionality may be limited by their location and factors beyond their control. Factors such as the policy environment, market forces, planning laws and regulations may prevent farms from pursuing stronger multifunctionality options (Wilson, 2008). The author explains that some farms

have greater opportunities for pursuing strong multifunctionality owing to their geographical characteristics. For example, the presence of peri-urban areas, or a well-established tourism zone, close to farm offers greatest opportunities for strong multifunctionality. Similarly, farms which are located away from these areas in very remote locations are constrained by their location to pursue strong multifunctionality. Moreover particular values, knowledge and cultures may determine the attitudes of farms and their ability to diversify. In other words, the ability of farms to become strongly multifunctional depends upon wider knowledge systems and embeddedness within external market systems²². The notion that the farm's wider environment critically determines its ability to pursue strong multifunctionality implies a limited ability of smaller farms in southern countries to achieve multifunctionality. Especially small marginal farmers in the south are severely restricted by resources and credit, and therefore also in their multifunctionality options. Their struggles in day to day survival are more likely to push them into using Green Revolution technologies, and thereby limiting their engagement in stronger forms of multifunctionality (Wilson, 2008).

Marsden and Sonnino (2008) offer a similar perspective on the relationship between multifunctionality and sustainability, classifying it into three categories of "sustainability". At the most basic level, there is simple *pluriactivity* as a "survival strategy that helps the least productive farmers to combat increasingly harsh market conditions" (Marsden and Sonnino, 2008 , p.423) – a condition which best describes most subsistence farming in the global south. At the next level, diversification is associated with the post-productivist shift, where the landscape is valued for its "ecological, social and aesthetic functions",

²² Wilson (2008) asserts that market embeddedness is associated with weak multifunctionality because the farm is likely to engage in productive agriculture to satisfy demands from wider food chains.

agricultural production takes a back seat and leisure and tourism become valued as "products". However Marsden and Sonnino emphasize that it is the next level of multifunctionality which is most "sustainable". Here agricultural multifunctionality is part of sustainable rural development – or, in a few words, diversification has the effect of providing employment opportunities, satisfying the needs of the wider region and society. Within this enhanced category, multifunctionality is characterized by a "symbiotic interconnectedness with farms in the same locale" and a range of functions in-tune with wider social and environmental needs (Marsden and Sonnino, 2008, p.423).

The implication on agri-tourism of these wider discourses is that there is a tendency for agri-tourism's practice to be linked with the wider assumptions around sustainable development and multifunctionality. For example, the above assumption that a shift of farming away from agricultural production towards a type of non-production diversification which includes tourism is automatically stronger sustainability cannot be taken as a given. In southern countries, there is lack of evidence on how wider rural livelihood, food security, and bio-diversity on the ground may be affected by tourism. By assuming that agri-tourism is a form of stronger multifunctionality, little consideration would have been paid to how the environmental impacts of tourists transform the lives of rural communities. The next section further examines the implications of adapting these concepts within the context of the global south.

AGRICULTURAL MULTIFUNCTIONALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

While this literature is useful in theorizing the connections between agricultural production characteristics and multifunctionality, its applicability

beyond the northern context is limited without reassessing its implications. In the global south, Wilson's assumption of strong multifunctionality as being associated with conservation and tourism diversification is overly simplistic. For example, appropriating tourism as a multifunctional strategy for all landscapes, including, for example, highly productive river valleys, is inappropriate, as this would take land away from cultivation and food production. There may also be environmental impacts such as pollution or unplanned development in regions which are remote or inaccessible. Often impacts beyond the boundaries of the farm, such as infrastructure construction, increased fuel use or scarce water resources, are not taken into consideration, but if these are the by-products of tourism diversification, it is difficult to justify this as strong multifunctionality or as sustainable development.

Linking strong multifunctionality with conservation may produce a situation where only the richer farms may be able to set aside land for conservation. Smaller and more marginal farms are likely to continue producing food through productivist agriculture if they are unable to "afford" the luxury of conservation or "greener" agricultural practices. In a neo-liberal context, governments may be easily convinced that larger farms are the pathway of achieving rural "sustainability" or strong multifunctionality. Adopted as policy by governments, the linkages between strong multifunctionality and conservation may disadvantage smaller farmers. Considering multifunctionality as a positive policy implication, therefore, is a simplistic and unsatisfactory solution especially in southern countries, where farms may be forced to move away from food production towards non-production land-use, and this may actually lead to welfare reduction, loss of food security and displacement of poor rural

communities (Ray, 2009, Chatterjee, 2008)²³. This study argues that strong multifunctionality is not necessarily an impossible goal for southern farms; rather the criterion for evaluating what constitutes as strongly multifunctional requires re-examination. It has been argued that existing western literature that links sustainable development to multifunctionality has assumed a western perspective which highlights the emergence of several issues when applied to the southern context. The appropriateness of strong multifunctionality can only emerge from the detailed examination of the local context and actors. The next section unpacks the literature around ecological citizenship and analyses how this may impact the "sustainability" of those undertaking agri-tourism through the way they perceive citizenship – i.e. through their attitudes towards environmental responsibility, entitlements, learning and knowledge.

1.3. Ecological citizenship in agri-tourism

Individuals making environmentally beneficial decisions in their everyday life not from any compulsion or legal obligations but rather, through a sense of responsibility to the environment are referred to as ecological citizens (Dobson, 2003). Ludwick Beckman (2001) described the path to true citizenship as the behaviour of people acting virtuously without "carrots" or "sticks". The author distinguishes individuals acting virtuously of their own accord from those incentivized or penalized through rewards or fines to act in an environmentally responsible way. Acting virtuously, the author argues, is more long-term than financial or other incentives or penalties, which, when removed, could see reversion of the status quo in people's behaviour. Fundamentally, EC relies

²³ There are a few development economists who believe it may be prudent for smaller farmers to give up farming and take up non cultivation employment elsewhere (Fan and Thorat, 2007, Hanumantha-Rao, 2005), however this is an extreme viewpoint which this study argues leads to displacement, despair and urban poverty.

upon individuals pursuing not only their environmental rights, but also fulfilling their duties towards the environment (Dobson, 2003). In contrast with approaches where individuals' fundamental environmental rights and entitlements are the most important considerations, Dobson (2003) makes it clear that in EC individuals must fulfil both their duties and responsibilities towards the environment. While "citizenship" is predefined by the laws of the land, ecological citizenship, on the other hand, relies upon the inherent sense of responsibility that citizens feel towards the environment in a non-contractual way. In conventional citizenship, the author explains, citizens are bound by the rules of the territory, rights and duties which exist vertically between the citizen and the state. On the other hand, in EC the duties and rights are horizontal, between individuals sharing a network of obligations and entitlements towards each other through enhanced knowledge about good environmental practices. Dobson argues that the nature of relationships within EC is non-reciprocal: duties and responsibilities exist between individuals who may not be bound through territorial belonging – they may not know each other, belong to the same ecological community and yet they share a sense of responsibility towards each other. To understand the implications of agri-tourism practice, hence, EC is highly a relevant framework: it affects how individuals are making responsible decisions around the choice of food, facilities, comforts, amenities, recreation, and travel. The impacts are non-territorial and non-reciprocal – they have environmental implications beyond the boundaries of the farm, village, district or nation-state. The level of responsibility displayed through the ways in which agri-tourism is locally practiced, or why (instead of mainstream tourism) it is being practiced at all, is not reliant upon legal or contractual obligations; this

chapter examines if this is related to the "environmentally virtuous" motivations of agri-tourism stakeholders.

APPLYING EC TO THE GLOBAL SOUTH

As highlighted above, the focus of EC is almost entirely on the agency of individuals, however, can the motivations of people to act virtuously be isolated from the environmental conditions that define agency in the first place? Sherilyn MacGregor points out: "people cannot be expected to engage in politics for its own sake unless sufficient conditions for citizenship practice are in place" (MacGregor, 2009, p.297). In what ways (and to what extent) do environmental conditions such as the flows of wealth, knowledge, rural-urban linkages, and policies of the state limit or enhance the capacity of individuals which is so important in enabling agency to emerge? In fact, Dobson argues that for citizens to become virtuous in their actions, the state needs to step back and take a back seat: a liberal state is a pre-condition for achieving ecological citizenship. But, can a similar style of governance from the state, which is commonly visible in the current day context as a capitalistic market dominated by neo-liberal governance reconcile with the ability of citizens to act virtuously towards the environment? As Massey pointed out, the flows of globalization are transforming individual lives, but the manner in which individuals benefit or lose out is predetermined by their existing hierarchical power relationships (Massey, 1994). How then, do the unequal terrains of power (which come into the fore especially in the global south) play out with respect to ecological citizenship?

OBLIGATIONS AND ENTITLEMENTS IN EC

Since environmental obligations and entitlements are at the core of EC, it cannot be meaningfully applied to a terrain of unequal human-nature

interactions. Very simplistically, often environmental impacts are referred to by their environmental foot-print: that is the environmental space that individuals, communities, or even nations exert on the environment to exist or flourish. Since individuals, communities and nations consume resources (food, water, fossil-fuels, and carbon), polluting the environment disparately, their environmental footprints on the global commons are highly varied and uneven. Consequently, within most EC literature there is general consensus that for all individuals to shoulder the same level of environmental responsibility would be unfair (Dobson, 2003, Agyeman, 2013). The level of environmental responsibility that citizens should bear should be proportional to their capacities to consume, pollute and their ability to make substantial impacts on the environment. But within a terrain of rapidly changing patterns of consumption and growth, and shifting hierarchies of power, how does the terrain of obligations and entitlements become (re)defined? Within agri-tourism the main stakeholder groups consist of the urban agri-tourists, the rural farm owners, and members of the wider village community including workers. The relationships between these three stakeholder groups in the form of environmental obligations and entitlements are negotiated and played out in complex ways – these hence form the subject of the analysis which follows in Chapters 5 and 6 later.

1.4. Agri-tourism in the global south

As mentioned previously, in the rapidly transforming emerging contexts of the global south such as Maharashtra, the priorities are different from the north: environmental discourses must deal with issues around rural livelihoods, food security and poverty alleviation. The review of literature around the Green

Revolution, sustainable development and multifunctionality has identified varying environmental stances adopted by authors along with their strengths and shortcomings. This section re-evaluates how specifically within agri-tourism there is potential to address rural livelihoods, food-security and poverty alleviation in the global south.

Agri-tourism involves a change from a production towards a post-production based agriculture, where cultivation may no longer be the main activity; rather there is a shift in focus towards agri-tourism as a service. This service critically depends upon the subjective understanding of "rurality" by the stakeholders of agri-tourism – it plays an important role in its construction of nostalgia and sustainability by its providers and customers. Moreover, in agri-tourism agricultural activities within the farm are fundamental for what some authors see as maintaining a sense of "authenticity" (Fleischer and Tchetchik, 2005, Phillip et al., 2010). "Authenticity" and "rurality" have interesting parallels with "indigenusness" – as several post-colonial authors have claimed the concept of indigenusness is problematic because the process through which some communities and cultures are categorized as "indigenous", while others are excluded is often the result of negotiations, local politics and power struggles (Gupta, 1998, Hall, 2001, Lloyd, 2001).

Closely connected to the production of "rurality" is the notion that agri-tourism is an environmentally "sustainable" activity, an association actively promoted by its stakeholders and policymakers (ATDC, 2011, Taware, 2009, TOI, 2009, McGehee et al., 2007, McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006). It is commonly argued in the literature that agri-tourism brings those undertaking it closer to "nature" and provides them with the ability to experience "authentic" rural culture and lifestyles (Nilsson, 2002, McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006,

Kizos and Iosifides, 2007); a notion which this study argues must not be taken as given without well grounded empirical examination. McGehee (2007) examined farmers who undertook agri-tourism in the United States, and explained that their motivations were positioned within the Weberian concept of "substantive" and "formal" rationality. While substantive rationality was based upon similar values such as sustainability: improving quality of life, family values, well-being, wider community interests and good environmental practices; contrastingly, the motivations of formal rationality were understood simply as commercial profitability²⁴. The author asserts that farmers' motivations absorb aspects from both these binary conditions and they need not simply subscribe to one of them – they often result from a complex hybrid condition somewhere in-between these extremes. Therefore, how the practice of agri-tourism relies on a combination of these motivations and other external contextual factors needs to be uncovered through a rich enquiry of agency and local context.

The following section describes each of these aspects in more detail and tries to anticipate the implications of these concepts on the specifics of agri-tourism in the global south. These issues provide a basic framework for the localized understanding of agri-tourism, linking it with the wider discourses of sustainable development and multifunctionality.

"RURALITY" IN AGRI-TOURISM

Agri-tourists have the desire to get back to their roots and be re-acquainted with their past (Nilsson, 2002), and therefore the construction of

²⁴ This viewpoint differs from those who have argued that commercial profitability from agricultural multifunctionality in itself is a form of sustainability if it contributes towards retaining farmers within agriculture (refer to previous sections on agricultural multifunctionality).

"rurality" forms an important motivation. The rural landscape not only provides urban tourists a get away from the everyday stresses and routines of urban life (Nilsson, 2002), but also satisfies their desire for calm and reflection, peace and tranquillity (McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006, Ainley and Smale, 2010). Ainley and Smale (2010) explain that those who undertake agri-tourism have often had some sort of strong connection with rural life in their past and are therefore returning from a sense of "nostalgia". Also owners of agri-tourism sites themselves commonly quoted their desire to continue farming as an important motivation for undertaking agri-tourism (Tew and Barbieri, 2012, Kizos and Iosifides, 2007, Comen and Foster, 2009, McGehee, 2007, Barbieri, 2010). Agri-tourism owners also felt very dissatisfied with the urban lifestyle, and the idea of the rural idyll became a strong reason for them to pursue agri-tourism (Nilsson, 2002, Ollenburg and Buckley, 2007, Tew and Barbieri, 2012). Moreover, agri-tourism owners also were keen on pursuing an alternative form of agriculture that distanced itself from intensive production: one that displayed a shift towards organic food production (McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006), that acknowledged the feminization of agriculture (McGehee et al., 2007) and was more embedded in the values which idealize nature (Nilsson, 2002).

Agri-tourism literature almost unanimously agrees that a sense of nostalgia and romance towards the rural are the primary driver of agri-tourism (Phillip et al., 2010, Nilsson, 2002, McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006, Kizos and Iosifides, 2007). Kizos and Iosifides (2007) explain the relevance of "rurality" as a motivation that defines agri-tourism by quoting the Greek Ministry of Agriculture:

Agrotourism is a type of tourism that provides visitors with the opportunity to spend their holiday in a quiet place, close to nature and to simple villagers who are still tied to the land and tradition. Visitors can get

to know customs and traditions of Greek rural places, but, most importantly, they can enjoy warm human "hospitality" and their spontaneous good manners

(Kizos and Iosifides, 2007, p.64)

The notion of "romance" that has been constructed around rural life is also mentioned by Nilsson (2002):

The countryside is often regarded as an incarnation of calm and reflection, with a trait of backwardness and a lifestyle, different from an urban perspective that has developed from an environment once dominated by peasants in an old idealized picture of the farmer that has not totally disappeared.

(Nilsson, 2002, p.8)

Urry (2002) has argued that the countryside has been the "object" of the tourist gaze for centuries, especially in England, as illustrated by Gray's quotation around Grasmere in the Lake District: "This little unsuspecting paradise, where all is peace, rusticity and happy poverty (especially given the countryside's regular harbouring of diseased animals)" (Urry, 2002, p.87). The sarcasm points towards the author's belief that there is deception in the "romance" of the countryside. The changes in the countryside have been so profound, with the modernization of agriculture, people's lives, and so on, that the notion of rurality no longer holds true. Urry claims that to support this notion of rurality there have been profound corrections or changes to the countryside which has turned it into a manicured and gentrified landscape.

But, how is rurality affecting agri-tourism in the global south? Within a context of very high rural-urban migration rates in rapidly transforming southern countries, migrants often maintain high levels of contact with their relatives and families (Deshingkar, 2006). Are they returning back to their roots from a sense of nostalgia and rurality, or simply for a get-away from the everyday routines of urban life? How do the owners of agri-tourist sites treat returning relatives? Are

the boundaries between guests and agri-tourists blurred in these circumstances? These are some avenues of enquiry which will advance the understanding of rurality and its contribution towards agri-tourism literature in the south.

"AUTHENTICITY" IN AGRITOURISM

In the western agri-tourism discourse "authenticity" has been considered an important motivation in itself – as Kizos and Iosifides (2007) explain: "alternate tourism offers, or is alleged to offer, quality products and services, puts emphasis on the local character and provides 'authentic' experiences and personal contact between the tourist and the provider of the service" (Kizos and Iosifides, 2007, p.60). But there is a departure between the reality and what is constructed as authentic by the tourists' imagination, and those who promote or provide agri-tourism, or as Nilsson (2002) states, between what is perceived by the tourists and what is factual or concrete. Phillip et al (2010) explain also that authenticity in agri-tourism can be compared with a stage performance: reality is often hidden away from the visitors in a manner similar to what occurs in the back stage of the performance. In a truly authentic experience of agri-tourism, the authors claim, the agri-tourist would be admitted to the "back stage" of the farm's actual operations.

The desire to get away from the urban has increased the demand for the rural idyll, but at the same time experiences of the countryside are valued more if they are perceived to be "authentic". Consequently, hands on activities associated with farming (such as sowing, tilling, and dealing with animals) are popular within agri-tourism as they make visitors feel they participating in the activities of a working farm (McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006). Tourists were

conscious of agri-tourism being an alternate form of tourism, which was different from mainstream tourism, where the presence of farming activities was central to the whole experience and this contributed very strongly to one of the primary motivations: learning about how food is produced through enhanced interaction and knowledge exchange opportunities (McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006, Phillip et al., 2010, Comen and Foster, 2009, Ainley and Smale, 2010). Moreover, learning about agriculture, food production, history, rural culture, and alternative farming have also been described by several authors as the most significant advantages of agri-tourism (Ainley and Smale, 2010, Nilsson, 2002, Comen and Foster, 2009, McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006). In satisfying the learning objectives of agri-tourism, the conservation of the agricultural lifestyle is often seen as an important pre-requisite condition.

While in some cases, farming plays an active part of the "authentic" experience – the tourists take part in day to day activities and education is considered important, in other cases, farming forms only a backdrop for tourism activities and the visitors stay detached from agricultural activities. This characteristic is seen by Phillip et al (2010) as fundamental to the theoretical distinctiveness of agri-tourism, and therefore it forms the basis for a system of classification which these authors propose. According to Phillip et al. (2010), a "working farm" is one of the fundamental characteristics of agri-tourism, but it is not sufficient on its own to create authenticity; the visitors must also have some form of contact with farming activities, which may be direct, indirect or passive. *Direct contact* with farming activities enables visitors to take an active part in farming activities (which may or may not be staged). *Indirect contact* requires visitors to come in indirect contact with farming activities, for example by consuming produce produced by a farm. Finally, *passive contact* means that

visitors do not come in any contact with activities other than the use of the farm as a backdrop, which according to the authors is not in the spirit of agri-tourism.

In general, scholars agree that contact with farming activities is essential for agri-tourism. Sonnino (2004) describes agri-tourism as "activities of hospitality performed by agricultural entrepreneurs and their family members that must remain connected and complementary to farming activities" (Sonnino, 2004, p.286). But some believe that, at the core, farming and tourism are incompatible activities. For example, Fleischer and Tchetchik (2005) found through their study of rural accommodation in Israel that agriculture simply provides a backdrop for tourism to take place. The authors claimed that there was a possibility that tourism taking place on farms would compete with existing agricultural activities over resources such as labour and land. Although the authors found that farms where tourism took place used their resources more efficiently, they also highlighted that the visitors saw no advantage in farms being working farms.

One of the most important motivations to undertake agri-tourism relates to the desire for learning and education. Comen and Foster (2009) found that those undertaking agri-tourism in Vermont were well educated and aware individuals who were highly motivated to learn about agricultural practices. But the most common educational aim in agri-tourism was the desire to provide learning opportunities for the public, especially for children, through interaction with animals (McGehee, 2007, Nilsson, 2002, Ollenburg and Buckley, 2007, Pittman, 2006, Tew and Barbieri, 2012). McGehee et al (2007) interestingly found a gendered dimension to agri-tourism education – that women were more interested in educating the public about agriculture, whereas men were more interested in preserving the historic culture and agrarian heritage. Sharpley and

Vass (2006) also considered the education of public about rural culture and traditions an important aspect of agri-tourism.

In the case of rural India, Chatterjee (2008) points out that the condition of communities has transformed (and continues to transform) because of education and exposure to modern media such as television, advertising and cinema. This means that the physical, social and cultural landscapes all show signs of urban influence. In these circumstances, therefore, is this notion of the "authentic" rural imaginary or real? How far does the notion of "authenticity" of the rural experience play a part in motivating agri-tourism? Or is the visible motivation of agri-tourism in these circumstances similar to what McIntosh and Bonnemann (2006) describe as an attraction towards the uniqueness of the experience²⁵, rather than anything else? Agri-tourism's tendency to be in proximity to cities, within what Lerner and Eakin (2011) refer to as peri-urban areas or urban peripheries, provides an interesting context for the construction of "rurality"; ironically within a zone which is subject to most rapid urbanization, transformation and production pressure within the wider city region.

Managing the "authentic" experience – within a context where culture, landscapes and society are highly hybridized, requires an understanding of how the providers and consumers of agri-tourism are affected by local politics and subjective decisions. That is: how are certain aspects of agri-tourism given priority over others and promoted as "authentic"? Therefore, although learning and education are common themes in western agri-tourism literature, within the southern context they require local empirical examination.

²⁵ McIntosh and Bonnemann (2006) researched volunteers employed in organic farms in New Zealand who were satisfied with very basic food and accommodation and no remuneration because their main motivation was the uniqueness of experience.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND AGRI-TOURISM

Can the tensions between business profitability, on the one hand, and social/cultural/ environmental values on the other hand, ever be reconciled by farmers who undertake agri-tourism? This question is at the heart of all agri-tourism ventures and it also links agri-tourism with the wider sustainable development discourse. McGehee (2007) has used Weber's argument of "substantive" and "formal rationality" to examine agri-tourism ventures. The author explains that the motivations of improving lifestyle, pursuing community interest and improving behaviour, driven by the values of "sustainability", can be termed as "substantive rationality"; pure economic profitability, in turn, which underpins the motivations behind most businesses, can be viewed as "formal rationality". The author takes the view that the primary motivations for undertaking agri-tourism have mostly been the "formal rational" motivations of economic diversification, increasing profit and making income more secure within increasingly turbulent economic climates. For McGehee (2007) claims that quite a few agri-tourism ventures start as social or cultural ventures, but may turn more businesslike with time and experience. The author concedes that in decision-making the states of substantive and formal rationality do not exist separately – they often co-exist as hybrid states of motivation. Unpacking these detailed motivations within agri-tourism, this study argues, is necessary because this will enable a grounded understanding of how the southern context imposes unique environmental constraints on agri-tourism's local practice.

An important aspect of agri-tourism which Fleischer and Tchetchik (2005) found was that tourism has a correlation with the characteristics of agricultural production. In farms where tourism takes place, have a higher likelihood of diversifying their produce into higher value crops as opposed to traditionally

grown varieties. Therefore the ability of agri-tourism to provide an alternative market for farmers struggling to cope with the vagaries of an unprotected and fluctuating agricultural market-place is an important consequence. This is echoed by several other authors: Tew and Barbieri (2012), on the basis of their study of farms in Missouri, claimed that the traditional mono-cropping patterns were incompatible with agri-tourism, which encouraged diversification of farms to grow speciality high value crops. Also the authors found that regions that already had a diversity of products, such as wine and decorative products, were more likely to support tourism. Sonnino (2004) also found that in already touristic areas farmers tended to concentrate their resources on tourism, often undertaking farming only to satisfy the legal government requirement. According to the author, rather than the vagaries of farming, it was the involvement in tourism that provided farmers with their "piece of bread" (Sonnino, 2004, p.295). In the global south, often authors have considered the loss of food production as an unsustainable practice because it affects livelihoods, employment and out-migration (Hanumantha-Rao, 2005b, Ray, 2009). These studies make it clear that characteristics of agricultural production are linked with multifunctionality and agri-tourism's practice. Therefore, how unique circumstances of production in the south, especially shifts towards greater intensification can generate unique constraints for agri-tourism will need to be understood.

Within western agri-tourism literature, another important motivation for farmers undertaking agri-tourism is to enhance family values and improve personal or the family's quality of life (Barbieri, 2010, Das and Rainey, 2010, Kizos and Iosifides, 2007, Kizos et al., 2011). Dissatisfaction with urban life and the offer of a good environment, scenery and health are attractions for people

undertaking agri-tourism (Nilsson, 2002, Ollenburg and Buckley, 2007). Comen and Foster (2009) claim that although agri-tourism amongst its participants was primarily a business decision, an important motivation for farmers was the ability to work from the farm or home. Agri-tourism helps farmers to strike a balance between their work, profitability and quality of life (McGehee, 2007). Ollenburg and Buckley (2007) found from their study of agri-tourism in Australia that a reason for undertaking agri-tourism was that it enabled farmers to bring up their children within the countryside, which is perceived as a better environment for children to grow up in. Nilsson (2002), on the other hand, found that it was generally "farmers' wives" who benefited through home employment, enabling them to undertake work and care for children. There were several other authors who saw a gendered dimension to western agri-tourism, with farmers' wives taking the management role (Sharpley and Vass, 2006, Comen and Foster, 2009, McGehee et al., 2007). Women also saw greater advantage of agri-tourism in keeping families together by providing employment to other family members (Tew and Barbieri, 2012), and evening out the risk posed by the vagaries of agriculture (McGehee et al., 2007). This literature makes an interesting comparison with the difference in socio-cultural issues in global south and their intersection with local agri-tourism practices.

By and large, most agri-tourism ventures across the world are bound by the common motive of generating economic capital: increasing the revenue and profits of the farm (Barbieri, 2010, Tew and Barbieri, 2012, Bernardo et al., 2004, Das and Rainey, 2010, McGehee, 2007, Nilsson, 2002, Ollenburg and Buckley, 2007, Phillip et al., 2010). The generation of economic gains is seen as the most common positive attribute of agri-tourism by authors and policymakers alike, not only through the provision of jobs to local people, but

also through the development of local farm services and products through new marketing possibilities (Kizos and Iosifides, 2007). Most agri-tourism studies agree that it has the potential to bring employment: Kizos and Iosifides (2007) point out that in Greece agri-tourism was being promoted through government development programmes that hoped to improve working conditions for rural workers and elevate living standards generally. Some consider agri-tourism primarily to be an opportunity for farmers to stabilise their income and stay in the business of farming (Comen and Foster, 2009). In the literature, agri-tourism is commonly believed to have the ability to revitalize the local rural economy and benefit the entire village community. Moreover, according to some authors, agri-tourism has the potential to save the rural land itself from urbanization and development (Che et al., 2005, Hegarty and Przezborska, 2005).

Agri-tourism is also part of a much wider discourse that deals with the production and consumption of rural goods and services (RGS) through the generation of economic capital within the countryside to benefit rural livelihoods. The intensification of RGS production and consumption leads towards higher levels of agricultural multifunctionality (Marsden and Sonnino, 2008, Marsden, 2003). Within agri-tourism, specifically, the "goods" translate as the packaging of "nature" to serve the urban needs of "authentic rural" food, culture, recreation, amenities and learning (Barbieri, 2010, Barbieri and Valdivia, 2010, Kizos et al., 2011, Wilson, 2008, Nilsson, 2002). Numerous studies on sustainable tourism conceptualize the consumption of "natural" or "social" amenities as natural and social capital respectively (Briassoulis, 2002, Butcher, 2006, Garrod et al., 2006), and also question the socio-political ethics of considering the environment in terms of "eco-system services" (Holden, 2009, Holden, 2005). Within tourism studies there is an extensive literature that

critiques the instrumental use of local resources and amenities for tourism. Most commonly, authors have raised concerns around the environmental justice aspects, and especially the exclusion of local communities from decision making processes (Blackstock, 2005, Jones, 2005). Moreover, there is also extensive literature on the ethics of indiscriminate misuse of the global commons, and the risk this poses to the wellbeing of future generations (Lea, 1993, Holden, 2003, Holden, 2005, Briassoulis, 2002).

1.5. Rethinking the research agenda

This chapter began with a discussion on the Green Revolution – arguably the most important agricultural transformation of the 20th century, to highlight the existing environmental perspectives that may influence the study of agri-tourism in the global south. Early environmental literature from South Asia and elsewhere was mostly produced as a response to the negative environmental impacts of agricultural modernization on rural communities, eco-systems and the environment (Carson, 1962, Cleaver, 1972, Conway and Barbier, 1988, Evenson and Gollin, 2003, Gadgil and Guha, 1995, Mies and Shiva, 1993). However, the reliance of this literature upon simplification and binaries makes it deficient with respect to the finesse required for handling the complexities of contemporary environmental problems (Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan, 2000b, Gupta, 1998). This is especially true for rapid economic transformations within emerging southern countries such as India, where rapid rates of urbanization have caused the social, physical and ecological environments to become highly complex and hybridized (Gupta, 1998, Gupta, 2005, Chatterjee, 2008).

The main criticism of early environmental literature, often from post-colonial authors, is the simplification of highly complex problems which binary

thinking often causes (Gupta, 1998, Chatterjee, 2008, Skaria, 2000, Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan, 2000a). There are several examples of this style of writing: for example, the categorization of people into "omnivores" and "ecosystem people" (Gadgil and Guha, 1995), "indigenous" and "foreign" (Gupta, 1998, Hall, 2001, Lloyd, 2001); post-colonial authors argue that this is rather an outdated and simplistic mode of analysis. Moreover, several authors have also cast doubt on the appropriateness of western discourses to fit the richness and complexity of southern contexts such as India (Escobar, 1995, Gupta, 1998). These authors highlight the danger of populist nationalistic rhetoric, essentialist gender categories, rhetoric around authenticity and indigenesness as fundamentally flawed assertions within environmental decision making. Rather, post colonial authors advocate an ethnographic approach which relies on examining the agency of individuals, but is also strongly embedded within the local context.

Even though post colonial literature is often vague with respect to definitive policy recommendations on poverty, environmental degradation, rural livelihoods and similar developmental goals (Nanda, 2001), its concern with both context and agency provide a useful epistemological footprint for studying agri-tourism. This chapter highlights how agri-tourism is deeply connected with sustainable development and multifunctionality (Sonnino, 2004, McGehee et al., 2007), therefore, its appropriateness to environments can only be examined through detailed qualitative analysis which is embedded within the workings of everyday life of people and the local environments, especially in how they understand environmental responsibility and entitlements through ecological citizenship.

There are several aspects specific to the global south (especially India) that make the environmental problems here highly complex and different from the north. Research must grapple with concerns around environmental justice, food security and poverty alleviation as wider goals for development (Hanumantha-Rao, 2005b, Haddad et al., 2012, Ray, 2009). Moreover, the location of agri-tourism within the peri-urban fringe, where severe land pressure from urbanization, industrialization and production, cause agriculture to acquire highly productive and modernized characteristics (Lerner and Eakin, 2011, Fan et al., 2000, Ray, 2009). These issues complicate the context, and it is impossible to adopt sustainable development as an overarching concept without adapting its priorities to suit the global south. The problematic assumptions within agri-tourism literature around food productivity and sustainable development in the south (Wilson, 2008), the binary simplifications between economic and sustainability motivations in agri-tourism (McGehee, 2007), and also rather narrowly defined perspective of agri-tourism as a way of enhancing livelihoods, all raise the need for a new approach that reflects the priorities of southern contexts such as India.

The construction of "rurality" in agri-tourism takes place to aid the shift towards multifunctionality. Essentially, the process involves artificially constructing a notion of "rurality" as a "product" which is consumed by agri-tourists. In what ways, therefore, does the process of this social construction intersect with the notion of agri-tourism being "sustainable"? In the construction of "rurality" and its consumption, how are the negative environmental consequences concealed? Also, is there a departure from what is portrayed as "rural" and what is "authentic", and does this have any implications on the lives or communities or the environment? The literature around "rurality" and

"authenticity" raise these questions, which necessitate a detailed qualitative enquiry around the everyday practices of agri-tourism stakeholders.

The existing bodies of environmental literature are very useful and provide a background context for examining agri-tourism, but each body of literature presents its own set of opportunities and problems; without being adapted to deal with present day environmental problems in India, these are therefore unsatisfactory as they currently stand. Although there is sufficient literature around agricultural multifunctionality and agri-tourism in the north, the boundaries of this literature need to be widened to include the issues which are most relevant in southern contexts such as India. Within the context of the emerging India, rapidly transforming and urbanizing peri-urban regions provide a very rich but challenging context for environmental research to focus: rural livelihoods, food security and poverty alleviation are challenges that environmental scholarship need to urgently tackle here. Not only does agri-tourism's potential impact on these issues justify the urgent need for research to include southern contexts such as India; but also agri-tourism serves as a microcosm of wider environmental and agricultural trends in these contexts and must therefore be understood in greater detail.

Chapter: 2 Research Methodology

The aim of this research is to examine agri-tourism as a discourse linked with environmental policies, but also its embeddedness in the everyday life and interpretations of stakeholders: agri-tourism owners, employees and villagers in peri-urban Mumbai and Pune. In academic and media discourses agri-tourism is seen commonly as synonymous with "sustainable development" – an environmentally beneficial form of agricultural multifunctionality, as discussed in the previous chapter. Sustainable development is the overarching theoretical framework of this research. It enabled this study to probe into how agri-tourism was enhancing rural livelihoods – but also reconcile with wider environmental interests of climate change, bio-diversity, food-security, socio-cultural diversity, for current and future generations (WCED, 1987, Connelly and Smith, 2003, Carter, 2007). However as discussed in the previous chapter, sustainable development has been widely criticised for being ambiguous, flexible and prone to political manipulations (Redclift, 2005, Escobar, 1995, Gupta, 1998); moreover according to critics – its origins in the global north, limit its capacity to protect livelihoods in the global south (Hanumantha-Rao, 2005b, Divan and Rosencranz, 2008).

This study therefore tries to advance beyond the criticisms of sustainable development, to be more inclusive of environmental issues of the particular and multiple contexts of Maharashtra. It links agri-tourism with its local context and within the everyday life and practices of its stakeholders through the framework of analysis of ecological citizenship (EC). It uses EC to probe into stakeholder's interpretations of environmental responsibility, entitlements, learning and knowledge. The methodology uses three case studies of agri-tourism projects

set within contrasting landscapes of urbanization, cultivation, agrarian, environmental and social characteristics²⁶. To begin with, policy and documentary analysis was used to explore the wider environmental characteristics affecting this region as a whole. The main research methods used in this study was a combination of semi-structured interviews and observations to examine the everyday life and practices of agri-tourism stakeholders. These allow for local meanings and interactions around sustainability and multifunctionality to be unpacked. These methods also permit rich empirical data in the form of participant narratives and fieldnotes to be generated. This facilitates knowledge around how "sustainable development" is interpreted and negotiated across multiple levels to emerge: (1) within spaces of multi-level governance and policy, (2) within academic and expert knowledge, and (3) in its local practice by stakeholders – farmers, workers and the local community.

2.1. Research context and epistemology

This study addresses two broad concerns arising from using sustainable development as a theoretical framework in the global south. Firstly, the power disparity between the researcher and the participants, owing to the dominance of western thinking and knowledge generally in the field of research (Smith, 1999) calls for enhanced reflexivity from the researcher, especially in applying sustainable development to the global south²⁷. Secondly, it addresses the inequalities of social representation and power between the rich-poor and rural-

²⁶ Case study landscape characteristics are discussed in detail in chapter 5.

²⁷ Especially since there are criticisms of sustainable development in its simplification of the issues affecting the global south (for example see Escobar, 1995 and Gupta, 1998).

urban divides that result from being located in a rapidly urbanizing region with complex hybrid characteristics of social and environmental development.

The term 'research' is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. The word itself, 'research', is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary.

(Smith, 1999, p.1)

In this quotation Smith (1999) acknowledges how Western research has been associated with pursuing an agenda of colonialism, dominance and gaining power over indigenous communities. Western (especially anthropological) research has been widely critiqued for its lack of sensitivity towards indigenous knowledge systems and communities and their consequent disempowerment as a result (Grande, 2004, Smith, 2006, Battiste, 2000). Whilst the rural context where agri-tourism is set is highly hybridized and complex²⁸ (Chatterjee, 2008), what is relevant to this argument is that the process of gaining knowledge induces political and asymmetric power relationships between the researcher and participants, especially when the researcher is seen as foreign or western (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Western researchers have traditionally essentialized the indigenous "other" into a homogenous identity through the simplification of their complex characteristics, and this has led to the removal of their voice and disempowerment (Bishop, 2005). Moreover, Smith (1999) writes that with the intention of controlling natural resources and to advance commercial and political interests, "outsiders" have used positivist research to marginalize the interests of indigenous communities. Whilst these accusations have applied equally to the qualitative research traditions (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008), qualitative researchers need to be aware

²⁸ Chatterjee (2008) claims that referring to certain communities as "indigenous" may amount to a binary simplification that reduces their inherent social and cultural complexity and leads to detrimental representational effects.

of the traditional problems of studying marginalized communities. In the present day context, researchers are obliged to carry out their research in an ethically credible manner by bringing out the marginal voices within these communities. One of the ways this is possible is by acknowledging multiple points of view: by avoiding the tendency to construct knowledge through the "god's eye view", which presents a universal and totalizing perspective that is far from reality, this is made possible (Haraway, 2004). Post-structuralist and feminist epistemologies, therefore, advocate that research must always be acknowledged as political, but also its performance provides unique opportunities for collaborative work, learning and empowerment (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008).

Various forms of knowledge, including the discourse of sustainable development, have been widely critiqued for satisfying unfair agendas that have enabled the global north to exert political control over the global south. Viewpoints over the idea of development itself range from it being viewed, on the one hand, as a discourse that undermines southern "indigenous knowledge" (Scott, 1985, Scott, 1998), and, on the other hand, as a scientific modernization strategy for the south: a way to improve living standards and utilize natural resources efficiently, in the process also prevent environmental degradation (Hanson et al., 1982). Sustainable development has been seen as a strategy for reconciling economic development with environmental conservation. However, according to Escobar (1995), this process has allowed the powerful north to stamp its authority over the south over issues of environmental conservation. While the north sees its interests in promoting a version of sustainable development that preserves the earth's common resources such as forests, atmosphere and water, the south argues this interferes with the provision of

basic minimum standards of living for its citizens (Gupta, 1998, Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997, Carter, 2007). Control and the power struggles over decision making autonomy are at the heart of the discourse of sustainable development and must therefore be central to the epistemological concerns of this research.

Not only is it important for this research to address the issues of knowledge and power implicit to western research itself or the global discourses around sustainability, but also the location of the Mumbai-Pune city region within an area of high economic growth and urbanization induces challenges of uneven development and inequity that need to be addressed. Whilst this region offers a good opportunity for examining agri-tourism because it is the country's focus for urbanization, industrialization and investment, these trends are also creating an environment where the welfare and livelihoods of vulnerable and marginalized groups have been increasingly sidelined by the government and policymakers²⁹.

To examine agri-tourism in this region, one must consider how through multiple competing meanings, political struggles and perspectives, agri-tourism's discourse has been politically constructed across various levels of policy and practice. Not only does agri-tourism need to be understood as linked to the global understandings of sustainable development and multifunctionality, but also it needs to be contextualized within the everyday life of stakeholders. To generate locally specific knowledge, therefore, how stakeholders were interpreting environment, sustainability and multifunctionality locally within everyday interactions of agri-tourism became the most relevant mode of inquiry

²⁹ For a detailed discussion on how farming livelihoods have been marginalized refer to chapters 3 and 4 which follow this one.

(Burr, 2003). The epistemology of this research casts away a "universal one size fits all" approach in favour of local and multiple interpretations. By doing so, it also addresses the power imbalances, and gives voice back to local communities and stakeholders (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008).

2.2. Research questions

This study focuses on three main research questions that attempt to link agri-tourism with its global, regional and local contexts. These questions are each discussed in turn with respect to their overall contribution to the theoretical framework.

Question 1: How do interactions between development goals, environmental governance and agrarian ecologies shape agri-tourism's understanding and practice in peri-urban Mumbai and Pune?

The first avenue of enquiry tries to contextualize agri-tourism with respect to wider environmental understandings within multi-level governance and policy. Agri-tourism's discourse in Maharashtra is constructed collectively by various public and private organizations (such as Government departments, NGOs and cooperatives) through documents such as national and state policies, but also through publicity leaflets, posters, websites and manifestoes. The policies provide a fundamental direction on local and regional agrarian issues such as the use of natural resources, water, infrastructure construction, employment, and are therefore an important source of information. Documentary and policy analysis is used to analyse this set of data as an important method for uncovering the motivations of private and public institutions. The intention is not to take these as an accurate portrayal of the organizations that produced them, rather, they were seen as "texts" that need interpretation to gain wider

information about the organizations producing them (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004). These documents (policies, publicity leaflets and websites) are not analysed to elicit a single and objective truth, rather, these interpret the context through a deliberative process which is acknowledged to be subjective in nature. In other words, it was important to declare researcher biases and to allow for alternative perspectives to emerge (Yanow, 2007). Documentary and policy analysis aimed to construct an overall picture of the context and therefore contextualize the specific findings from the semi-structured interviews.

Question 2: How are rural-urban linkages transforming in the face of rapid urbanization in this region, and how are they negotiated within the agri-tourism discourse?

Since agri-tourism is connected to a complex network of processes between the city and the countryside, the second avenue of enquiry examines agri-tourism with respect to rural-urban linkages: the flows of capital, people, knowledge and materials between the city and the countryside. Agri-tourism satisfies a tourism service demand in the countryside through its provision as a service for urban visitors; but it also relies on an efficient flow of commodities such as food, products, and resources between the urban and rural. Efficient communications and infrastructure between the urban and rural, by way of roads, railways and telecommunications, especially to transfer water, electricity, fuel, food and other natural resources are all critical linkages for agri-tourism. Moreover, agri-tourism is connected to urban areas through skills and knowledge that are required to run its service as an entrepreneurial business within the rural areas. How do these linkages between the rural and urban result affect the balance of power between various stakeholder groups? Moreover, what is the impact of infrastructural enhancements and knowledge flows for the

already marginalized rural communities, especially with respect to their access to land, water, food, natural resources?

To answer these questions, especially in a context of unequal geographical development, a case study approach is suitable because it allows comparing how changing environmental characteristics between different locales affect agri-tourism. Therefore three locations with contrasting landscapes in the wider Mumbai and Pune peri-urban locales were identified. They were chosen on the basis of different criterion such as the distance from the city, employment patterns, agricultural characteristics, urbanization and population density. Using a case study approach makes it possible to examine social phenomenon where it cannot be easily separated from its context (Yin, 2003). This approach of using case studies, therefore, made it possible to examine agri-tourism within its social and environmental context.

Question 3: How is environmental sustainability subjectively interpreted by stakeholders (agri-tourism farm owners, employees, urban visitors and the wider rural community) within the locally situated everyday practices of agri-tourism? How do these practices transform ecological citizenship within agri-tourism?

The third avenue of inquiry aims to examine how stakeholders are interpreting and practicing agri-tourism in the everyday life of the farm. For this it was important to analyse how wider discourses of environment, multifunctionality and sustainable development were interpreted by the stakeholders. For example agricultural multifunctionality is often seen in academic and policy spheres as a strategy to make farmers self sufficient and continue farming – in this sense it is considered "sustainable development". On the other hand, in much of the global south (and in India), it is still ambiguous how a shift towards multifunctionality will affect the lives of small-scale and non-

tenured farmers (Chand et al., 2011, Lerche, 2011). As yet there is insufficient evidence to understand how the benefits brought about by multifunctionality trickle down to poorer members of the rural community. On a similar note, global discourses such as "sustainable development", have been widely criticized by several authors, including Escobar (1995), for the tendency to be assumed as "sustainable", even though there is little evidence to support how ill-suited broad-brushed policies actually affect communities on the ground. This study therefore aims to fill this gap by carrying out a rich and detailed study of the practical, concrete realities of agri-tourism: by combining the qualitative methods of semi-structured interviews and observations carried out with key stakeholders within the agri-tourism case studies, rich narratives and fieldnotes were generated. Across three rural agri-tourism sites and in the city of Pune, a total of 82 interviews and observations of farmers, owners, employees, members of the village community, officials and NGOs are carried out as the primary method of this study.

2.3. The Case Study Approach

Agri-tourism's local practice is a complex social phenomenon, affected not only by multiple level policies, but also by regional environmental characteristics and rural-urban linkages. The features within each agri-tourism project (i.e., the distance from the city, degree of urbanization, presence of infrastructure and communications, availability of water, natural resources, type of cultivation) are all crucial in determining its practice locally. The variations in the practice of agri-tourism in each farm arose not only from the subjective interpretations of its wider discourse, reliant upon the agency of each stakeholder, but also from the interplay of multiple processes within the landscape – interactions between the

ecology, the agriculture, natural resources, social factor such as employee skills and local politics together to produce regional variations. Hence the phenomenon was firmly embedded within its contextual environment – to the extent that it was impossible to separate agri-tourism from its environment. The only way to understand how agri-tourism is affected by its context is to take contrasting contextual characteristics and examine more than a single case to be able to make comparisons (Yin, 2003). This study therefore adopted a case study approach and examined three different agri-tourism farms as individual units of study³⁰.

The farm was chosen as an individual unit of study because each agri-tourism farm worked as a complete organization in its own right. Each was a distinguishable enterprise – its owner, employees, vision, strategies and circumstances produced their own identifiable organizational characteristics. While each farm unit was unique, it was possible to identify contextual characteristics that could be compared across the different cases. In doing so, the objective was not to provide wide generalizations, rather to understand in detail how agri-tourism as a situated phenomenon was affected by unique and varying local contexts(Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). The use of multiple cases benefited the research, as it enabled comparisons to be drawn and generic findings (only for certain specific issues) to be extended to other emerging locations in the global south. Moreover, making comparisons by using more than a single case also increased the credibility of the analysis because specific findings could be verified with respect to occurrences elsewhere (Yin, 2003, Silverman, 2010).

³⁰ For a more detailed contextual overview of the environmental conditions which formed the basis of the case study selection refer to chapter 5.

Studying agri-tourism as a sustainable development strategy relies on two inter-connected modes of enquiry: firstly, focusing on the agency of stakeholders itself, and also secondly, more importantly, on how their values and perspectives are shaped by the local environmental conditions. The variations between the case studies help to highlight how agri-tourism's practice is shaped by the "agency" of stakeholders, but also it is bound by the constraints specific to each specific local environment. These differences are made visible by unpacking how stakeholders construct meanings around the environment – especially how their narratives reflect attitudes towards natural resources, ecological practices, the values imparted to nature-conservation, biodiversity and towards individual livelihoods. In this way, by examining detailed environmental narratives and their relationships with varied local environments, it is possible to appreciate the multiple and varied meanings of "sustainability". Rather than adopting a universal sustainable development discourse for analysing agri-tourism, this more flexible approach is more appropriate for a locally specific research in the southern context of Maharashtra.

2.4. Research Methods

DOCUMENTARY AND POLICY ANALYSIS

Analysing documents such as state and national policies, and also promotional leaflets, posters, brochures, websites and other marketing textual material, is an important research method to provide a contextual overview of the environment within which agri-tourism is practiced. While these documents provide a varied and rich account, they are not taken in themselves as social facts or an accurate portrayal of the organization that produced them. Rather they are seen as "texts" that need to be interpreted to illuminate certain

characteristics of the organizations that produce them (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004, Yanow, 2007). Documentary analysis is intended to complement the data obtained through other methods in the study (such as interviewing) in order to strengthen the validity of the findings.

The documentary analysis follows an interpretative approach, which is described by authors such as Yanow (2007) and Wagenaar (2007) as the ability to grasp the meaning of concepts and discourses within texts for what they mean to us. The objective of the analysis, in turn, is to elicit meanings from the text in a highly context specific manner. Under this approach it is important to understand the words in themselves, but also the intentions behind the text, referred to by Yanow (2007) as the symbolic aspect of policy. While texts carry within them social meanings, their validity relies upon detailed contextual information. This requires looking at wider circumstances – how the policy is produced and how groups of people or so called "interpretative communities" are responsible for producing the text. While specific texts are affected by subtle local variations in meaning, they primarily reflect wider themes and discourses to whom they make reference, and ultimately to which they belong (Wagenaar, 2007). Also relevant is the "intertextuality" of documents, or each document's relationship with the wider family of documents to which it belongs (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004, p.66).

An interpretative approach to policy and documentary analysis means that the process of interpretation itself is subjective – it relies on the values, beliefs and theoretical knowledge of the researcher – making the goal of objectivity in the process of meaning elicitation impossible and pointless. The meanings elicited assume highly context specific embeddedness and richness. The process of meaning interpretation is the priority and the approach distances

itself from realist positions that prioritizes the examination of wider structures and "universal truth" claims (for example see Sayer, 2000). Rather, the approach used here is non-essentialist and post-structuralist: one that cannot easily fit within camps of realism³¹ or social constructionism³². Importantly, this study considers not only meaning production from interactions between individuals through language and discourse; it also relies upon examining their agency. Hence it distances itself from social constructionism, where the role of agency becomes unimportant (Burr, 2003). Rather the policy analysis methodology followed here was similar to that described by Bevir and Rhodes (2003), who are sympathetic to the construction of meanings and discourses assembled together within text through language, but also to the role of human agency in the process of meaning interpretation.

Documentary analysis provided important insights into how stakeholders within multiple realms of public sector, private sector and civil society are linked to agri-tourism's practice. Publically accessible documents are a rich source of information of the values, trends and cultures that constitute the overarching contexts – helping to piece together how agri-tourism relates to the wider socio-economic context.

Documentary analysis focuses on characteristics of style, language and readership, all of which reflect the culture of the organizational setting. Also their "intertextuality", or their relationship with the family of documents to which they

³¹ Realism, a social science epistemological camp propagates the existence of deep fundamental structures which govern human interactions and behaviour. These structures and processes are assumed to exist independently of the influence of individuals and therefore become the main object of what the social scientist must uncover to understand any phenomenon (see Sayer 2000).

³² The epistemological perspective of social constructionism focuses on social processes and how meanings are attributed to social interactions. These meanings are constructed independently of both deeper structures and also of individual personality and values (agency). Interactions are thus the main object of interest for the researcher and structures and agency are not important. For social constructionists knowledge is important to understand the world, but it is derived from people's everyday interactions with each other (see Burr 2003).

belong, provides wider contextual information (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004, p.66). For example, how particular brochures, websites and leaflets produced by agri-tourism operators portray the agrarian landscape may relate to the culture of the agri-tourism industry generally, to other mainstream tourism enterprises, or to NGOs based upon ethical or organic farming. These similarities will provide different but specific insights into the nature, culture and values of the agri-tourism enterprise based upon their representation within these texts.

Figure 4 Publicity leaflet from an agri-tourism business

AMENITIES

- Swiss Cottage Tents
- Igloo Tents
- Bamboo House



- Aqua Skipper
- Power Boat
- Kerala Kayak
- Paddle Caddie



- Rifle Shooting
- Bullock Cart Safar
- Horse Extrusion



- Swimming
- Jungle Hunt
- Fort & Temple visits



- Fishing Caddle
- Students Camping
- Indoor Games



- All the tents are well equipped & secured.
- We serve delicious, healthy & home made, Veg & Non-Veg foods.
- We arrange folk dance, DJ Party, Bon fire party as per demand of guest.
- Medical facility available.
- Our Speciality in group camping, school trips & Holiday excursion.

“OUR GUEST IS GOD’S AMBASSADOR”

VJAY TYPE: SATARA23/916

Figure 5 Publicity leaflet from an agri-tourism business



FARM
for all seasons

Accommodation / Facilities

- ◆ 10 Private spacious rooms. Each with a courtyard in a bathroom & a private backyard, having small vegetable garden.
- ◆ All the rooms are well connected to solar water heater.
- ◆ Generator backup is available.
- ◆ Water served is purified by Aqua Guard Water Purifier.
- ◆ There is a separate kitchen for Vegetarian and Non- Vegetarian food.
- ◆ Ample area for children to play, and indulge in fun activities.
- ◆ Visit to farms / (gotha). Acquaint yourself with knowledge of different types of farming with a visit to a nearby farm.
- ◆ Bullock cart and Tractor ride on demand.

Tariff (Excluding taxes)
Rate for 2 persons Rs. [REDACTED]
Rate per extra person along with bedding Rs. [REDACTED]

Check in time:
11.00 am
Check out time:
10.30 am

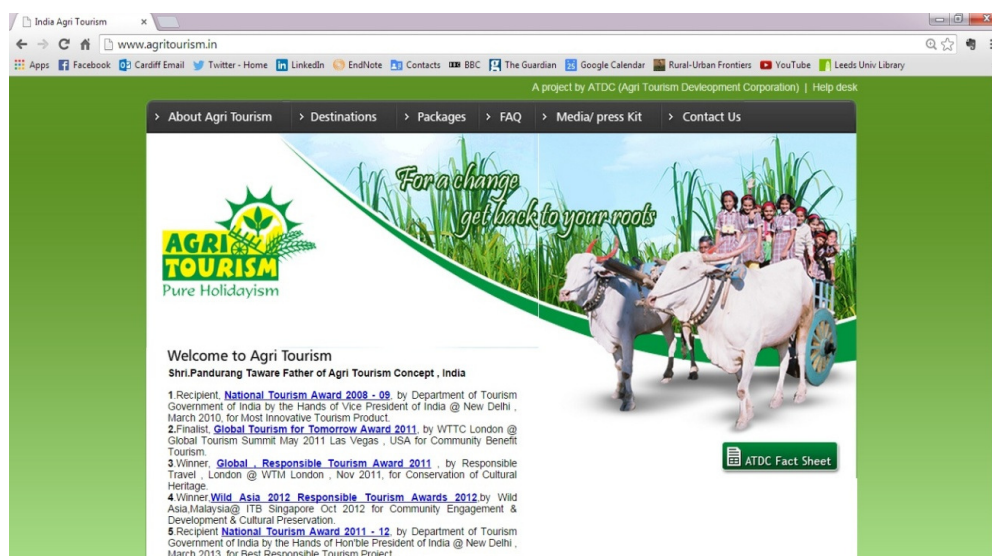
- Children above 5 years will be charged extra.
- Tariff includes welcome drink, morning tea and breakfast.
- Extra meals, cold drinks, snacks, beverages, mineral water and Non- Vegetarian food will be charged separately.



Marketing and promotional material is often "recipient designed" or designed to appeal to the tourists to attract them. Therefore, not only did it provide an insight into how the operators perceived agri-tourism, but it also portrayed how agri-tourism was being represented to attract tourists with the

motives of successful business entrepreneurship. The examples (see Figure 4, Figure 5 and Figure 6) provide an insight into the values and priorities attributed to the environment. The promotional leaflets employ imagery and text to show the range of farming activities provided by the agri-tourism site, thereby conveying to potential visitors which activities they may associate with agri-tourism. Not only do these documents provide information to visitors about the local construction of agri-tourism, but also they collectively start to resemble/influence similar leaflets produced by other sites. Altogether they start to attribute shared meanings to the activities, facilities, security, that one may

Figure 6 Page from ATDC website (Source: www.agritourism.in)



expect from agri-tourism within Maharashtra state as a whole, thereby influencing the overall understanding of agri-tourism within the state.

A majority of the documents analysed were **policies at the national and state levels**. Since the organizations which produced these belonged to a range of cultures, it is important to highlight their backgrounds and significance within the governance context in Maharashtra and India. **Firstly**, India's national

and state policy originates from the central policy making body – The Planning Commission. This organization issues Five Year Plans which set out specific government targets to guide development. The current Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-2017) was published in 2013, and it forms a comprehensive overarching policy guide for the entire country. The document (which consists of three volumes containing twenty four chapters) covers issues such as sustainable development, water, land, environment, agriculture, industry, energy, rural development, urban development and education, amongst others. **Secondly**, the Planning Commission also sets out specific plans for each state called the State Development Reports (MSDR). The analysis focused on the Maharashtra State Development Report published in 2005 and formulated on the basis of the Tenth Five Year Plan. The MSDR aims to strike a middle-ground between the national policy and the state agendas by collaborating with each state to produce the state plan. The document is similar in format to the national plans, with chapters following similar headlines as described above. **Thirdly**, a number of policies produced directly by Maharashtra state government were also analysed (these are listed in Table 1 in Chapter 3). The main departure within these state policies is that they tend to reflect Maharashtra's agendas more directly (and are hence more specific) compared to the MSDR, which tends to take a more generic stance. **Finally**, an important document analysed was the Guidelines for Approval and Registration of Agri-tourism Centres in Maharashtra. This document was produced by ATDC/MART – an agri-tourism cooperative based in Pune which has the status of a company, but in many ways operates as a quasi-governmental body, with a policy advisory role to the state government. This document sets out the licensing guidelines which need to be followed by farms to be accredited and "licensed" by ATDC/MART. Farms

opt to become licensed to gain benefits from publicity by displaying the approval logo, but also the body takes on the role of a travel agent by directing customers to agri-tourism farms.

INTERVIEWING

Qualitative interviewing is the main broad research method employed in this study because it enables the researcher to step into the shoes of the participant and gain an insight into their world: obtain the participant's own accounts of their views, beliefs, attitudes which would otherwise be difficult to acquire (Mikecz, 2012). Interviewing has been seen as a space for knowledge construction. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) have described the interview process through the use of the journey as a metaphor – one which the researcher and participant undertake together not knowing the exact course it may take. This journey involves the production of knowledge, but it needs to be conducted in a flexible way through dialogic interaction. During the exchange, meanings around topics emerge and through deliberation and negotiation consensus is reached (Bakhtin, 1981). As knowledge is produced through consensus, this in turn steers the course of the conversation – it influences both the interviewer and interviewee's production of meanings (Willink, 2009, Krauss et al., 2009). The meanings therefore not only depend upon either one's subjectivity, rather they change because of the satisfaction of expectations between the interviewer and interviewee (Tinggaard, 2009). Therefore the interview process is dynamic, active and flexible. One of the most significant advantages of interviews over other methods (such as naturally occurring talk during participant observation) is that both the researcher and participants are active – the researcher is at liberty to introduce topics and broaden the conversation to allow diverse and

varied meaning construction to take place as they desire (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002, Holstein and Gubrium, 2004). Therefore, interviewing is an appropriate way of uncovering how stakeholders attribute meanings to sustainable development, environmental responsibility and citizenship.

While qualitative interviewing is the broad methodological strategy – specifically in this study, semi-structured interviews offer a number of advantages compared to other interview types (such as structured or unstructured interviews). Semi-structured interviews were chosen because it was possible to narrow the analysis down to broad themes, as opposed to letting the interviews follow an entirely free-flowing narrative. Semi-structured interviews also made it possible to vary the order/nature of questions, and retain a degree of flexibility with regard to the research themes. This was important because it allows the researcher to step back and enables participants to freely air their concerns and viewpoints. Although semi-structured interviews allow some flexibility for questions to be adapted to suit particular participants and situations (Mikecz, 2012), adhering to broad themes makes the analysis easier (Rabionet, 2011). Flexibility of the interview questions therefore, has to be weighed up against the desire to adhere to the overall structure to make the analysis easier. Nevertheless varying the order/nature of questions is crucial for allowing multiple viewpoints to emerge, that may otherwise be lost, especially due to the researcher-participant power imbalance (Greiner, 2010). While interviews allow the interviewer to step into the shoes of the participants and meanings to emerge, it is impossible to claim that the knowledge produced is objective and unbiased (Guillemim and Gillam, 2004), or the meanings that emerge are "pure" and "uncontaminated" (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004). The researcher comes on board with his/her own prior knowledge, research agenda

and theoretical biases. According to Greiner (2010), this may affect how the researcher interprets meanings from the narrative of the interview. In some cases, biases may affect the recruitment of the interviewees in the first place, or even the types of questions they ask (Ryan et al., 2011). The interview process is one of assembly and collaboration, which involves meaning construction. Rather than seeing these unavoidable issues as flaws, this method was seen as an opportunity for theories to be tested or expanded. As opposed to other methods where generalizations can be drawn from the analytical process, the method of semi-structured interviews makes it possible to draw out rich and detailed data, that allows broader theories to be tested (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004).

The lack of a predetermined course of action and acknowledgement of biases should not be taken as a license for sloppy practice (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Interviewing must remain a rigorous process where a transparent research methodology means that all possible biases are declared at the outset (Young, 2011, Holstein and Gubrium, 2004). Many researchers have spoken of triangulation as a validation method for qualitative data generally (Flick, 2004). But according to Coffey and Atkinson (1996) triangulation wrongly promotes a view that certain meanings around social discourses have greater validity over other points of view. According to the authors, this potentially has the effect of silencing voices that are marginal or weaker and is therefore problematic. Rather, the construction of validity relies upon good practices by the interviewer, referred to by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p.248) as "good craftsmanship". An example of this was using field-notes to accompany each interview and record the circumstances of the interview: its location, the participant's mood, time of day, situation – it was important to

record the overall context of the interview that may affect the course of the conversation.

The overarching themes that were chosen for the semi-structured interviews were: (1) participant's background and connections to agri-tourism, (2) the effects of rural-urban linkages – such as jobs, skills, education, infrastructure, connectivity and markets, (3) the perceptions of stakeholders around the environment including their sense of environmental responsibility and entitlements, (4) themes around governance, and (5) the stakeholder's attitudes towards employment and livelihoods. The choice of themes related directly to the research questions outlined earlier.

2.5. Analytical Methods

The analytical methods followed by this study rely upon a variety of approaches as opposed to a single method, referred to by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p.234) as the ad-hoc techniques of analysis. The emphasis is on knowing the data in some depth by reading it thoroughly through theoretically informed interpretations. Rather than following specific sequences and linear stages, the interview transcriptions were undertaken and then read to gain an overall impression. Thereafter, the interesting passages were marked out for detailed analysis, coding, and so on. This is referred to by several authors as the "bricolage approach" to analysis – a term that refers to its non-linear and random trajectory (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). It is also important to emphasize that the analysis in reality was not a distinct and separate stage, but it took place in conjunction with other activities (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). For example, during the interview itself I was already thinking about the topics that may be introduced into the conversation based upon the

structure or research questions in the research. While carrying out transcription, I already started to think about the coding categories. Therefore, only for the sake of clarity in writing this chapter has analysis been described as a separate stage, in reality it is intertwined with other research stages.

The tension between existing theoretical knowledge around sustainability and ecological citizenship, and the knowledge that emerges from the data runs through the entire research process. It is inevitable that the existing knowledge acquired through literature on EC: preconceptions of what environmental responsibilities and entitlements of stakeholders in agri-tourism would mean, were the inevitable starting point in understanding attitudes, perspectives and practices on the ground. At the same time, also the emerging trends from observations and interviews help to refine and sharpen the existing theories on the subject, thus imparting it "inductive" characteristics – where, to an extent, the data helps to refine and evolve the theoretical framework. In reality the process is iterative – there was a back and forth exchange between existing theories and emerging knowledge during all stages of the research process (Schmidt, 2004). The process therefore cannot be described as either inductive or deductive, rather it borrows from both strategies (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996).

IDENTIFYING PATTERNS AND CODING THROUGH NVIVO

A pre-coding step that deserves a brief mention is the process of transcription. The common view is that transcription takes place prior to the analytical stage and the two are separate, and also it is widely believed that transcription is a highly standardized process (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). But in this study transcription was not straightforward as the interviews were recorded in Hindi and the transcription also meant translation into English.

Inevitably, this involved a layer of interpretation, which began with the process of transcription itself. What was being recorded, therefore, was the interview transcript as I understood it, mediated through my layers of understanding, rather than what was "objectively" said [sic]. Moreover, as Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) explain, transcription essentially removes details from the interaction that takes place between the interviewer and participant – elements of conversation such as the face-to-face interactions of body language, gestures, signs, tone of voice and posture are all important contextual details which are lost in this process. But it is through the researcher's subjectivity that decisions about which contextual detail is highlighted or overlooked are taken, and this has an effect on the process by which meanings are conveyed (Skukauskaite, 2012). In the study, the accuracy of meanings around agri-tourism and sustainable development were of great importance, and therefore it was a high priority to retain the contextual information around key textual passages.

The actual coding process was undertaken using the computer based software NVivo. It allowed transcripts, field notes, documents and policies to be collectively processed by reading and re-reading and identifying patterns to emerge from the data (Miles and Huberman, 1994). While Coffey and Atkinson (1996) emphasize that coding is not synonymous with analysis, it is very hard to distinguish and differentiate between the two processes. Specifically codes allow retrieving passages of text classed under categories and clusters and this is a way of saving time when handling lengthy textual documents. Codes can also be seen as a process of summarizing the texts – a process of "data simplification" (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996, p.28). Beyond simply cataloguing and retrieval, coding also starts the deeper analytical processes, what Coffey

and Atkinson (1996) refer to as "data complication". Developing the coding frameworks uses creativity, reconceptualization and thinking of possibilities beyond the data itself, which in itself leads to the start of the evolution of theories and frameworks (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996, p.29).

The NVivo process involved firstly importing interview-transcripts and fieldnotes into a single project file. The next step was to carry out an initial quick read of all the data with the intention of constructing a "coding tree". This comprised of two hierarchical coding levels – the broad themes which were split up into more specific themes. As a starting point this was broadly based on the research questions, but evolved further during the course of the analytical process. The next, main coding/analytical stage involved a detailed reading of the data during the course of several months. The codes, representing the analytical themes (often several of them) were applied to the data, with the final objective of being able to retrieve the data under each theme. Therefore the outcomes of each thematic code was a lengthy text document, which had to be (re)read during the writing/analytical process to highlight key narratives, some of which are used as quotations in Chapters 5 and 6.

The coding process was neither inductive nor deductive, but a combination of both. The coding tree was guided by reading and re-reading of the data but also informed by prior theoretical knowledge around sustainable development, multifunctionality and mostly western agri-tourism concepts; but also informed by the research questions. Since the primary method was semi-structured interviews, in some cases it was possible to work with an interview-guide: a set of pre-determined themes which helped to narrow down the number of codes, making the analysis easier (Turner, 2010). As Schmidt (2004) points out, however, there is a danger that if the coding categories are very

rigidly formed, applying these to the data in a non-reflexive manner may simply be an exercise where the researcher only remain open to finding passages of text and quotations that reinforce these categories. Not only was it important to remain loyal to the research questions and prior knowledge, but also it was equally important to remain flexible with regard to categories as new knowledge emerged from the data.

INTERPRETING MEANINGS AND THEORY BUILDING

Although the interpretation of meanings cannot be attributed to a distinct stage (since it applies equally to both literature review and empirical data analysis, and it is hard to distinguish individual meanings from wider theoretical influences), its importance to the overall analysis is one of the most important steps that leads to theory building. Strictly, with reference to data analysis, this "stage" follows the process of identifying patterns and coding. The four part framework of discourse analysis described by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) is useful in explaining the process of interpreting meanings that are applied to the passages of coded text. Firstly, what makes the text interesting is identified in the case of this research, pieces of texts are interesting because they stand out or challenge existing thinking on sustainable development and agri-tourism, or enable new boundaries of meaning around the existing meanings to emerge. Secondly, the text is positioned within the context of literature or existing theories around agri-tourism and sustainability. Thirdly, the meanings around the specific text are discussed with regard to various perspectives from which the piece may be analysed. And, finally, the analysis considers how sustainability and agri-tourism are affected by the various power networks of those who are associated with it, and also how this impacts their power position.

One important consideration while analysing the meanings around specific quotations of text is the "pool of meaning" to which they belongs (Marton, 1986) or to the wider theories, ideas and literature to which they refer (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996).

Beyond meaning construction, the process where data is sorted, categorized and pulled apart moves to a stage of convergence: the divergent meanings elicited are then held together into a theoretical whole. Through this exercise, as Coffey and Atkinson (1996) claim, theory building enables us to explain the social world around us; with respect to this study, it had to help to explain the behaviour and attitudes of stakeholders with respect to the environment and sustainable development in the study area in peri-urban Mumbai and Pune.

ENSURING RIGOUR AND QUALITY

The way that this study strives to achieve rigour needs to be clarified, given its qualitative epistemological grounding. Even though achieving "objectivity" is not the main concern, this does not imply not following good practices and rigour. Using mixed methods in this study (such as documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews) does not mean that the findings need to be triangulated between the methods. Rather, in line with Coffey and Atkinson's (1996) assertion: the main intention of qualitative research is not to assert a "universal truth" by proposing that any one single version of truth holds higher priority over other viewpoints. Using triangulation goes against the essence of what qualitative research is about. The intention here is, by contrast, to bring to light the complexity and richness of the issues affecting agri-tourism,

and to highlight in the process a range of perspectives rather than making claims to any single objective reality.

Rigorous analysis for this research means ensuring basic safeguards. For example, it is considered poor practice to pick and choose data from a large set of data collected to support a theoretical argument. To ensure rigour, instead, it is better practice to adapt the theory so that the entire set of data collected can be fairly represented (Silverman, 2010). According to Silverman (2010), the boundaries of existing theories must be extended to be able to explain deviant behaviour or inexplicable outliers. The deviant cases may exist in the first place because the existing theories were incorrect or inadequate. The revision of theories around deviant cases was therefore seen as an opportunity to extend theory and hence strengthen the conclusions.

2.6. Research ethics and limitations

This section critically reflects on how my "hybrid" identity, that of both an outsider and insider, in a context of poverty and power differentials, limited the research and created problems during its process. This critical reflection, according to Frost (2009), is necessary both to maintain rigour and ethics. The epistemological concerns of carrying out a study in the global south through the vantage point of a western researcher have been discussed previously. This section reviews the practical limitations and difficulties due to differences of lifestyle and culture. Moreover language poses its own challenge because there are practical and ethical implications of interviewing participants where English and even Hindi was not their first language. There are methodological challenges due to the power imbalance between the researcher and participants belonging to weak and marginalized communities that would hinder

empowerment, and had to therefore be addressed (Nicholls, 2009, Roulston, 2010, Ndimande, 2012). In addition, there are difficulties in generating knowledge when marginalized participants try to exert control and gain power through resistance (Beaunae et al., 2011). Challenges are posed not only because of power differences between the researcher and participants, but also by existing power differentials within highly stratified local communities. For example, locally powerful people, often the owners of the agri-tourism sites, tried to control my access to participants by assuming the position of gatekeepers. This section summarises these practical methodological issues and how they were overcome in this research along with the limitations of this study.

A HYBRID IDENTITY: MY STATUS AS AN INSIDER AND OUTSIDER

My identity of an "outsider" from a western university with access to knowledge, money, and a much higher living standard automatically put me in a relative position of power in the eyes of participants (see Beaunae et al., 2011 for a detailed discussion, also see , Gobo, 2011, Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). This was complicated by my origins from north India and my ability to speak the language of Hindi (India's national language understood in most regions), which confused most participants. Although I had some understanding of their culture, way of life and shared a common language, my behaviour and accent, attributed to having lived in the UK for over a decade, were alien to most. Consequently my identity confused most participants – they were unable to position me as a complete "outsider" – yet I was not one of them. In other words mine was a "hybrid" identity.

According to Mikecz (2012), knowing the indigenous language enables the researcher to approach the interview in an informed manner and to know the context. It also enables the participants to trust the researcher. My lack of ability to speak Marathi contributed to a large extent to my "outsider" position, and also towards the imbalance of power with participants (for a detailed discussion see Young, 2011), but knowing Hindi was a distinct advantage. Knowing one of the languages spoken by the participants, according to Chen (2010), enables the possibility of power rebalancing and empowerment within local communities (also see Ndimande, 2012). If the interview is carried out in a language in which either the participant or researcher are less comfortable, this results in a shift of power. Several authors point out that the use of English in itself has been seen as contributing to the asymmetry of power relations between the participant and researcher (Gobo, 2011). Although I knew Hindi, not knowing the regional language of Marathi was a reason that some interviewees saw me as an "outsider", which sometimes led to the lack of trust. This is one of the limitations that this study had to overcome methodologically.

On the one hand, to be able to have a meaningful dialogue with participants it was important to remedy the "outsider" position and build a degree of trust with participants (Watson, 2009). Bearing in mind that a majority of participants felt less comfortable using English, I avoided its use. Although I felt less comfortable using Hindi, I used it mainly since participants felt more confident in expressing themselves in Hindi – this was a way to shift a degree of power back to the participants. Although this research was limited when participants could only speak in Marathi, and on one or two occasions I had to resort to a translator. But the data generated from these interviews had to be treated with caution. On the other hand, owing to the fact that I already had

some knowledge about the context, I had to be mindful that my "insider" position did not induce any preconceived biases that might interfere with my ability to listen to participants (Beaunae et al., 2011).

THE INTERVIEW AS A METHOD FOR ADDRESSING THE POWER IMBALANCE

My identity as an "outsider" was responsible for inducing a power imbalance in my relationship with the participants. The fact that I was directing the questions put me in an automatic position of power and control. However for a meaningful dialogue where trust could be established with the participants this meant that I had to give up some of my power. Establishing a level footing with the participants was pre-requisite to a meaningful conversation where the participants did not feel intimidated by my authority in this encounter. In some cases, participants saw the interview encounter as an opportunity to gain back power and therefore tried to exert resistance (Beaunae et al., 2011). This also became a difficulty that required sensitivity and tact. For example, a participant challenged me to go close to a cow and then laughed at my discomfort when the cow hissed at me. School teachers asked to be interviewed in front of their pupils since they felt powerful and in control. On one occasion they asked me to address their pupils in their class during the interview. Through these actions, and on noticing my discomfort in doing so, they re-established their sense of power that had been lost because I was in charge of the interview agenda.

What is common to these examples is the fact that these encounters were all forms of resistance that challenged my authority as the interviewer. They required action from me to change the line of questions – thus shifting power back to the participant, which Nichols (2009) claimed can be a painful process

for the researcher. Handled carefully, however, these challenges were seen as opportunities, rather than problems. They facilitated the interview as an encounter of co-constructing knowledge – they gave the participant an opportunity to shape the interview agenda, thus contributing towards the overall goal of giving weaker participants voice in the research agenda (Young, 2011). The method of semi-structured interviews was used with the intention of carrying out the research with the participants as opposed to on the participants (Clark, 2010) – as a tool to enable weaker voices be heard. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains, it is vital for empowerment within a post-colonial and anti-imperial agenda for the researcher to go beyond what ethical codes dictate and follow a decolonizing methodology (as quoted in Roulston, 2010).

While it is important for the researcher to be sensitive to the needs of the participant, the use of empathy in the interviewing process presents the researcher with an ethical dilemma. Empathy is generally regarded favourably in qualitative research, but if it is used purely to satisfy the researcher's objectives of eliciting information, then this becomes morally questionable (Watson, 2009). The interview gives participants a chance to reflect, talk and think – modes that often become blurred with therapy. For the researcher, however, to take on the role of a councillor is highly inappropriate (Clark, 2010). Empathy creates a superficial basis of friendship between the researcher and participant, creating an illusion for the participant of the true objectives of the research interview purely for the motive of eliciting information (Pezalla et al., 2012). An example from my fieldwork helps to illustrate this point. This involved two temporary marginal workers employed by one of the agri-tourism owners. Despite explaining to them the academic nature of the interview, I felt that somehow they believed the interview would make things better for them. They

volunteered to be interviewed and 10 minutes of polite questioning already opened up for me an opportunity to gain valuable insights into their world of harsh employment conditions, low wages, long working hours. This was valuable research information that helped to uncover a different face of agri-tourism. However I was still left with an uncomfortable feeling of helplessness as I closed the interview. By offering them a sympathetic ear somehow I had let them on to believe that I was somehow going to act in making things better for them. This made me feel that I had let them down by not being able to make any immediate material change to their lives.

POWER STRUCTURES, ACCESS AND REPRESENTATION

The location of the agri-tourism case studies within rural communities with hugely skewed power structures and social inequalities produced a unique methodological challenge for this study. This problem affected nearly every stage of my research. In the first place difficulties in accessing participants led to the use of snowballing sampling with some caution. Powerful owners and elites posed difficulty not only in being interviewed themselves, but also often tried to influence the process of interviews with weaker participants, junior staff or employees. This situation had to be handled with sensitivity and the data generated analysed with caution. This section firstly summarises how power structures and elites produced a challenge for the empowering agenda of this research; thereafter, it illustrates the steps taken by this study in achieving rigour, and in ensuring fair representation of the weaker and marginalized voices within the data collected.

My relationship with the owners of the agri-tourism case studies was a critical factor in my ability to access participants within and beyond the project.

On the grounds of good business sense, and as a paying customer, these agri-tourism sites readily accepted me to carry out the research. However, problems with respect to control and access arose when I was staying in these rural locations. The case studies, situated in very remote rural locations, meant that not only was I was obliged to stay on the site itself, but also I had to deal with the owners who were powerful local elites. While they were my participants, also they were providing a service for me. I had to negotiate with them the fee for accommodation, food, travel and other services I was even more vulnerable and in a weak negotiating position because I was accompanied by my partner and child, and remote rural locations meant being dependent entirely on the owners. In my interactions it became clear that they viewed me as an "outsider" – as a person who had an interest in their project beyond that of the everyday agri-tourist – one who they could exploit (and possibly who could "afford") by paying over the odds for the service they offered. My politeness and desire to keep the participants on my side was misunderstood as weakness. Since I had intended to carry out observations during the research, alternate accommodation was undesirable and also impossible due to the remote rural location of these agri-tourism projects. These factors collectively challenged my ability to freely recruit participants as these owners assumed the position of powerful elite gatekeepers.

Partly as a result of gatekeepers initially controlling my access, snowballing was an important technique for recruiting participants beyond the agri-tourism site. While this was an efficient way of recruiting participants, it had to be applied with caution because snowballing from a single community or organization can result in over-representation of particular viewpoints (Ryan et al., 2011). Moreover, there is a danger of missing out participants who are

external to the main snowballing network or weaker marginal participants (Sturgis, 2008). The desire for the research to probe into stakeholder's meaning constructions around sustainable development meant that it was important to recruit a wide range of participants, not only from within the agri-tourism project, but also from the wider village community affected by the agri-tourism project: the local residents, farmers, village leaders, officials, school teachers and extension workers – members of the wider rural community. The recommendations of existing participants in selecting new participants was a way to access stakeholders who had highly pertinent viewpoints on the subject of agri-tourism or were key/representative members of the rural community. Therefore, used in a manner that reflexively avoided its representational pitfalls, snowballing proved to be a useful and effective sampling technique.

I sought permission of powerful agri-tourism owners or gatekeepers for interviewing the employees within the agri-tourism projects, and while permission was never denied to me, often I was able to interview employees only within the employment setting or in proximity to the owners – this prevented me from putting participants fully at ease. In the presence of powerful stakeholders, I had to measure responses carefully as there was a danger that these powerful stakeholders could silence marginal participants and overly influence the research agenda (Mathee et al., 2010, Mikecz, 2012, Laine, 2000). I was also aware that the physical presence of the powerful was not essential in silencing weaker participants – the possibility of intimidation existed through an implied presence. There was a danger that weaker participants felt difficulty in confiding to me because of repercussions or lack of trust.

On the other hand, the fieldwork also involved interviews of elite participants: those who were locally powerful stakeholders such as heads of the

Panchayat, or government officials and policymakers. Interviewing these participants involved separate challenges – not only in accessing them, but also during the interview in gaining their trust and ensuring that the agenda remained still driven by the researcher. Mikecz (2012) explains that for the interview to proceed smoothly, it is important that the power gap between the researcher and elite interviewee is reduced.

The problems highlighted so far in this section were all the result of power differentials between the researcher and participants, or the result of skewed power hierarchies present within the research context. While these issues presented a challenge to the research in ensuring that weaker sections of the community were fairly represented, the problems were not insurmountable: they were overcome mainly by taking steps to establish trust with the participants and credibility of the research. Power differentials (especially between me and the participants) had to be diffused in order to establish a level footing with the participants. This meant it was important to take a few steps to give up some of my power so that the participants did not feel intimidated by my authority in order to generate meaningful data in the interview encounter. A few practical steps were taken to ensure this and these are elaborated further.

Firstly, the pitfalls of snowballing and under representation from weaker communities were avoided by employing caution in over-recruiting from specific participant groups. Moreover, the number/quality of participants recruited through snowballing was deliberately scrutinized and kept to a minimum. The alternative access method employed was by approaching participants directly. After the initial break-in period in each case study, I managed to recruit participants independently of the agri-tourism owner's network. This meant exploring the area on foot since agri-tourism sites were generally within a few

kilometres of villages, where I directly approached and requested willing participants for interviews. This strategy proved invaluable since it was important to hear viewpoints on agri-tourism from a non-biased perspective – beyond the political influence of agri-tourism farms' owners and employees. While some members approached in this way agreed to be interviewed, this method of accessing participants also was not problem-free. Firstly, participants who felt uncomfortable in speaking to me in Hindi declined an interview. Also those who agreed to an interview needed to be convinced of my intentions, and this required greater work, in terms of gaining their trust, as opposed to those participants to whom I was not a complete stranger, but had approached them on the basis of a reference from someone they already knew.

Secondly, establishing trust, credibility and appearing sensitive to the participants was a very important strategy for allowing the co-construction of knowledge during the interview process, and also a good way for weaker participants to open up to me. Especially with participants within the village community, it was important to appear friendly, curious and respectful to their traditions and culture (Young, 2011). The quality of being a good listener of participant's everyday problems, even if it meant straying away from the interview guide, proved to be a good strategy for establishing trust and a meaningful dialogue. While a high level of trust with participants was important, the overuse of empathy and its ethical pitfalls have been previously discussed.

Thirdly, with agri-tourism project owners it was important to build a rapport as they were in a powerful position to control access to their employees. I accepted their offers (within reason) of a meal, or a morning walk, or invitation to a family festivity – which helped to build trust and also provide access to important information and other participants. But the downside of being publicly

close and over friendly with the owners was that association with one group may lead to distrust from another group (Chenail, 2011). This often led the employees to distance themselves from me and trust me less when it comes to discussing their problems.

Fourthly, the problem of participants who were intimidated by employees or agri-tourism site owners was overcome to a large extent by explaining the intentions of the interview, and also assuring them of the confidentiality of the interaction. In some cases there were follow up conversations with staff while their employers were not present or outside the hours of duty. Even so, it was important to note the circumstances of the interview in terms of the location of the participant within a hierarchical structure and the physical location of each interview, as this tended to influence the "opening-up" of weaker participants.

Finally, for elite interviews, it was important for the sake of a meaningful exchange, to appear at a level footing with the participants. Practically this meant increasing credibility of the research in the view of the interviewee by maintaining a degree of professionalism and competence, ensuring that I was well prepared and time was not wasted due to lack of information that may be easily obtained prior to the interview (Harvey, 2011). It was also important to make my affiliation with the university very clear; my introduction by way of an official letter and business card went a long way in increasing my credibility to the elite interviewee. While these methods were important in interviewing elites, caution had to be used against appearing overly confident and official to marginalized and poor participants.

IMPLICATIONS ON RESEARCH

The key test for this research is to ensure adequate representation from various stakeholder groups, so that in light of the challenging methodological context (of gatekeepers and highly stratified local communities) the weaker and marginalized participant voices can be heard. While these problems are addressed methodologically through various practices to ensure rigour (such as by ensuring that snowballing was complemented by direct access and the awareness of pressure on weaker participants from their employers), the language barriers remain a limitation in this research. The lack of funds and time made it impossible to conduct interviews with Marathi speaking participants with the use of paid translators. Moreover, since translators themselves bring in biases that are difficult to monitor and regulate, the epistemological reliance of this study on the co-constructive dialogic nature of the semi-structured interview method would have been lost. While this study is unable to represent Marathi speaking participants, I argue that with respect to the specific research questions handled here this is not an overly limiting factor.

As mentioned earlier, this study aims to contextualize sustainable development through the perspectives and meanings awarded to environmental discourses by local agri-tourism stakeholders. While the accurate portrayal of meanings around sustainable development is important, the idea is to highlight the richness of the context through multiple (and often conflicting) viewpoints, rather than presenting a single objective reality of the context. While greater diversity of viewpoints is desirable, in the first place this study does not aim to be a comprehensive representation of all perspectives – which would be methodologically impossible to achieve. The study is aiming for neither substantive, nor formal theory building (Glaser and Strauss, 1967); rather it

aims to situate local meaning construction within the wider context of theories and policies. For this reason, it relies on multiple methods. Within this mode, deficiencies in data from one source are less critical than if only a single method of interviews was being used.

This study also tries to understand how contextual factors such as rural-urban linkages and physical landscape characteristics regulate or moderate the interpretation of wider policies and theories by local stakeholders in a comparative manner. In line with the comparative analytical approach, the research relied on case studies. The limitation of lack of representation from Marathi speakers therefore is uniformly spread across the three case studies. The comparative nature of the analysis means that lack of language is not an insurmountable problem for this study.

The research epistemology broadly relied upon qualitative methods, as opposed to quantitative methods such as quantitative analysis or GIS mapping. These methods could have highlighted different (but equally valid) questions around broad trends of agri-tourism, location biases, typologies and user patterns. Quantitative methods (such as structured interviews) are based a mode of enquiry that relies on large data sets; it is however, less detailed in nature. The time limitations and research priorities of this research did not allow this study to follow an enquiry pattern of this nature. For those seeking answers of this nature, the qualitative mode of enquiry of this study may be perceived as a research limitation.

A limitation of this study is that it proved very difficult to access policy-makers and government employees for interviews due to lack of time, resources and networks. Therefore this study lacks a perspective into the agency, values and attitudes of these powerful stakeholders responsible for generating

environmental policies. While it was possible to gain an insight into the systemic policy drivers from media and existing literature around the economic, political, social and environmental factors, from this material alone it is impossible to understand how local interactions and meanings shape environmental policy within these local governmental institutions. A consequence for this research is that it shifts focus from how policies are made, towards understanding how policies were being played out locally at the agri-tourism sites.

2.7. Final Reflections

The research setting produces unique problems for this study: marginalized communities, wide social inequalities, a hybridized and rich social context – thus making the examination of agri-tourism methodologically challenging. This chapter outlined how acknowledging the subjectivity of the researcher, rather than seeing it as a limitation, is instrumental in highlighting the richness, hybridity and complexity of agri-tourism's practice in the Mumbai-Pune city region. Moreover, the impossibility of escaping from previous knowledge and inherent biases is not seen as an impediment, but, rather, as a strength. The contradiction of agri-tourism – on the one hand its consumption of natural resources, and on the other hand policy-maker's (also the media and travel agencies') constructions of it as an "environmentally friendly" practice – justify the theoretical interrogation of agri-tourism through sustainable development. However, both sustainable development as a theory and the process of research itself have faced widespread criticisms for being rooted in westernized methodologies that have tended to simplify southern and "indigenous" contexts by reducing their complexity and hybridity. Therefore, not only did this study have to shoulder the traditional biases associated with

western research; it also had to deal with a challenging research context in terms of inequalities and power-differentials. During this study, the sensitive and reflexive handling of aspects of power and control that are associated with the relationships between the researcher and participants, and also between the participants themselves, featured throughout in the methodology outlined in this chapter.

The holistic examination of agri-tourism means that not only is it important to locally ground it stakeholder's interpretations – examining it through the everyday life of local communities – therefore giving voice to marginalized groups. It is equally important to position it with respect to wider theories and policies on environmental issues and sustainability. However the most critical and unique aspects of enquiry in this research is how the intermediate context of specific locales in the city-region (including rural-urban relationships) influence agri-tourism's practices. The analysis of intermediate environmental factors is therefore carried out through a comparative case study approach. Also this study's holistic and multi-level nature of enquiry is reflected in its research questions, which led to a mix of research methods. Firstly, policy/documentary analysis is used in an interpretative manner to illustrate the context. Also, interviews and observations are used to understand how stakeholders locally construct the discourses of sustainable development and agri-tourism, and also to paint a rich picture around how the practice of agri-tourism was affecting the everyday life of stakeholders.

The analytical approach tries to "let the data to speak for itself" – however this chapter outlines how achieving a purely deductive approach is impossible. The researcher's subjectivity (biases arising from previous knowledge, wider theories and the epistemology of western knowledge systems) permeates every

stage of the research process – including the analysis. The various analytical stages of transcription, the evolution of categories, the construction of meanings around sustainable development and the evolution of theories were all led by locally generated data from the research, but were equally influenced by the motivations of the research and its initial design. The actual analysis is neither inductive, nor deductive – rather it is a combination of both approaches, thereby the research strives to ensure that the existing theories and local knowledge did not undermine or simplify the rich and complex local context.

The power differentials within the research context and the researcher's grounding within the western research epistemology produce methodological challenges for the research. These are negotiated carefully by tailoring the research design to the local context. It is inevitable, however, that the ambitious and complex nature of this study is limited by practical considerations: not knowing the regional language of Marathi is acknowledged as a limitation of this study. Owing to budgetary and time constraints it is not possible to engage translators, however this chapter shows, how by using a comparative analysis through case studies, the risk of biased conclusions because of inadequate representation from Marathi is minimised.

Given that three case studies are used to examine the intermediate regional context including rural-urban linkages, it is proposed that these may be generalized to apply to other similar cases beyond the immediate context of the study because the analysis from these was comparative in nature. At the local level, however, a detailed qualitative methodology is used. This means that with respect to local interpretations, the ability to generalize is limited. The main objective of this research was simply to illustrate the richness and diversity of the local context. In doing so therefore the understandings and theoretical

boundaries of sustainable development were made more applicable to other regions in the global south.

Chapter: 3 Policy Discourses on Sustainability in India

This chapter contextualizes "sustainable development" within policies in Maharashtra. It deals with the first research question: ***how do interactions between development goals, environmental governance and agrarian ecologies shape agri-tourism's understanding and practice in peri-urban Mumbai and Pune?*** It argues that, through particular interpretations of "sustainability" within policies, neo-liberal capitalistic agendas are being realized through livelihood transformations: responsible, on the one hand, for increased multifunctionality (and consequently agri-tourism), and on the other, designed to boost growth through urbanization and modernized agriculture. The idea of development enhancing livelihoods while preserving natural resources and ecological habitats is a popular global environmental discourse, and India's Twelfth Five Year Plan (and most other policies) use narratives pertaining to these wider ideals. India's commitment to several multilateral agreements including the Kyoto protocol, and the objective of reducing the emission levels of 2005 by 20-25% before 2020 (GoI, 2013c), have also affected how national and state policies have incorporated this form of "sustainability". This chapter therefore tries to understand the measures which these policies employ, for example the employment of language within these documents, in making the harsh realities of economic growth more palatable on the ground. While language has become increasingly aligned with the global sustainability discourse, and whilst policies comprehensively list a wide range of impacts from the mismanagement of natural resources – this chapter argues that the underlying intention is to dedicate land, water and other resources fully into

achieving economic growth. India's environmental policies on agriculture, urbanization, industry, water and land, do not oppose wider concerns around climate change, habitat preservation and management – instead they prioritize resources towards streamlining capitalistic production to benefit the privileged few. Whilst agricultural policy has now shifted beyond the crude 1960s and 70s green revolution production methods, there is increasing focus on the environment and sustainability especially through the use of modern technology in farming – current thinking interprets "sustainable development" as modern efficient farming to alleviate food-insecurity and manage resources more efficiently. The result is greater capacity for agriculture to become more multifunctional, but poor and small farmers are increasingly being marginalized.

The greatest driver of policies in India is the desire to maintain a high level of GDP growth³³, justified most commonly by policy makers as a way of alleviating rural poverty. The goal of economic growth leads to a common presumption by policy-makers that this is impossible to achieve without a very high proportion of non-cultivation employment in the country – where the model of western countries is often illustrated as the example. In India, 59% of the workforce relied on agriculture for their primary employment till 2001. In Maharashtra this figure was 55% (Gol, 2007), whereas in the most economically diversified state of Kerala this figure was as low as 37% (Kannan, 2011). A perspective that most policymakers (and some academics) subscribe to is that the Indian agricultural sector is inefficient, wasteful, lacking dynamism, growth and in need of reforms. The fragmented nature of land-holdings, where a majority of farmers are small and marginal, is believed by many policymakers and academics as lacking scale and capacity to be productive and efficient (Li,

³³ India's Twelfth Five Year Plan has set a GDP growth target of an average of 8% between the periods 2012-13 to 2017-18 (Gol 2013, p.iv).

2009), especially since the nutritional needs of India in the 21st century are seen as urgent (Hanumantha-Rao, 2005a). Partly due to this thinking, and partly due to the interpretation of "sustainability" as technically advanced efficient farming, often referred to as sustainable intensification (Spielman et al., 2013, Garnett and Godfray, 2012), the Indian Planning Commission³⁴ has stipulated a growth rate of a minimum of 4% in the Twelfth Five Year Plan for agriculture.

The emphasis on high GDP growth has implication on all development and agricultural policies, and farmers are encouraged to increase revenues through high levels of productivity. Within the context of the global-south, this allows farmers greater leeway to practice agricultural multifunctionality and hence agri-tourism (Wilson, 2008). Therefore this chapter tries to understand how policies impact the capacity of farmers to become multifunctional – which is often considered within policies as synonymous with economic growth.

Connected to this, three trends were observed in most policies in India and Maharashtra. Firstly, policies try to channel scientific and technical knowledge into boosting productivity: hybrid seeds, mechanization, chemicals, micro-irrigation and soil-testing are all scientific techniques that policies increasingly rely on for achieving higher productivity. Although the trend began in the 1960s with the green revolution, the difference now is the claim that science can be used to finesse technologies to minimise the environmental damage that was caused by earlier agricultural modernization. A second connected trend is encouraging the education and training of farmers to achieve greater productivity, thereby enhancing their capacity for growth and revenue. Alongside increased capacity also there is greater responsibility on the farmers themselves and expectation for them to take charge of their farms and

³⁴ The Indian Planning Commission was set up in the 1950s to formulate Five Year Plans, policy reports that set out the blue print of the country's economy and development.

environment. Finally the third trend is that agricultural policies advocate now a reduced role for state intervention and an increased role for civil society, private companies and community cooperation in delivering development and welfare.

3.1. The policies

Policies relating to the environment in India are administered by a twin layer governance context. The central government controls environmental matters through the country's parliament, which is the primary legislative body. Matters, perceived to be non-territorial and of countrywide importance such as managing inter-state rivers fall under the central government's control. On the other hand, there are twenty nine states, each with their own state legislatures (including Maharashtra), which are responsible for managing issues such as land-use, forests, agriculture and tourism (Divan and Rosencranz, 2008). Given this split of centre-state power, it would be expected that agri-tourism would fall within the remit of state administered policies; however this is not the case – agri-tourism is not directly covered by any state or national policies.

Despite agri-tourism's popularity, to explain why there is the absence of direct policies relating to it, it is important to understand the how neo-liberalization has affected the Indian governance context. The restrictions on international trade and investment have been eased since the 1990s; this has resulted in a hands-off approach from the government and a far wider role of the private sector in meeting out the traditional functions which were originally the state's responsibility. This is especially visible in the reduction of agricultural subsidies, and the much wider role played by the private sector in providing farmers access to credit, education and knowledge – aspects which are essential for ensuring farming livelihoods.

An increase in the number of farming cooperatives in India has been one of the results of the neo-liberalized agriculture sector (Dayal, 2012, Lalvani, 2008). The main body responsible for the promotion of agri-tourism in Maharashtra is a farming cooperative called the Agri-tourism Development Cooperative (ATDC/MART), which is registered legally as a company (ATDC, 2011). Based in Pune, this cooperative was formed by a group of wealthy large land-owning farmers across the state that came together to promote agri-tourism in Maharashtra, both through media publicity and to try and influence state policy (Taware, 2009). Although this body does not possess any legal sanction, it is the most significant organization that deals with agri-tourism in Maharashtra. It does so by (a) issuing guidelines for agri-tourism and accrediting farmers with a "membership licence", which farmers can incorporate within publicity materials; (b) by publicizing agri-tourism and soliciting its members to potential urban tourists. ATDC/MART is a good example of how neo-liberalized governance shifts the control of power (and potentially wealth) into the hands of the civil society/private bodies (Gupta, 1998); which in this case comprises of a fairly small group of elite farmers.

While there are no direct policies related to agri-tourism, it is important to understand how policies are transforming the livelihoods that create a context where farmers diversify towards greater agricultural multifunctionality. India's central government (as discussed previously) is responsible for formulating wider policies, which originate from the Planning Commission set up in 1950 by the country's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Heavily influenced by the Soviet planning model from the 1920s, it tried to identify quantifiable targets that could be achieved through planning with the overarching objective of achieving modernization for the newly formed nation. India and China both followed the

model of setting out Five Year Plans to stipulate developmental targets based upon needs and resources. A directive dating back to 1950 states that the objectives of the Planning Commission were to: (1) assess the state of resources (human, capital and material), (2) allocate these resources in an efficient and balanced way, (3) devise a strategy based upon urgency of need, (4) incorporate external political factors, (5) plan the execution, (6) monitor achievement and implementation, and finally (7) make performance-based recommendations (Gol, 2013a).

The Planning Commission was chaired by the Prime Minister and other members, included eminent economists. The First Plan (1951-56) focused on raising agricultural production and irrigation. The Second Plan (1956-61) focused on making improvements to the public sector to prioritize economic growth. Also this plan saw the beginning of the project to construct large dams. The Third Plan (1961-66) continued with dam construction but also welcomed in the green revolution and promoted raising wheat production³⁵. While the Five Year Plans may not have been fully implemented and realized, and many were delayed or interrupted by political situations or war, they are a useful way to understand the chronological order of development priorities in India. The current Twelfth Five Year Plan was published in 2013, and forms a comprehensive overarching guide for policies within each state.

The Maharashtra State Development Report (MSDR) forms the main state level policy that incorporates important development issues such as agriculture, irrigation, infrastructure and industrial growth. This document is based upon the Tenth Five Year Plan. One of the stipulations within the Tenth Five Year Plan

³⁵ Further information on other Five Year Plans is available online from: www.planningcommission.nic.in

was the requirement for the Planning Commission to collaborate with state governments to produce state plans. In doing so the objective was to tailor each plan to the contextual particularities of each state – thus ensuring that each state's constraints and opportunities for development and growth were dealt with on a state by state basis. According to Montek Singh Ahluwalia, the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, the idea was to converge various policies in the states into one single scholarly reviewed text that analyses state specific issues (GoI, 2013a). The MSDR has resulted from collaboration between the Planning Commission and the state government. Other collaborators included academic institutions such as the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR) (an academic institute funded by the Reserve Bank of India), the Gokhale Institute for Politics and Economics, Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies, and The Tata Institute of Social Sciences (GoI, 2007).

While the MSDR now deals with a comprehensive list of development issues, a number of different state policies were transforming rural livelihoods before they were consolidated into the MSDR. These are listed in Table 1 and were analysed alongside the two main documents mentioned above.

Table 1: List of Policies

Policy	Type	Year	
India's 12 th Five Year Plan	National	2013	Vol 1 – 3.
Maharashtra Development Report (MSDR)	State	2005	Chapter 3 Agricultural Growth Chapter 4 Irrigation Chapter 5 Industrial Growth Chapter 6 Infrastructure Development Chapter 8 Human resource and development of weaker sections

			Chapter 11 Integrated village development Chapter 12 Tourism Chapter 13 Urbanization Chapter 14 Employment Chapter 15 Water and Employment
Grape Policy	State	2001	
Tourism Policy	State	2006	
Industrial Policy	State	2013	
Land Acquisition Act	State	2013	
Agro-industrial Policy	State	2010	
Location of industry in MMR	State	1998	
Water policy	State	N/A	Latest in 2012 not available
Irrigation Act	State	2005	
Water Resources Act	State	2005	
Guidelines for Approval and Registration of Agri Tourism Centres in Maharashtra	State	2010	
SEZ policy	State	2001	

3.2. Can intensive agriculture be green? Examining the "sustainability" of Maharashtra's agrarian policies

Agri-tourism is a form of agricultural multifunctionality; however there are divergent viewpoints on how it connects with agricultural intensification and "sustainable development". In global (mostly western) literature, often agricultural multifunctionality is considered more "sustainable" – agriculture is seen as having multiple roles beyond food production (Sonnino, 2004, Marsden and Sonnino, 2008, Ploeg and Roep, 2003). Reducing pressures of intensive food production away from the widely discredited environmentally harmful and energy intensive green revolution technologies (Cleaver, 1972) is seen as taking pressure away from farmers from food production towards a "post-

productivist" mode that uses more "green" farming methods (Wilson, 2008). In the global south, however, farmers are far more limited in their farming choices because of wider constraints brought about by urbanization and livelihood distress (as previously discussed in chapter 2).

In answering the question if "intensive agriculture can be green", this chapter argues for the need to examine policies in India/Maharashtra with respect to "sustainable development", but bearing in mind that the problems that are faced by the global south cannot be universalized with the global definition of sustainable development based upon western terms (Escobar, 1995). Policies affecting agriculture commonly advocate increasing productivity, but within the context of the global south, the implications for "sustainable development" must be unpacked on a case by case basis with due consideration to the empowerment, class divides and marginality of small farmers. Both national and state policies make a case to promote the growth of agriculture as a sector:

It is recommended that the constraints that jeopardise the growth of the agricultural sector should be removed and the strategies to accelerate agricultural growth, which in turn, would stimulate growth in other sectors of development, should be adopted. Top priority must be given to promotion of irrigation facilities and watershed development programmes.

Twelfth Five Year Plan (Gol, 2013c, p.xxxix)

Attempts have to be made to overcome the constraints and increase the productivity and competitiveness of this sector. The government may also have to reformulate its policies and priorities to create an environment suitable to agricultural growth. Equally important is the need to promote rural non-farm employment so that the burden in the agricultural sector is reduced. Growth in both these sectors will generate more rural income, stimulate consumer demand and give a boost to other economic sectors.

Maharashtra State Development Report (Gol, 2007, p.77)

What is clear from agricultural policies, both the central government's Twelfth Five Year Plan, and also the Maharashtra State Development Report (MSDR), is that the agricultural sector has been in decline in the entire country, but especially so in Maharashtra. Maharashtra's agricultural policy claims that since 55% of the workforce is employed in the agricultural sector, growth in this sector impacts a large proportion of the population, and hence it is vital for alleviating rural poverty. While the policies recognize that it is not possible to increase the land under cultivation, the only way growth can be achieved is by increasing productivity of existing agricultural land. The policies acknowledge that India's green revolution, which began in the 1960s, managed to achieve self sufficiency with respect to wheat and grain production, even though it relied upon HYVs supplemented with chemical fertilizers, irrigation and pesticides. The adverse environmental impacts of these have been globally recognized, and current Maharashtra/Indian policies go some way towards acknowledging the environmental impacts of agricultural intensification. Both the MSDR and The Twelfth Five Year Plan express concerns about the wasteful overuse of fertilizer and its consequences for soil (Gol, 2007, p.63, Gol, 2013b, p.14), the overuse of irrigation in growing sugarcane (Gol, 2007, p.69) and the reduction of the water table because of this (Gol, 2007, p.76, Gol, 2013b, p.2), amongst other environmental impacts. But policies focus mainly on increasing agricultural productivity, for which they advocate four basic methods: (1) increasing the provision of irrigation including watershed management, (2) through the careful and appropriate use of chemical fertilizers, (3) through seed replacement programmes advocating the use of HYVs and hybrids, and finally (4) by increasing efficiency through the consolidation of landholdings. The next section analyses the impacts of each of these on the lives and livelihoods of

small farmers: how intensifying production may affect social equity, marginalization and ecological impact to rural communities – how narratives to this end are played out through the discourse of "sustainable development".

IRRIGATION AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

Within the drought prone landscape of Maharashtra, the availability of irrigation is the most important factor that affects agricultural productivity. The availability of irrigation not only extends the growing season, but also increases the range of planting options for farmers during the *Rabi* season³⁶ in the dry winter months. Also in the *Kharif* season, farmers do not have to wait for the rains to start before planting crops (Gupta, 1998). Moreover, since HYVs depend upon the availability of irrigation (without which their productivity is very low), productivity benefits from their use are limited to areas where farmers have access to irrigation. Consequently, farmers in areas that are devoid of irrigation are unable to diversify their crops, and have poor livelihood prospects compared to the farmers to whom irrigation is available. Several authors, especially from the agricultural economics background such as Hanumantha Rao (2005b), argue that there is a direct association of providing irrigation to farmers with their poverty alleviation prospects.

This need was recognized in India's first Five Year Plan, which began ambitiously with the modernization of agriculture through construction of large dams to increase the country's irrigated land mass. In regions where canals were difficult to reach, the state began subsidizing tube wells to enable farmers to access ground water for irrigation. Along with subsidized electricity for pumping water through the tube wells, these forms of irrigation gained

³⁶ The winter planting season is called the Rabi season, and the rainy planting season is referred to as the Kharif season.

popularity with the farmers and were instrumental to the increase of productivity first associated with India's green revolution. It was limited however to the states of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. The arguments for providing irrigation by policy-makers were constructed around building the capacity of farmers to be economically self sufficient through higher productivity and revenues – giving them the ability to plant a wider range of crops, increasing their cropping season, their ability to diversify and generate additional employment (labour from other states migrated to meet the increased demands from the green revolution states) – thereby increasing the efficiency of the cultivated land. Hanumantha Rao (2005b) argues that increasing productivity by providing irrigation reduces the pressure on marginal and forested lands elsewhere and that this prevents deforestation. Consequently the author argues providing irrigation is inherently "sustainable", even though there may be other environmental consequences such as submergence of productive land due to dam reservoirs.

Constructing large dams and subsidizing tube wells to provide farmers irrigation, however, has been very widely criticized as being a short term strategy with long term environmental consequence. Large dams displaced rural communities, inundated vast tracts of agricultural land and habitat, and they have been questioned about the long term environmental costs incurred in the short term benefits they bring. In an era of post independence early reforms, the construction of dams represented a bold statement of modernization. For a newly formed country, the "taming of nature" was an easy way for India to express its political might to the world (Gadgil and Guha, 1995). Similarly, the use of tube wells for drawing water by using energy was a short term fix – it quickly resulted in depletion of ground water aquifers across most of India.

Especially when electricity is heavily subsidized or free, authors have argued this encouraged irresponsible behaviour and wastage of water. It has also been pointed out that surface irrigation through Indian canals is amongst the most inefficient across the world – owing to seepage and evaporation, the ratio of water that is actually used is very low – 29 per cent as compared to 60-70 per cent in the West (Hanumantha-Rao, 2005b, p.84). Over-watering across many areas in the Punjab has resulted in the salination of vast tracts fertile land, rendering them marginal for agricultural production. Moreover, the provision of irrigation has deepened existing inequalities between regions: areas that have greater political representation have developed faster. For example, the Maratha dominated areas in Maharashtra have been prioritized over regions that are politically underrepresented or marginal (Lalvani, 2008), such as those dominated by Dalits or Adivasi tribes (Mosse, 2010).

Even though current central and state policies carry a strong message of increasing agricultural productivity through irrigation, the adverse environmental impacts from the construction of dams and tube wells is acknowledged in several ways. With respect to managing water, the Twelfth Five Year Plan in the first overview chapter states:

While intensive use of groundwater made a great contribution to the Green Revolution, today in large parts of west, central and south India there is a man-made crisis of falling water tables. Economic growth at between 8 per cent and 9 per cent a year will only be possible if the water requirements of the expanding population, with a growing degree of urbanisation and the water requirement of expanding GDP can be met.

Twelfth Five Year Plan (GoI, 2013c, p.22)

Moreover the policy acknowledges that dams have limitations in the provision of water:

Traditionally, large dam projects have been the mainstay of the irrigation effort in the country. However, it is now recognised that there are

definite limits to the role they can play in providing economically viable additional large water storage.

Twelfth Five Year Plan (Gol, 2013c, p.145)

The Maharashtra's State Development Report also displays concern with regard to the "un-sustainability" of disproportionate allocation of water to sugarcane farmers in the state:

The government policy of encouraging the cultivation of very water intensive crops, notably sugarcane must be reconsidered. Increase in area under sugarcane is due to high profitability in cane cultivation relative to other crops, as well as preferential treatment extended to cooperative sugar factories. There are, however, concerns about the sustainability of this water intensive crop in water scarce state of Maharashtra.

Maharashtra State Development Report (Gol, 2007, p.77)

Although agricultural growth relies upon increasing productivity through irrigation, the "sustainability" of doing so is questioned within these policies. What is visible in the issue of providing irrigation is the wider dilemma that those proposing sustainable development encounter: that development inherently relies upon the use of precious natural resources, and these must be carefully managed to maximize the benefits to the widest range of people and to alleviate poverty. Consequently policies are advocating a shift from the traditional irrigation methods towards watershed management and new technologies such as drip-feed irrigation. These methods are considered by several authors as the way forward (Kalamkar, 2011) and have provided policymakers a "way out" since they hold the promise of being more "sustainable". Watershed management relies upon community participation and careful management, especially through partnerships with NGOs. Also drip feed irrigation, despite its initial high level of capital investment, is promoted because of its potential to save water.

Watershed management consists of small scale rainwater harvesting and erosion control projects such as construction of micro dams (*bunds*), attenuation tanks and contour banks for erosion control. These measures are carried out to manage water in rain-fed areas to extend the availability of water to the dry months beyond the monsoons. These projects were initially promoted by the central government in the Seventh Plan (1985-90). Works were carried out as part of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and also supported by the National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRRA). While watershed management has become a popular strategy with policymakers signifying a shift away from dams and tube-well irrigation, in reality, take-up has been low and uneven. In the latest Twelfth Five Year Plan there is even greater emphasis on increasing the scope of watershed management (Gol, 2013c).

The provision of drip-irrigation is encouraged and is popular in Maharashtra – it is part of micro-irrigation which includes sprinklers, and is encouraged within the Twelfth Five Year Plan. It is seen by policymakers as advantageous as it has the benefits of reduction of water wastage due to seepage or evaporation during the transfer process of water. Owing to the lower usage of water in drip irrigation there are considerable savings for the farmers in terms of energy costs. Although capital costs are high, it is popular with high value crops such as grapes, bananas, coconut, mango and pomegranate. There is a significant improvement in productivity and therefore drip-irrigation is very popular in Maharashtra, which accounts for almost half of the total drip feed area in the entire country. Partly the reason for this is that farmers have access to a high level of subsidy offered by the state government, whereas in other parts of the country farmers have to depend upon a centrally sponsored

programme. Moreover, farmers have come to realize for themselves the difficulties involved in water extraction from dwindling aquifers within a drought prone regions.

Whilst watershed management and drip-irrigation may benefit certain suitable areas, the manner in which policies are promoting these universally as "sustainable" is overly simplistic and unproductive. Drip irrigation is very expensive, and despite the state government's subsidy, its potential benefits extend disproportionately to larger capital oriented rich farmers. The investment involved and the prohibitively complex paperwork required to get the government grants puts small/marginal farmers at a disadvantage. Moreover, costs tend to be even higher for closely spaced crops and benefits are higher for higher value crops such as fruits – small and marginal farmers are bound to be constrained by their lack of capital and skills required for these to succeed.

The problem of applying a policy for watershed management universally is that in the areas that lack effective local governance and community participation, these are likely to fail. In the first instance watershed measures require an active community to mobilize itself and coordinate the government grant in an organized and participatory way to undertake the project. Moreover, once the project is built, measures such as check-dams and bunds need regular maintenance – there is assumption on part of policymakers that there is sufficient participatory motivation and cohesion within the local community for this to succeed. In reality, there is seldom an agreement amongst people within communities, and local politics and corruption are likely to make the success of watershed management patchy. Policies also lay a great deal of emphasis on using the MGNREGA scheme to implement watershed management measures. Whilst overall this may be a good strategy to start up local projects, in recent

years the MGNREGA scheme has come under criticism for being plagued with corruption (Moore and Jadhav, 2006). Also watershed management measures constructed initially through the MGNREGA initiative still need to rely partly on the community participation later to succeed.

SEED REPLACEMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY

Improving the quality of seeds is seen by policymakers as an important determinant of productivity, critical for increasing farming revenue and hence enabling farmers' capacities to become multifunctional. Consequently, the replacement of traditionally used seeds with HYVs, hybrids or quality controlled varieties, which are more productive and profitable, is universally constructed as a "sustainable" strategy within policies. The Twelfth Five Year Plan states:

Apart from hybrids in case of maize, and to less extent in bajra, these yield increases came mainly from better seed quality, higher seed replacement and better practice...

Twelfth Five Year Plan (GoI, 2013b, p.11)

The DAC [Department of Agriculture and Cooperation] made the present assessment of seed requirement during the Twelfth Plan for its proposed Seed Mission with respect to some of the major crops which brings out that even excluding requirements arising from possible shift to hybrids, seed production of varieties will need to increase by about a third to meet the projected increase in seed replacement rates...

Twelfth Five Year Plan (GoI, 2013b, p.33)

An important part of the new Mission will therefore be to better integrate farmers with production and distribution of quality seeds through, for example, seed village programmes and by encouraging NGOs to help FPOs [Farmer Producer Organizations] take up seed production. Therefore, capacity building will be vital to success.

Twelfth Five Year Plan (GoI, 2013b, p.34)

While replacing poor quality seeds that are less productive with improved seeds may increase productivity and the economic resilience of farmers in some cases, the policies have set out targets to achieve seed replacement

universally across the country in a crude and oversimplified way. The underlying assumption that all existing seeds need to be replaced because they are universally un-productive, does not allow for circumstances where traditional varieties may be more appropriate³⁷. Several environmentalists have raised concerns around biodiversity because of the replacement of indigenous varieties with hybrids and HYVs, especially during the early years of the green revolution (Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997, Scott, 1998, Rajbhandari, 2006, Shiva, 1993). Moreover, hybrid and HYV varieties have been criticized for their lack of resilience especially within arid climates to poor soil conditions, lack of adaptability to specific local micro-climates, vulnerability to attacks from pests (Cleaver, 1972) – where "native" varieties were used traditionally in keeping with location specific characteristics (Scott, 1998, Shiva, 1997, Gupta, 1998). Gupta (1998) documented how farmers in Uttar Pradesh carefully made the selection of seeds through local knowledge acquired by assessing local conditions through informal testing over small areas, and from recommendations and observational experiences, but the final decision was determined by the individual farmer's capacity to afford the cost of the seed itself.

Moreover, authors have also argued that seed replacement as a part of modernization has the potential to increase socio-economic class divides. HYVs require fertilizers and expensive inputs to succeed – all of these are more easily available to richer farmers because of the expense involved, therefore marginal farmers are at a greater disadvantage not being able to afford them (Cleaver, 1972, Mohanty, 1999). The reliance of these varieties on irrigation is another factor that increases the geographical divide between the farms/regions where

³⁷ It has been argued by several authors that traditional varieties perform better in drought prone conditions or areas of poor soil quality (Gupta 1998, Shiva 1997).

irrigation is available or not (Gupta, 1998). The heavy capital cost involved in purchasing new seed varieties, combined with fertilizers, chemicals and other inputs, leads farmers into highly risky and dangerous cycles of indebtedness (Mohanty, 2005). Given that there is strong evidence around the generation of social, economic, political and ecological problems, policies need to be far more specific and targeted in their wording and methodology in order to undertake seed replacement in an appropriate manner that does not compromise environmental and social welfare. The issue of seed replacement illustrates how policies in India tend to be top-down directives that are often overly simplistic and fail to address the complexity within environmental issues. Often this results in policies that inadvertently cause greater damage to the environment than good – in this case, local knowledge about seed varieties is compromised by the blanket proposals for seed replacement.

FERTILIZERS, PESTICIDES AND PRODUCTIVITY

The green revolution relied upon chemical fertilizers and pesticides for HYVs to realize their maximum yield – without proper irrigation and these expensive, energy intensive inputs their productivity dropped to levels lower than the indigenous varieties (Cleaver, 1972). To increase yields, farmers were provided with heavily subsidized chemical fertilizers, necessary to replenish the soil that was being depleted due to repetitive mono-cropping year after year (Agarwal, 1992). The resulting environmental problems associated have been well documented through the years. Abundant availability of fertilizer due to subsidy led to excessive use and wastage – the runoff from cultivated areas polluted water courses and rivers (Agarwal, 1992, Cleaver, 1972, Conway and Barbier, 1988). Pesticides were harmful to the bio-diversity of habitats (Carson,

1962) and to the health of those handling them (Freebairn, 1995). The texture of the soil suffered due to the lack of organic matter which normally maintains soil aeration, instead repeated applications of chemical fertilizers made the soil compact and lose its productivity (Gupta, 1998). Vast tracts of land suffered from salinity and long term loss of productivity owing to the combination of repeated use of chemical fertilizers and irrigation. Moreover fertilizers and pesticides are highly energy intensive and expensive (Pimentel et al., 1973, Freebairn, 1995), they pushed farmers into a highly capitalistic and risk oriented modes of agriculture. Farmers, on the one hand benefited from higher incomes, but on the other hand their reliance upon banks, subsidies, loans and private/multinational agents became even greater and this left them disempowered (Cleaver, 1972).

There has been global awareness of the environmental problems associated with the indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides (Kannan, 2011), and this is acknowledged within current Indian policies. The agricultural policy in India, the Twelfth Five Year Plan, acknowledges the harm possible and proposes reducing subsidies for fertilizers/pesticides:

Another, very important reason why subsidies should be rationalised and restrained is that some of these subsidies could actually be doing harm. [...] Data from all over India, especially from the prime green revolution areas, show that high use of chemical fertilisers and power is causing excessive mining of other soil nutrients and of groundwater, and that this is also leading to loss of quality of both soil and water.

Twelfth Five Year Plan (GoI, 2013b, p.14)

Fertiliser consumption in the country has been increasing over the years and now India is the second largest consumer of fertilisers in the world, after China, consuming about 26.5 million tonnes of NPK. However, imbalanced nutrient use coupled with neglect of organic matter has resulted in multi-nutrient deficiencies in Indian soils [...] As nutrient additions do not keep pace with nutrient removal by crops; the fertility

status of Indian soils has been declining rapidly under intensive agriculture and is now showing signs of fatigue

Twelfth Five Year Plan (Gol, 2013b, p.44)

These policies claim that the subsidy support awarded to the use of chemical fertilizers has benefited farmers economically, but this has also led to waste and environmental harm, and hence subsidies need to be phased out. However, there is lack of acknowledgement that farmers' access to expensive inputs is highly uneven and divided along class and geographical lines. The subsidies and government loans available to farmers were less critical to large capitalistic farmers than they were to small/marginal farmers. Already under the strain of other market/commodity price risks and rising land prices, a reduction of subsidies is likely to be the last straw for small farmers, pushing them into even greater levels of indebtedness. The policies also support a more extensive regime for soil testing in order for fertilizers to be more targeted towards the local soil conditions – aimed at reducing waste and pollution. Whilst this objective has some environmental merit, the policy is silent on how this may be executed on the ground. The assumption is that farmers, irrespective of size or affluence, have the skills, knowledge and capacity to be able to carry out soil testing themselves – a highly unlikely scenario, considering that small farmers are often pushed into making decisions on the basis of day to day survival, as opposed to long term planning (Wilson, 2008). Targeted fertilizers can only work if there is an adequate support network of experts and knowledge to hand. While this is not explicitly stated in policies, the underlying assumption is that this role will be satisfied by NGOs and community farming cooperatives. The reality is that whilst NGOs/cooperatives actively benefit some areas, geographically this tends to be unevenly spread and relies upon local politics and social structures. The reduction of subsidized chemical fertilizers therefore

shifts greater responsibility and risk onto farmers themselves, who are expected to mobilize help for themselves – a phenomenon that is increasingly common to most aspects of governance within neo-liberal market led modes of food production (Walker, 2008).

In synthesis, policies saw increasing agricultural production by providing irrigation, seed replacement, fertilizers and pesticides as essential to the growth of the agricultural sector. This process of agricultural intensification was justified as "sustainable development" as this promised to make farmers more economically self-reliant and thus increase their capacity to become multifunctional in order to undertake activities such as agri-tourism. Therefore the policy stance on increasing production serves as a proxy for understanding how multifunctionality and agri-tourism are affected. Even though policies in a limited way, acknowledge the criticisms of intensive agriculture, they see improving technology, enhancing cooperation and increasing scientific knowledge as ways of overcoming these problems with intensification. All policies, however, were silent on the adverse impacts of capital intensive food production on marginal farmers and increasing inequity between social classes. This is a criticism that equally applies to agri-tourism – more detailed analysis is required on how farmers with access to capital who develop agri-tourism in their farms transform the wider rural community. The next section examines how policies advocate urbanization in the city region, the impact of this on the agrarian environment, and in turn on the capacity of farmers to become more multifunctional.

3.3. Is urbanization "sustainable"? Analysing the impacts on rural livelihoods

Boosting agricultural productivity and making farming strategically more productive is an overarching goal of Indian agricultural policies. India's Planning Commission through the Twelfth Five Year Plan has set out an ambitious GDP growth target of 8% for the periods 2013 to 2018 for the country's overall economy. According to the policy, such a high target for growth can only be achieved through urbanization (as opposed to solely agricultural growth), by focusing attention on the entrepreneurial capacity of urban areas:

Urbanisation will be central to India's strategy of achieving faster and more inclusive growth because agglomeration and densification of economic activities (and habitations) in urban conglomerations stimulates economic efficiencies and provides more opportunities for earning livelihoods. Thus urbanisation increases avenues for entrepreneurship and employment compared to what is possible in dispersed rural areas
Twelfth Five Year Plan (Gol, 2013b, p.318)

Within much of the rural south, the assumption is that shifting employment from agricultural to a non-agricultural base is key to achieving high rates of growth and economic development (Rigg, 2006). The concentration of people in large urban centres with populations over 300,000 accounted for 56% of India's population, and smaller towns of 100,000 – 300,000 accounted for a further 14% (Gol, 2013c, p.319). This has skewed the availability of employment opportunities in favour of urban areas – the McKinsey Report on India's Urbanization estimates that by 2030 70% of all employment will be generated by urban areas, and consequently will generate 70% of the country's GDP (McKinsey, 2010, p.13). The report claims:

The cost of not paying attention to India's cities is enormous. Today's policy vacuum risks worsening urban decay and gridlock, a declining quality of life for citizens, and reluctance among investors to commit

resources to India's urban centres. We believe that the lack of serious policies to manage urbanization could jeopardize even the 7.4 percent growth rate...

(McKinsey, 2010, p.13)

Moreover the Twelfth Five Year Plan makes a case for strategic densification including new towns along growth corridors that are "well connected to existing cities" (Gol, 2013b, p.329). The policy encourages growth to be planned to maximize the density of peri-urban and semi-urban areas that have growth potential – it claims this way the conversion of agricultural land may be avoided (Gol, 2013b, p.320). Urbanization leads to the concentration of employment, skills, opportunities and development within the rapidly urbanizing fringe – an area where land-values are reasonably lower compared to established urban centres. The peri-urban fringe consequently has a profound impact upon agricultural multifunctionality and agri-tourism: rural-urban linkages of skills, knowledge, money, people and commodities transfer across to the rural areas, consequently spurring them on to further development, urbanization and economic activity. This includes agri-tourism.

A component of urbanization that policies in India/Maharashtra focus on as they see it as the most important factor in generating employment and economic growth is the industrial sector. Policymakers have realized that the proportion of population reliant upon agriculture, owing to agricultural modernization, is bound to decrease and needs to be absorbed by industry. The location of industry, hence, is seen as a key policy tool in the ability of policymakers to control the geographical spread of economic activities, growth and investment within regions. Although Maharashtra is the second most urbanized state in India, accounting for 14% of the country's urban population, its urbanization (and consequently industry) has been confined to areas around

large cities (Gol, 2007). Moreover, the policy notes that there has actually been a decline in the population of smaller cities, and on the whole urban growth has not increased in the recent past³⁸. The major concern that the policy raises is the uneven distribution of urbanization and industry, which is believed to lead to uneven livelihood prospects and development across the state. The stance that policies in the state adopt in trying to correct this is that they offer industries incentives to be located in "under-developed" or "rural" locations:

Dispersal of population away from bigger cities was to be achieved by planning a spatial dispersal of economic activity to the backward districts and by developing small and medium towns. New industries were to be established away from large, congested cities. The basic instrument of this policy was industrial location policy that diverted industries to backward regions/districts. The policy was expected to bring about dispersal not only of industry, but also of employment and population and thereby bringing about balanced regional development.

Maharashtra State Development Report (Gol, 2007, p.296)

The Industrial Policy of Maharashtra states that its first policy is to have:

Increased focus on less developed regions of the state to bring them on par with mainstream industrial development

Industrial Policy of Maharashtra (GoM, 2013, p.3).

Policies in India portray urbanization unquestioningly as positive – critically what is missing is any thought into how the entire city region may be transformed by pushing industry into lesser developed regions in the countryside. Although policies try to encourage industry to be located within "less developed areas", in reality industries are automatically located within areas where land is cheap, labour, goods, and services are available – in other words they relocate to areas that are the second best option. This is the reason why peri-urban and semi-urban fringes are being rapidly occupied by industry

³⁸ This phenomenon is unique to Maharashtra that most urbanization is taking place in an unbalanced way around large cities, whereas small cities and rural areas suffer from lack of growth – this is directly opposite how Lerner and Eakin (2011) talk about urbanization occurring mainly around small/medium towns.

and are increasingly affected by urbanization – a phenomenon that many authors including Dupont (2007) refer to as urban areas pushing their "problems" towards the periphery. The relocation of urban functions within rural landscapes also brings with it a discrepancy in scale – a mismatch between the existing landscape and the scale of buildings needed to house the urban functions (Torreggiani et al., 2012).

While the location of industry/urbanization within the countryside is being encouraged positively for economic benefit and diversification of employment outside of agriculture – it is also increasingly blurring the boundaries between the rural and urban. Even though policies encourage urbanization, what they lack is a critical perspective on how this may impact the city-region in its entirety. In the global south industrialization/urbanization is so rapid that basic infrastructural support such as sewage, roads, water supply, all often lag behind – resulting in poor living conditions for residents (Arabindoo, 2009). The main cause of mismanagement/lack of infrastructure is caused by the lack of governance – a vacuum that several authors attribute to the blurring of jurisdictional boundaries between the rural and the urban (Allen, 2003, Shaw, 2005, Woods, 2009).

Rapid urbanization increases the pressure on rural resources such as land, water, labour, food, commodities and also infrastructure. These resources are pushed to their limits from the growing industrial demands; policies must therefore recognize that these need to be developed. However, the private sector is an increasingly important player in this transformation, and therefore the manner in which infrastructure is developed is tailored to support the interests of private companies, as opposed to bringing about wider benefits (Potter and Unwin, 1995). A good example of this is how policies treat land as a

commodity in achieving urbanization and industrialization. The governments (both in Maharashtra and in the centre) have followed land acquisition policies that are extremely harsh towards farmers³⁹ (Ploeg, 2010, EPW_Editorial, 2014, Walker, 2008). For example, the Maharashtra state government has set up Special Economic Zones (SEZ) specifically to streamline the land acquisition process and to promote industrial/urban growth within these (GoM, 2001a). Moreover it has set up specific institutional organizations to coordinate and oversee the process of land acquisition such as: (1) the City and Industrial Development Cooperation Limited (CIDCO) to coordinate the new township of Navi-Mumbai to relieve pressure on the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, (2), Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) to facilitate the provision of land to industry across the entire state, and (3) Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) to coordinate land for housing across Maharashtra. An example of a policy that allocates a government agency, in this case the Maharashtra Tourism Development Cooperation (MTDC), with disproportionate power to acquire land from marginal land owners, shows the potential to cause distress:

If an investor approaches the MTDC with a viable project on a particular plot of land and undertakes to bear the cost of acquisition and escalation thereof, the MTDC will acquire such land through the Collector and lease the same to the private investor on stipulated terms and conditions in accordance with the government rules and regulations.

Tourism Policy of Maharashtra (GoM, 2006b, p.13)

The most significant criticism, thus, of urbanization and industrialization that policies in Maharashtra/India are supporting is their disproportionate impact on the lives of the poor. Whilst the ability of poor people to access natural resources is reduced (Tacoli, 2003), the increased employment prospects that

³⁹ A detailed account on the politics and legal mechanisms of land acquisition follows in Chapter 5.

urbanization brings with it (which policymakers often portray as its benefit) does not automatically translate into a corresponding increase in their standards of living. Although urbanization may cause wages to rise, with it commodity prices and living costs also escalate, thus making net benefits neutral or negative (Gregory and Mattingly, 2009, Ray, 2009). A consequence of the shift of the employment base from cultivation to industry is that the private players involved often squeeze the welfare/wages awarded to the rural workforce to achieve higher profits (Gregory and Mattingly, 2009).

The problems of development within city-regions cannot be handled by authorities that deal with urban and rural as separate entities. There is increasing agreement globally that problems associated with urbanization and development bridge across "rural" and "urban" divides – that the boundaries between what is classed as urban and rural are ambiguous. While western authors such as Woods (2009) have been advocating the concept of the "city-region", which the author claims will enable analysis to examine rural-urban linkages including connections, networks, dependencies and linkages, rather than focusing on (artificial) boundaries between regions. The problem in policies dealing with urbanization in Maharashtra is not that they do not focus on the city-region in its entirety; rather, development itself is leading to the transformation of rural-urban relationships in a manner that is geared to serve the interests of capital generation by a select few elites.

3.4. Summary

This chapter aimed to contextualize agri-tourism within India/Maharashtra's policies on agriculture and the environment. One of the main objectives was to try and understand how policies impact agri-tourism,

which was argued connects with the ability of farmers to become multifunctional – and in the context of the global south, this is commonly seen within policies as correlating to becoming self reliant through agricultural intensification (GoI, 2007, GoI, 2013c). Connected to economic self reliance of farmers was the overarching objective of policies to achieve an 8% GDP growth during the Twelfth Five Year Plan period of 2012-17. This had a profound impact on the agriculture and urbanization within the entire country, but especially so in Maharashtra, the second most urbanized state in India where agricultural intensification is seen as the precursor to poverty alleviation.

The global discourse around "sustainable development", India's international commitments to climate change and towards the millennium development goals to achieve poverty alleviation have permeated national policies. It was argued that these objectives in India are interpreted within a reduced role of the state and greater responsibility on individual farmers, community organizations, NGOs and civil society, but also a greater reliance on technology. This devolved governance was explicit within several policies: for example, in the policy of providing irrigation in a sustainable manner, the policies advocated watershed management (as opposed to traditional dams/tube wells), which required a greater level of community coordination and participation. Also policies advocated the use of higher technology including sprinklers, and to make skills/knowledge transfer through extensions a priority – this was especially visible in the policy around seed-replacement. Also the reduced role of the state (as discussed earlier in this chapter) was visible in the policy around removal of subsidies for fertilizers, and the expectation for civil society/NGOs and farmers to self mobilize to manage their own affairs in soil testing. This new mode of governmentality has come to characterize neo liberal

governance in southern contexts, and this has implications for agri-tourism: farmers have greater autonomy through deregulation, but also have greater capacity to impact the marginality of employees/labourers and the village community.

Politically urbanization is seen as positive for GDP growth, and to this end the government tried to encourage the shift in the employment base from agriculture towards industry/non-agricultural jobs. As the policies tried to highlight, industry/urbanization occurs highly unevenly within the city region and policies tried to correct this: urbanization was actively encouraged by providing imperatives for industrial growth within "underdeveloped" rural areas. Moreover, especially since industries within the metropolitan boundaries of the city are seen as sources of pollution for the urban environment, their location within the city is actively discouraged by policies (GoI, 2007, GoM, 2013). This has several indirect implications on multifunctionality and agritourism. Firstly, although policies try to encourage remote areas to develop first, urbanization is most likely to occur in the peri-urban fringe as opposed to rural areas. This is because in this zone there is greater advantage from existing transport infrastructure, cheaper land, labour, roads, skill and other rural-urban linkages – while here industries do not gain from the same level of subsidies offered in rural locations, they choose the second best option (Dupont, 2007, Kundu et al., 2002). Owing to similar infrastructural factors, agri-tourism has also gained popularity within the peri-urban zone. Therefore, the location of agri-tourism often overlaps with the rapidly urbanizing fringe, and this produces several advantages and disadvantages: (1) there is greater pressure on profitability due to rising land-values, (2) sites suffer from labour shortage but benefit from

skills/knowledge, and (3) while there is loss of visual amenity, there are also advantages from better infrastructure and connectivity.

This chapter has tried to highlight that policies in India have taken on board the environmental issues arising from capitalistic production and urbanization, and have shifted towards greater responsibility. However, as previously discussed in chapter 2, sustainable development often disguises the environmental impacts of capitalistic development and globalization (Escobar, 1995, Gupta, 1998), and policies in India are no exception. While they acknowledge the most common criticisms of intensive agricultural production and uneven urbanization, there is little understanding of the real life impacts on the farming communities within varied local contexts in Maharashtra. Policy-makers proposed measures such as watershed management and soil testing regimes that required greater skills and involvement from local villagers and NGOs. However, policies seldom considered how local politics and social dynamics in individual and varied contexts may affect the ability of rural communities to participate and coordinate action. The policy analysis in this chapter, therefore, sets out a context for the agrarian and urban processes in the city-region – but the definitive impact of urbanization on everyday life of farmers will become clear only through detailed qualitative analysis of specific case studies that will follow in later chapters.

Chapter: 4 Maharashtra's Agrarian and Urban Context

This chapter examines the environmental transformations taking place in Maharashtra brought about by urbanization within the agrarian landscape. These are an important contextual backdrop for Maharashtra's increasing agricultural multifunctionality and the rising popularity of agri-tourism. This chapter also partly answers the first research question: ***how do interactions between development goals, environmental governance and agrarian ecologies shape agri-tourism's understanding and practice in peri-urban Mumbai and Pune?*** It adds to the argument of the previous chapter that agricultural multifunctionality is encouraged by urbanization in two ways. Firstly, small farmers resort to multifunctionality to diversify their farming income as a coping strategy against livelihood stress. Livelihood stress is brought about from the effects of urbanization combined with capitalistic agricultural production. The link between neo-liberal governance in India, especially since the 1990s, and the loss of agricultural livelihoods of small farmers has been well documented in several studies (Brass, 2008, Das, 2001, Das, 2007b, Das, 2007a, Kapoor, 2011, Munster and Munster, 2012, Ploeg, 2010, Singh, 2002, Singh, 2013, Vakulabharanam, 2005). Secondly, urbanization is related to a rise in multifunctionality through the provision of new employment opportunities, improved market linkages, infrastructure enhancements, education and skills, non-cultivation employment opportunities and increased tourism (Alagh, 2011, Das et al., 2013, Eapen, 2001, Goswami, 2010, Kumar et al., 2009, Li, 2009, Minten et al., 2009, Tamboli and Nene, 2013). Although urbanization has induced livelihood stress, it has also opened up space for employment

diversification – both within the countryside, and especially within the peri-urban fringe. While urbanization brings with it problems and opportunities for livelihoods, this chapter argues, the unique agrarian environment here plays a vital role in the mediation of these effects. Maharashtra is characterized by an arid climate with unpredictable rainfall, irregular access to irrigation, inconsistent soil fertility, all of which makes farming extremely difficult for small farmers⁴⁰. Nevertheless, agriculture remains the primary source of employment in Maharashtra, as 55% of its population relies on it for their livelihood⁴¹ (Gol, 2007). This chapter, therefore, sets out how the interactions between the agrarian environmental context and urbanization, and how these affect the prospects for farming in the 21st century.

The previous chapter examined how policies are impacting agricultural livelihoods in this region, and consequently how they aid agricultural multifunctionality and agri-tourism. This chapter bridges the gap between the policy environment and the everyday life of the agri-tourism site: it tries to understand how the major issues and variations within the environmental backdrop contribute towards making each agri-tourism site uniquely different. The chapter begins by exploring the main agrarian characteristics in Maharashtra, its climate, physical characteristics, social and economic aspects, including the lack of growth in the agricultural sector in India as a whole. It then provides an overview of how urbanization is transforming the agrarian environment: (1) through issues relating to land, (2) natural resources, (3) infrastructure and communications, and (4) its socio-economic impacts such as

⁴⁰ Small and medium farm holdings in Maharashtra made up 73.4 percent of all agriculture in the year 2000-01 (Kalamkar, 2011).

⁴¹ The percentage is even higher if the most urbanized districts such as Mumbai, Pune, Thane and Nagpur were excluded. In 20 districts of 34 districts agricultural employment was greater than 70%, thus indicating that Maharashtra's primary employment was agriculture (Gol, 2007).

education, skills, opportunities and markets. Finally, this chapter introduces the three case studies to highlight the uniqueness and differences between agri-tourism sites. It uses the case studies to discuss how urbanization and agrarian issues such as land and migration are practically played out in the everyday life of agri-tourism.

AGRICULTURE, URBANIZATION AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS

As described previously in Chapter 3, in recent years, India's agricultural sector has been seen by policymakers as underperforming and suffering from a systemic lack of growth (Binswanger-Mkhize, 2013, Roy, 2007, Gol, 2013c). Several studies argue that this perception of underperformance in agriculture has led to increasing dominance of capitalistic values in agricultural production (Das, 2001, Das, 2007a, Das, 2007b, Brass, 2008, Walker, 2008, Singh, 2013), which consequently leads to higher levels of pressure on the land and natural resources. Increasingly small farmers are being pushed out of agriculture all together, or they are shifting into a more intensive, modernized and unsustainable forms of food production, such as the increasing dominance of sugarcane farming in Maharashtra (Lalvani, 2008)⁴². Non-farming employment in rural areas into industry and other sectors is increasing, and is seen indeed as a positive development for economic growth by some (Li, 2009), but there have been rising cases of farmers suicide in eastern Maharashtra, according to some due to the rising indebtedness and insecurity in farmers from market/ weather irregularities and crop failure (Vakulabharanam, 2005, Mohanty, 2005, Gruere and Sengupta, 2011). Modernized agriculture also goes hand in hand with agricultural multifunctionality: in the north, the process of diversification of

⁴² Several authors have pointed out that sugarcane farming in Maharashtra is unsustainable as it requires high levels of irrigation and is at the cost to other crops (Lalvani 2008, Kalamkar 2011, Das 2001). A more detailed discussion follows later.

crops and non-farming activity to increase income has often been seen as environmentally sustainable (Marsden and Sonnino, 2008, Sonnino, 2003, Wilson, 2008). In the context of stressed livelihoods in the global south, however, farmers have traditionally simply diversified their agricultural activities in order to survive (Wilson, 2008, Wilson and Rigg, 2003).

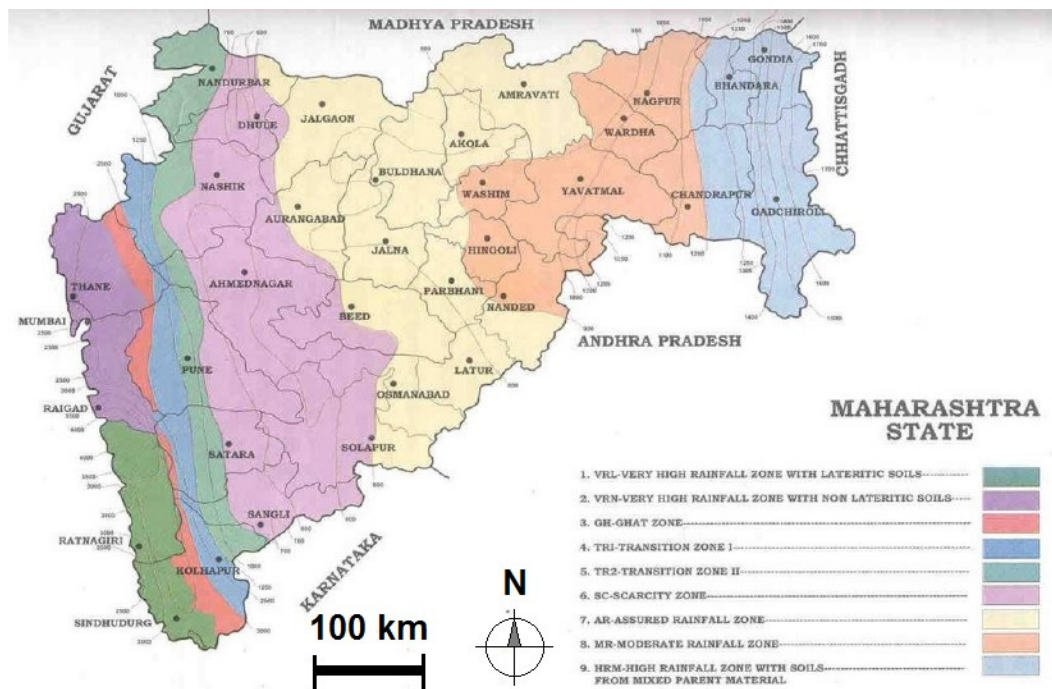
Maharashtra is India's third most urbanized state with approximately 44-45% of its population living in urban areas (Nijman, 2012, McKinsey, 2010). As direct result of urbanization, traditionally urban functions are relocated into the urban periphery and countryside. This leads to cost of land to increase substantially, especially in areas close to cities. Urban growth leads to the phenomenon of counter-urbanization: the rise of residences (both commuter and holiday homes) into rural areas and its associated infrastructure and transport linkages with the city. Industry, education, the service sector and commercial offices are increasingly relocated here as a response to the availability of (cheaper) land, natural resources and infrastructure. Gradually the pressure on farmers mounts to move out of their land. Their options are: (a) to migrate in search for urban employment, (b) to engage in non-cultivation rural employment, or (c) to work as labourers in larger and more commercially oriented farms.

4.1. The agricultural context

The climate in Maharashtra falls within the Indian monsoon zone, which is characterized by heavy rainfall during the summer months, from June to August, and a relatively dry period during rest of the year. There are three broad categories of rainfall in the state: (1) the hilly western Konkan region, which includes the Western Ghats, receives an average of 2500mm average rainfall,

most of which, however, runs off into the Arabian sea due to rocky soil with poor percolation capacity; (2) the arid rain shadow plateau in western Maharashtra and the Marathwada districts – this zone falls within the rain shadow zone just east of the Western Ghats and receives only 800mm of annual average rainfall;

Figure 7 Soil and Climatic Zones in Maharashtra



and (3) areas with average rainfall and soil carrying capacity towards the North and East of Maharashtra (Dhanagare, 1992). While rainfall in Maharashtra is above the national average, the major challenge faced by agriculture results from extreme variations in its distribution between districts, and even within sub-districts. Moreover, the rainfall during the monsoon season can be fairly unpredictable. Ten of thirty four of Maharashtra's districts in the Konkan region receive above average rainfall; the remaining districts are classed as arid or semi-arid. A statistic which summarizes Maharashtra's extreme rainfall variation between districts is that of the total drought prone land in India 24% belongs to Maharashtra.

Unpredictable rainfall, combined with uneven access to irrigation in the state, makes agriculture unproductive and risky for farmers. Of all the cultivated land in Maharashtra, only approximately 15% is irrigated; the rest is rain-fed. Lack of irrigation and unpredictable rainfall constrains farmers from modernizing production and adopting high yield varieties (HYV). Moreover, farmers grow crops such as coarse cereals like *jowar*, which naturally produce low yields. As a result, crop yields in Maharashtra are much lower than the national average.

The most significant aspect of Maharashtra's ***geology and soil characteristics*** is the dominance of the Deccan plateau, which extends across the state as a vast plain, interrupted only on its western fringe by the Western Ghats that run vertically north-south approximately 1000m in altitude and are known in the state as the Sahyadri range. The hills slope gently towards the east but form abrupt steep cliffs facing the sea towards the west. Consequently, Maharashtra's agri-climatic zones follow the geology in vertical bands running north to south. The geology overlaps with soil types and rainfall to produce agri-climatic zones which are tabulated and mapped as follows.

Table 2 Agri-Climatic Zones in Maharashtra (Source: Adapted from Dept. Of Agriculture Website, Govt. of Maharashtra, available at www.mahaagri.gov.in)

	Zone	Temperatures	Average Rainfall	Soil type	Cropping patterns
1	South Konkan Coastal Zone	Min 20C, Max 33C	3105mm (June – Sept)	Lateritic ph- 5.5-6.5 acidic, poor in phosphorous rich in nitrogen and potassium	Rice 39% of cultivated area; Ragi 0.45 lakh. ha; Vari; Pulses - horse-gram Oilseeds-Niger/ Sesamum, Ground nut; Horticultural crops - Mango, Coconut, Arecanut, Cashewnut Jackfruit, Banana, Pineapple Spices - clove Nutmeg and Blackpepper
2	North Konkan	Min 27C, Max 22-	2607mm (June –	Coarse and shallow. PH5.5 to	Rice - 40,600 lakh.ha; Vari 19,600

	Costal Zone	30C	September)	6.5, acidic rich in nitrogen, poor in phosphorus and potash.	ha. Pulses-udid/ tur Vegetables-brinjal, tomato Oilseeds-sesamum, niger Fruits-banana, chicoo
3	Western Ghat Zone	Min 13-20C, Max 29-39C	3000 - 6000mm.	Light lateritic and reddish brown; distinctly acidic, poor fertility - low phosphorous and potash content.	Forest cover 25%; spices 353 ha. fruits & vegetables 2933 ha. Well suited conditions for rain-fed crops. Kharif - Rice, Ragi, Kodra, Rabi - Jowar, Gram, Groundnut, Niger Sugarcane – important crop Fruits- Mango, Cashew, Jackfruit, Jamun and Karwanda
4	Transition Zone 1	Min 14-19C, Max 28-35C	700-2500mm	Soils are reddish brown to black tending to lateritic. PH 6-7. Well supplied in nitrogen but low in phosphorous and potash	Kharif crops - Groundnut, Sugarcane Vegetables - Potato, Onion, Chillies, Tomato, Brinjal Fruits - Mango, Banana, Guava Cashew, Grapes.
5	Transition Zone 2	Min 5C, Max 40C	700 - 1200mm (well distributed)	Greyish black soil, moderately alkaline 7.4- 8.4, average fertility, well drained, flat terrain.	Both kharif and rabi - Jowar, Bajra, Groundnut, Wheat, Sugarcane, Udid, Tur Gram and Ragi
6	Scarcity Zone	Min -14C, Max 41C	Less than 750mm (bimodial distribution)	The soils are vertisol, with montmorilonite clay; Low nitrogen, low to medium in phosphate and high in potash	Bajra, Jowar, Groundnut, Safflower, Pulses
7	Assured Rainfall Zone	Min 21C, Max 41C	700 to 900 mm	Soil colour ranges from black to red. Type- (1) vertisols (2) entisols and (3) inceptisols PH 7-7.5	Jowar - 33% of GCA, Cotton - 22.55% GCA, Oilseeds 5.17% GCA, Pulses - 7.63 % GCA; Kharif – Jowar, Bajra, Gram, Safflower Pulses - Tur, Mung, Udid, Gram & Lentils Oilseeds - Groundnut, Sesamum Safflower, Niger Sugarcane in irrigated areas
8	Moderate Rainfall	Min 16-26C, Max	1130mm.	Black soils derived from	Cotton

	Zone	33-38C		basalt rock. Medium to heavy in texture alkaline in reaction. Low lying areas are rich and fertile.	Kharif Jowar, Tur, Wheat, Pluses, Oilseeds
9	Eastern Vidarbha Zone	Min 15 - 24C. Max 32 - 37C.	950 - 1250mm (western side). 1700mm (eastern side).	Soils derive from parent rock granite, gneisses, and schists. Brown to Red in colour. PH 6 to 7	Paddy (main crop) Rabi – Pulses - Gram, Lathyrus, Jowar, Oilseeds.

Since there are large variations in rainfall between areas in the west and east in Maharashtra, **irrigation and water management** have been recognized as crucial factors in intensifying agricultural production (Kalamkar, 2011, Gol, 2007). The percentage of irrigated land in Maharashtra is inferior to the national average; moreover, eastern areas lag substantially behind western Maharashtra in terms of irrigated land. Providing irrigation to the *Kharif* crop⁴³ may reduce the risk of monsoon failures, but extending the availability of water during the winter months is absolutely vital to the success of *Rabi* crops, and therefore is a major factor that affects farming livelihoods.

The Government of Maharashtra has recognized this, and consequently has prioritized investing on irrigation and flood control in the state. The allocated capital to irrigation and flood control increased from 14.87% in the Third Plan (1961-66) to 37% in the Ninth Plan (1997-2002), but dropped in the Tenth Plan (2002-2007) to 28% in Maharashtra state, as opposed to only 6.5% nationally in India (Kalamkar, 2011).

⁴³ Most of India has two agricultural seasons. The Kharif season is the main cropping season during the late summer monsoon months. The second season is known as the Rabi season which supports hardy crops such as Jowar and other coarse cereals during the dry winter months.

While irrigation spending has been prioritized by the state government, its distribution across areas and crops has in itself led to disparity and inequity. Owing to powerful lobbying from Maharashtra's sugar industry, sugarcane receives between 50-70% of the total irrigation even though sugarcane is cultivated only over 13.84% of the state's gross cropped area (GCA). While the recommended irrigation rate for Rabi Jowar is 30 hectares cm, for sugarcane this is 274 hectares cm, making it therefore far more reliant upon irrigation. In Maharashtra's hot arid climate sugarcane must be heavily irrigated, which in itself raises questions about the environmental sustainability of the crop (Lalvani, 2008). Moreover, due to the pricing structure of irrigation charges, in the state farmers of other crops end up subsidizing irrigation received by sugarcane farmers⁴⁴.

Not only are governmental policies of irrigation partial towards more lucrative crops such as sugarcane (and the powerful capitalistic sugar lobby), but also much work is required towards the provision of environmentally sustainable forms of irrigation such as watershed management programmes (Dhanagare, 1992). The importance of construction of micro-dams or *bunds* across rivers and streams, and of percolation tanks to retain water for the dry Rabi period, is well known, but in Maharashtra these projects are patchy, especially in the Vidarbha region. The government has concentrated its subsidy efforts mainly in financing tube wells and installing electrical pump-sets to benefit farmers, while NGOs have led the Watershed Management Programmes that provide more sustainable forms of irrigation (Dhanagare,

⁴⁴ Maharashtra's water charges are highest compared to the National average in India, and although water rates are charged per volume of usage, but the biggest problem is that initial capital investment rates are calculated per hectare of land. This means that farmers growing other crops end up subsidizing the sugarcane farmers due to their higher usage in the long run (Lalvani, 2008).

1992). The long term sustainability of this method of irrigation⁴⁵ remains a low priority of the government. An area, where Maharashtra leads compared to other states in India is the provision of drip feed (or micro) irrigation – the state has approximately 50% of the entire country's area of drip feed irrigation. Again, however, there is disparity between crops – a majority of drip feed irrigation benefits the high value crops such as fruits, flowers and sugarcane farmers.

In much of India and in Maharashtra in particular, ***cropping patterns*** have been linked with irrigation; which has been seen as the main reason for lack of agricultural intensification and poor farming prospects. Firstly, the monsoon cropping patterns – the Kharif and the Rabi seasons⁴⁶, are responsible for the long dry winter months, when farmers are severely constrained by what they can grow. Combined with the lack of irrigation, farmers are unable to diversify into more lucrative Green Revolution⁴⁷ crops in Maharashtra⁴⁸. Especially since the Green Revolution was based upon high yielding varieties (HYVs) which were heavily reliant upon inputs of chemical fertilizer, pesticides, energy use and irrigation, were introduced in the north initially, later established in other parts of Maharashtra⁴⁹ (Nanda, 1999). The reason why other states and areas did not benefit from increased productivity was that irrigation was available to farmers in a few states alone, while other states and areas continued to rely upon rain-fed agriculture. This pattern holds especially true in Maharashtra –

⁴⁵ The problem of tube wells is the increased energy use and impacts on the water table.

⁴⁶ The Kharif and the Rabi seasons based upon the monsoon rains. The Kharif season lasts from July to October during the rainy months, and the Rabi season spans the dry winter months from October to March. Traditionally the main Kharif crop was paddy (rice), while the Rabi crops were jowar and wheat.

⁴⁷ For a fuller discussion on India's Green Revolution refer to chapter 2.

⁴⁸ Till 2000 60% of the gross cropped area (GCA) of Maharashtra was still dominated by cereals which are low in productivity (Gol, 2007)

⁴⁹ The green revolution states in India included the Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh in the North, Maharashtra and Gujarat in the West, parts of costal Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka in the South (Nanda, 1999).

the majority of districts continue to practice rain-fed agriculture and are therefore limited in the crops they are able to produce.

Over time, cropping patterns are changing in Maharashtra – the proportion of food crops such as cereals are declining, while commercially grown crops are increasing both in irrigated and rain-fed areas. Maharashtra's main rain-fed crop jowar has declined⁵⁰ and in its place commercially grown rain-fed crops such as pulses, oilseeds and cotton have increased⁵¹ (GoI, 2007). Moreover, changing patterns of food consumption in urban areas have meant that there has been a massive increase in the production of high value crops of fruits and vegetables, rising from 0.27 to 1.26 million hectares between the periods from 1980-81 to 2000-01 (GoI, 2007).

Sugarcane is Maharashtra's main irrigated cash crop and, along with cotton, has been subject of much criticism from the points of view of farming livelihoods and environmental/food sustainability. The cultivation of cotton in Maharashtra, especially in the Vidarbha and Marathwada regions, has been associated with farming suicides – which have received substantial media attention and have been the subject of several academic studies (Mohanty, 2005, Gruere and Sengupta, 2011, Vaidyanathan, 2006). The adoption of the modified BT gene variant cotton, referred to as BT-cotton, is an important commercial crop in the state cultivated mostly on non-irrigated land⁵². While the BT variant elsewhere in India has been successful in increasing the yields per hectare, the state's contribution towards total production of cotton in India is

⁵⁰ Jowar in Maharashtra declined approximately by 23% during the period between 1980-81 to 2000-01 (GoI, 2007)

⁵¹ Oil seeds have increased by approximately 12%.

⁵² The lack of irrigation and irregular rainfall are responsible for low productivity, which is well below the national average productivity of cotton. Moreover farmers who undertake BT-cotton cultivation are mostly small farmers, and heavy reliance upon loans, combined with irregular rainfall in Vidarbha and Marathwada exposes them to risk and distress.

only 21.6%, even though 36% of the total area in India under cotton cultivation belongs to Maharashtra (Gol, 2007).

Sugarcane is the most important commercially grown irrigated crop in Maharashtra, which has seen an increase in cultivation from 0.3 million to 0.6 million hectares between the periods 1980-81 and 2000-01 (Gol, 2007). The growth of sugarcane cultivation and governmental incentives offered to the sugar factories in Maharashtra has come under scrutiny from academics in recent years. While sugarcane production is lucrative for farmers, it requires a high level of irrigation. Therefore some argue its growth has occurred at the expense of other crops (Lalvani, 2008, Dhanagare, 1992, Kalamkar, 2011). Since the 1950s a powerful sugar lobby of factory owners has, through connections with Maharashtra's state politics, dominated over governmental policymaking to support the industry. Over the years varied incentives have encouraged sugarcane farming – canals/irrigation projects have been commissioned within the catchment areas around sugar factories and irrigation to sugar-cane farmers has been subsidized. The cost to the environment owing to sugarcane farming has been high – over irrigation leaves the soil salinated and unproductive for other crops. Migrant labourers for harvesting sugarcane are contracted by factories at very low wages work almost as bonded labour. Moreover, the powerful sugarcane lobby has pressured the government to impose policies of reservation of land or sugarcane cultivation around factories (Lalvani, 2008).

4.2. The politics of land in Maharashtra

Although the physical environment, climate, soil, topography, agricultural characteristics is making farmers vulnerable, the transformations on account of

urbanization are even more significant in pushing (or motivating) farming towards greater multifunctionality. Arguably, the most crucial asset in the face of urbanization is land – how land is valued in the face of urbanization: what Ploeg (2010) defines as the "commodification of land in the face of capitalism" is a complex and multilayered process which this section aims to uncover.

It has been a common oversimplification for academics to portray urbanization and capitalistic growth as always negatively impacting the rural poor. For example, Kundu et al (2002) analyse the impacts of urbanization on the countryside through the analysis of distance from the urban core on parameters such as wages, health, infant mortality, education levels – all with the wider assumption that "urban areas push out their problems out to the periphery", which causes their degeneration (Kundu et al., 2002, p.5046). Another study uses statistical analysis to conclude that urbanization is associated with higher energy-use and climate change (Mukhopadhyay and Revi, 2009). These research approaches lack a grounded understanding of how urbanization affects everyday life, in not only negative, but also positive ways. This chapter therefore tries to highlight the complexity through which urbanization alters the relationships of farmers with their land, highlighting not only the problems, but also the benefits, and importantly their spread across social classes and locations (Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan, 2000a, Chatterjee, 2008, Gupta, 1998).

Urbanization and land pressure, created by the surge in demand over land, especially in the peri-urban areas around the city and along transport corridors connecting to the city are transforming the agrarian landscape (Levien, 2011, Narain, 2009). Consequence there is a surge in land prices; in itself this is generally not seen a problem by rural communities who often realize

the benefits of holding onto their land. These benefits, however, are not distributed equally amongst all social sections. Some farmers benefit from the increasing land capital, whereas others, faced with indebtedness due to agricultural decline, climatic and market uncertainties, are often left with no option but to sell their land.

Land pressure also results in physical landscape transformations. Firstly agriculture changes into a more intense mode of production (Das, 2001), but even more dramatically, the landscape is transformed by the increasing construction of buildings and/or infrastructure (Torreggiani et al., 2012). Consequently, small farmers and poorer communities are often displaced – they either migrate to the city or transfer into rural non-farming employment (Walker, 2008). The displacement of farmers is commonly seen as a negative impact on livelihoods. Whilst this may be true in some circumstances, urbanization also brings with it new markets, education, skills, improved infrastructure and alternative opportunities for livelihoods (Alagh, 2011). In some cases, as Gupta (2005) argues, it also offers an escape for people who have been traditionally marginalized by class/caste structures.

Land acquisition and the dispossession of farmers has been a highly publicised and debated topic within Indian agrarian studies. The lack of transparency and unfairness of the process of land acquisition has been widely covered by academics and the press (Walker, 2008). Under capitalism, the basic driver behind dispossession is what maximizes profitability from the land, and the capitalistic government in India facilitates this agenda through statutory machinery. While the Land Acquisition Act dates back to 1894, the process of acquiring land for "public purposes" has continued in a manner that has lacked transparency and has been seen as unfair especially to rural tribal communities

such as the *Adivasis* and other small farmers (Ploeg, 2010, EPW, 2014).

Moreover, due to local politics and corruption, the state has been haphazard in coordinating resettlement and compensating the dispossessed. In the 1950s and 1960s major infrastructure dam, irrigation, airport, railway projects were classed as categories deemed to be for "public purpose", and the state had amended the act in 1962 to give itself greater power to take control of the land. Later in 1984 the power was increased even further, to the point that effectively any "act of government" was deemed to be for "public purpose". This enabled the government to serve the interest of private companies by acquiring farming land cheaply and selling it to private entrepreneurs. Land acquisition has been central to India's capitalistic project, and has intensified especially since the country opened its doors in 1991 to foreign companies and privatization. Companies such as POSCO, a Korean steel manufacturer, have set up agreements with the Orissa state government to operate within rural areas of the state directly (Das, 2005).

There has been much resistance against these hard-lined policies, especially from environmental NGOs fighting against specific projects such as the Narmada Bachao Andolan and several others (FORN, 2008). Also resistance has come from displaced Adivasi communities themselves in the form of insurgencies such as the Naxalite and Maoist movements (Kapoor, 2011), but also peasant movements that eventually led to the formation of the Bharatiya Kisan Union, a political party with a Marxist leftist agenda (Bentall and Corbridge, 1996, Nanda, 1999). After many years of resistance, in 2013, the parliament passed a new legislation that deals with land acquisition (Iyer, 2014). The new Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act 2013 has to an extent acknowledged the

need to provide displaced people fair compensation that is in line with market rates. It still, however, creates major exclusions to favour development projects involving atomic energy, mining, oil extraction, electricity infrastructure projects, and 13 other areas (EPW, 2014)⁵³.

Land reforms began in the period after India gained independence in 1947. Given the existence of deep class inequalities, the Indian state began a process of land reforms with the aim of improving the conditions for landless and poor farmers. The aim was to achieve three main objectives for improving equity. Firstly, the state tried to reform tenancy by removing advantages which landlords enjoyed. Secondly, the state tried to achieve greater equality between landlords and tenants by abolishing the exploitative system of feudal landlords or intermediaries called *Zamindars*⁵⁴. Thirdly, a cap on land holdings called the land-ceiling was introduced with the purpose of re-distributing land to benefit landless farmers.

While the land reforms had a pro-equity agenda that aimed to alleviate rural poverty, with the exception of abolishing intermediaries, the other objectives on the ground remain largely unrealized due to several factors. Even though the system of feudal landlords was officially abolished, the existing class/caste divisions remained in place – aided by local politics, corruption, coercive means, the rich farmers retained their land and power (Ghatak and Roy, 2007). Moreover, the government policy of paying landholders large sums of money during reallocation of land to tenants meant that, despite readjustment of land, existing class structures were retained as they were (Das, 2007b, Patnaik, 1986).

⁵³ Since its election in May 2014 the new NDA government led by Narendra Modi has changed its policy on Land Acquisition, making it easier for land to be acquired by industry for development (see Iyer, 2014).

⁵⁴ Belonging to the caste of land-owners (similar to Deshmukh)

The size of land-holdings was changed significantly as a part of the post-independence land reforms in Maharashtra, due to the Land Ceiling Act being brought into force by the state government in 1961. The land ceiling or the upper limit of each land-holding was further revised and lowered in 1975. This contributed towards the increase of small and marginal land-holdings⁵⁵ by nearly three and half times between 1970-71 and 1995-96. All together, small and marginal holdings together comprise 75.3% of all land-holdings. During the same period, on the other hand, the proportion of large farms decreased from 40% to just 9% (GoI, 2007). According to Kalamkar (2011), the average size of land-holdings in the state is 1.66 ha, which is higher than the national average of 1.33 ha. Since the objective of land-reforms was the egalitarian re-distribution of land to landless farmers, the lower size of land-holdings represents a great success for the state in achieving this goal. In Maharashtra this means there is a higher proportion of large land-holdings compared to the rest of India. The size of land-holdings came down to a large extent due to the land-reforms and the Land Ceiling Act, but this was not the only reason. The growth of population and land being passed down through the generations has also led to the fragmentation of holdings (Chatterjee, 2008)⁵⁶.

The size of land-holding is relevant to enable farmers to diversify. According to Barbeiri et al (2008), as a precursor of agricultural multifunctionality, the ability of farmers to set aside capital to engage in activities such as agri-tourism is crucial. Moreover, farms are limited in their diversification options if resources are limited (Wilson, 2008). According to the authors, the lack of resources limits the ability of farms to move away from

⁵⁵ According to GOI (2007) the size-categories of land-holdings are: marginal - less than 1 ha, small - 1-2 ha, semi-medium – 2-4 ha, medium – 4-10 ha, and large – greater than 10 ha.

⁵⁶ The fragmentation of land-holdings is visible in the two case studies introduced later – Shivaji-farm and Prakriti farm.

"intensive production" towards the "sustainable" forms of multifunctionality, which are "less intensive". Since capital is more likely to be available to farmers whose agriculture is more productive and profitable, there may be an important link between farm size and multifunctionality. In other words, if a farm is struggling to make ends meet, it is more likely to be sold off rather than be diversified by the farmer. Moreover, smaller land-holdings are less likely to employ land-less labour than larger holdings simply because of their self sufficiency (Lerche, 1999).

Existing literature on the size of holdings and productivity, displays divergent viewpoints. Firstly, most development professionals and agricultural economists share the belief that the smaller the land-holding, the less productive its output (Purushothaman et al., 2013, Singh, 2002, Walker, 2008), while others believe that larger holdings become more inefficient for farmers to manage, and therefore this is a factor in the loss of productivity (Das, 2001, Patnaik, 1986). While the connection between land-holding size and productivity has been widely researched, these divergent viewpoints make the argument by Ghatak and Roy (2007) seem quite sensible. The authors claim that there are several other external influences such as local politics and the environment that make the research on productivity and size inconclusive. Similarly, Gupta (2005) claims that although the number of large land-holdings has reduced significantly, distress in agriculture has not reduced – this is because external influences play a larger part in causing distress amongst farmers than the size of land-holding alone.

4.3. Urbanization and agricultural multifunctionality

One of the main reasons for increased levels of multifunctionality in Maharashtra is that farmers are unable to sustain a livelihood through farming alone (Binswanger-Mkhize, 2013). Maharashtra's ambitious targets for economic growth have focused on rapid urban and industrial growth, causing the agricultural sector to decline (Gol, 2007). For farmers, this has meant reduced access to land and other resources such as water, energy and infrastructure, which have all been geared up to serve industrial and urban growth (Bandyopadhyay and Roy, 2012, Trebbin and Hassler, 2012). The pressures on land, resources, labour, and infrastructure peak within the peri-urban zone because of close proximity to the urban core where economic activity is focused (Eapen, 2001). For these reasons, this is also the region where farming is most difficult – and hence diversification is more a necessity and less of a conscious and pre-planned decision.

There are three important ways in which urbanization impacts farming in Maharashtra. The first relates to labour transformations in the peri-urban area brought about by urbanization. Urbanization brings about diversification of employment opportunities for low skilled rural workers and a consequent rise in wages due to labour shortage. The surge in demand for labour results from temporary employment opportunities in the booming construction industry (and also other sectors such as industry, food processing and so on) thus leading to their diversion away from farming. While urbanization works well for the landless labourers due to wage rises, this becomes a disadvantage to land-owning farmers already struggling to make an agrarian livelihood economically sustainable. Moreover, the lack of labour impacts these farmers even more so

because most farming families are already fragmented due to out-migration and the lack the availability of family members who traditionally contributed to farming tasks. There is an extensive body of literature around how agriculture has become feminized – how women are left behind to work on the fields while men commute/migrate to cities to work in economically lucrative and higher skilled jobs (Byres, 1999, Kapadia and Lerche, 1999, Jatav and Sen, 2013).

Secondly, India's market deregulation and the opening-up of food imports to international suppliers have made commodity prices very unpredictable and volatile (Kumar et al., 2009). This has led to widespread uncertainty and risk being transferred onto farmers. While this is a structural economic shift within neo-liberal governance which all agrarian areas face (Binswanger-Mkhize, 2013, Gupta, 2005), the problem becomes far more significant in rapidly urbanizing peri-urban areas combined with other problems of labour shortages and land-price rises (Arabindoo, 2009). In Maharashtra, the crops most prone to price fluctuations tend to be cash crops such as vegetables, ginger, haldi and onions. This is one of the reasons why farmers have taken up sugarcane as a more reliable option which guarantees a minimum price (Lalvani, 2008). Moreover, hikes in the prices of seeds, fertilizer, fuel, and other vital agricultural inputs makes agriculture all the more risky and less attractive, especially when in the peri-urban region there are far more lucrative options available.

Thirdly, while other functions in the peri urban region steadily rise, there is a lack of public investment in agricultural infrastructure. The neo-liberal government sees investments in the industrial sector as a far more lucrative, especially when there is enormous emphasis on economic growth (Li, 2009, Binswanger-Mkhize, 2013). The consequence in peri-urban regions is that even though farmers are closer to markets, they are still vulnerable to market

irregularities and fluctuating prices. The non availability of *godowns* or storage for crops/food becomes a major disadvantage to farmers when they are forced to sell their produce even if market prices are low.

In sum, urbanization is responsible for ***conflicts over land and resources***: structural changes, labour shortages, market irregularities and infrastructural problems, all of which combine to make traditional non-diversified agricultural livelihoods challenging. Urbanization, however, induces even deeper disparity and unfairness in how benefits from the land, natural resources and public utilities are received across class and sector divides. These effects are both directly and indirectly connected to urbanization. The direct impacts from conflicts over land/water result from the relocation of industry and other growth areas within the peri-urban region, and these leave farmers with a distinct disadvantage – but these are very visible and obvious. Equally important however are the indirect impacts from urban growth, which produce significant transformations in how benefits/welfare/resources such as water, land, irrigation, electricity and road, become redistributed. For example, the demand for construction materials may be geographically distant, but it still produces an impact in rural areas on how farmers find it more lucrative to use the soil from their fields to construct bricks, as opposed to grow food (Hawksley, 2014). Although urbanization may be occurring at a distance, its effects can still leave the agricultural sector at a distinct disadvantage compared with industry and other sectors of development.

Perhaps, the most direct implication of urbanization is the relocation of services/industry in the peri-urban region, and the shortfall in the water table as a result. The problem is exacerbated by the granting of indiscriminate licences to install tube wells and pump-sets by corrupt government officials. Even though

farmers may have been initially self sufficient with respect to their irrigation needs, they are now struggling to compete with the growing demands of industries and service sectors relocating here. As the density of industry and non-farming uses in the peri-urban area grows, the irrigation shortfalls increase. This contributes to airborne and watercourse pollution. Moreover, the scale of these new uses in the built up fabric tends to be visually incompatible and starkly out of place with the existing agrarian landscape (Torreggiani et al., 2012, Eapen, 2001, Arabindoo, 2009).

Urbanization increases construction activity and thus labour demand/wage rises affect agriculture, but also other resources such as land, soil, water and firewood are diverted into construction, thereby transforming the landscape. There is a surge in the activity of brick making, and the small scale brick manufacturing units are often located within fields which were once used for food production – the soil, water, firewood and other resources from these fields are channelled into construction. Recently, the brick making industry has increasingly come under the media spotlight. The activity of brick making is indeed diverting natural resources away from agriculture and increasing the levels of pollution, and there have been several articles raising concerns around how the industry's unregulated growth has serious impacts on labour welfare (Sengupta, 2007, Hawksley, 2014).

There are countless examples of the displacement of farming communities from fertile agrarian land from the construction of dams and other infrastructure projects such as the construction of the Sardar Sarovar Dam and Koyna Dam (Shiva, 2000, FORN, 2008). Even though geographically these areas may not be "peri-urban", they still are linked to increasing urbanization and the growth of cities. The most affected communities include the marginalized *Adivasis*, a rural

community which has been traditionally excluded from mainstream politics (Mosse et al., 2002). While their fertile agricultural land has been submerged by countless dams built within Maharashtra and across India, the awarding of compensation has been inadequate and irregular (Walker, 2008). In cases when they were relocated the land made available was higher up on hilly slopes which tends to be less fertile and unproductive (Gadgil and Guha, 1992, Klingensmith, 2003).

While large infrastructure projects displace rural communities, it has been argued by several authors that they tend to be of greater benefit to urban areas compared to rural areas. For example, the construction of the Mumbai-Pune Expressway has been arguably of greater benefit to the two metropolises as a vast improvement to the connectivity between them. It has not, however, improved the connectivity of villages which are located alongside the expressway, especially since there are few exits and access points along the high speed road (Datta, 2012, Datta, 2011). While many villages have been displaced and continue to have their environment polluted because of this project, the direct benefits they receive from it are few. In other words, the provision of infrastructure is unevenly distributed and it leads to greater disparity between regions. While the provision of infrastructure is increasingly privatized, there is insufficient transparency in how it is provided and for whose benefit. Governmentality is increasingly fragmented and this leaves a vacuum in the monitoring of local private companies who tend to become partners in corrupt contracts (Walker, 2008).

A direct consequence of urbanization is ***mobility enhancements***, which benefit people's prospects of access to education. Through superior access to the city and/or the (re)location of educational institutions to the peri-urban areas,

people are able to attain higher levels of education and skills. With increasing education and awareness of opportunities higher income levels are achieved; and also aspirations to diversify beyond agriculture also increase (Gupta, 2005).

The aspiration of younger generations in farming families to move out of agriculture into more lucrative jobs outside farming is common. Partly this is because land-holdings are split and passed down through the generations (Chatterjee, 2008), but also there are fewer opportunities available to the youth in rural areas. Subsequently, farming families often have members employed in the nearby towns/cities who often send remittances back to their family in the village (Deshingkar, 2006). Moreover a large number of farmers who carry out agriculture have at some point been employed in urban areas and have returned as the opportunities have dried up or circumstances changed⁵⁷.

A direct consequence of the increased affluence is the rise in car ownership, ***tourism and entrepreneurship***. This is especially significant in areas where the road infrastructure is already well developed or has been recently improved. The rate of construction and urbanization along tourism corridors has increased significantly. In Maharashtra, tourism has been especially popular in towns in the hilly terrain of the Western Ghats, which form a major attraction with tourists wishing to escape to cooler climates within easy proximity to urban conglomerations. Another contributor to the attractiveness of the hills is the rapid haphazard urbanization around the city itself, which contributes to the deterioration of the environment in urban areas along with increased stress levels. Consequently hill-stations such as Panchgani, Mahabaleshwar and Matheran are growing in popularity to the point of saturation. Of late stricter planning regulations and controls have been

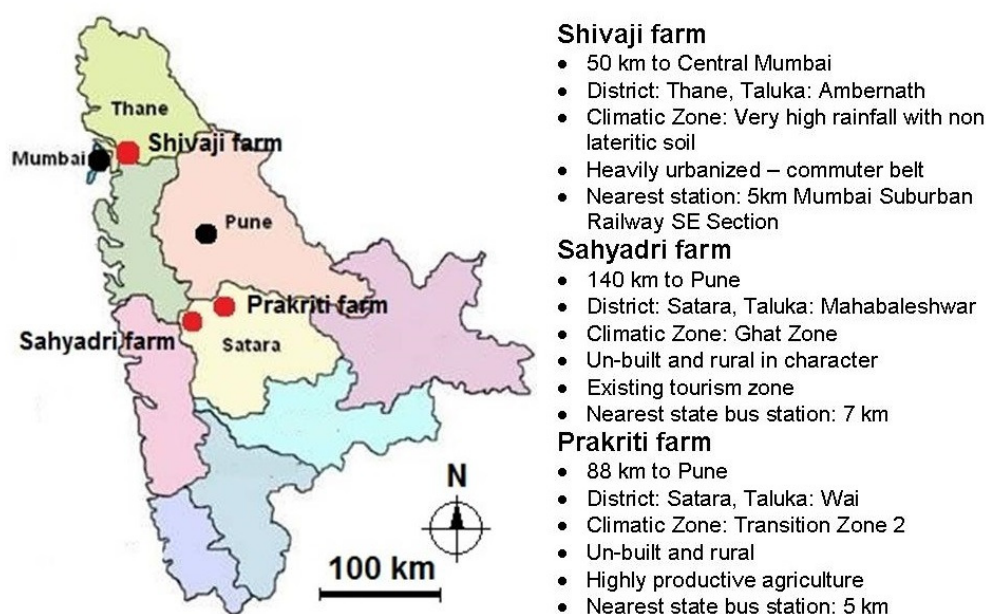
⁵⁷ A more detailed discussion follows in chapter 6 next.

introduced in these towns, and this has led to the overspill of tourism into areas that have been previously less developed.

4.4. Case studies

The case studies were chosen to represent environmental variations within the dynamics of land and urbanization in the wider Mumbai-Pune city regions. The key determinants of choice were factors that affected the farm's shift towards multifunctionality: the distance from the urban centre (consequently the land-value), the size of the urban centre itself, the type of agriculture, landscape and nature of employment. Shivaji farm was closest to Mumbai and is located within the peri-urban zone of India's second largest city, with an urban population of around 21 million people. Its land-values are therefore the highest, and the owners' main motivation in carrying out agri-tourism was to retain their land as an economic asset. Both Sahyadri farm and Prakriti farm were within an existing tourism zone, and were therefore able to benefit from the existing tourism activity. They differed, however, through their distance to the closest urban zone. Sahyadri farm was the most remote located seven kilometres from Tapola with a population of only 448, whereas Prakriti farm was located within five kilometres of a small town of 31,000 people. Moreover, Sahyadri farm was located within an infertile hilly landscape with poor rain-fed agriculture, mainly occupied by the "environmental refugees" created by the construction of the Koyna dam. Prakriti farm, on the other hand, was located within a fertile and highly productive agricultural valley and was the beneficiary of irrigation from the nearby Bara dam.

Figure 8 Map showing the location of the three case studies in Maharashtra



1: SHIVAJI FARM

Shivaji⁵⁸ farm is located approximately 60km east from Mumbai in *taluka*⁵⁹ Ambernath in Thane district. It is approximately five kilometres away from the closest railway station Saharanpur⁶⁰ on the south-east branch of the Mumbai Main Line Suburban Railway⁶¹. The journey from Mumbai to Saharanpur station by train takes approximately one hour and thirty minutes or two hours by car. For those arriving by public transport at Saharanpur station, the best option to reach Shivaji farm is by auto-rickshaw, which may be rented exclusively at the train station. The four kilometre narrow medalled pot-holed road to Shivaji farm passes through a small village called Dholpur⁶².

⁵⁸ Names changed to preserve anonymity.

⁵⁹ Sub-district

⁶⁰ Names changed to preserve anonymity.

⁶¹ The Mumbai Suburban railway extends across the Mumbai Metropolitan Area connecting various suburbs and commuter towns.

⁶² Names changed to preserve anonymity.

The farm's **history** can be traced back to its ownership by the family through several generations of the *Deshmukh* caste who were traditionally landowners⁶³. Currently the farm is split between three brothers – Ashok, Rakesh and Vikas. Each of them operate separate agri-tourism business, and have subdivided the land and buildings. They share the maintenance and upkeep of common access roads, and also advertise their agri-tourism business through a shared website.

Shivaji farm's climate is affected by its location within the North Coastal Konkan Zone, classified as the North Konkan Zone (see Table 2). The climate here is characterized by an average annual rainfall of 3100mm. The average annual temperature is 27°C, with an average maximum of 31°C in April, and an average minimum of around 24°C in December. Shivaji-farm, with an array of horticultural planting including mangoes, cheeku, jackfruit, palms, bananas, spices, and other trees, is uncharacteristically green compared to the surrounding landscape. Part of the reason is the availability of abundant irrigation from the river and tube wells from which water is pumped and fed through sprinklers installed across the farm. Drinking water on the farm is obtained by purifying water from the tube well through filtration.

Shivaji farm is a **large size farm** and occupies an area of approximately 40 acres (16 hectares) on land adjacent to a small river that runs along the south-western length, and the main road to Saharanpur runs along the opposite side along the north-east. A majority of the land is vegetated with a variety of fruit trees, and it drops steeply down to the river along the south-west – thus

⁶³ The Deshmukh caste is also called the Zamindars, were land-owners responsible for tax collection during the colonial period. They were subject to considerable downsizing under the Land Reforms Policy followed by the government immediately after independence (see section 3).

offering good viewing opportunities from higher up to across the river and along the gently sloping hills beyond (see Figure 12 and Figure 14).

Agri-tourism in the farm, According to Vikas, has been affected by the farm's scenic location in the open countryside. This has always made it a magnet for visitors from the city, but they formally started agri-tourism only since 2008, when they began charging the visitors for this privilege:

P: we have begun recently [in 2008]... Earlier people just used to come to have fun

Me: that means they used to come informally

P: yes informally... So like you have guests and you don't want to take money from them (yes.. yes)..

Me: this means that this thing [agri-tourism] you used to carry out informally before (yes.. yes)..

Vikas: owner of Shivaji farm

The character of the landscape is predominantly non-intensively farmed scrub-land, but urbanization is beginning to making its mark. Land-ownership is being taken up by second holiday homes and farm-houses to serve city elites from Mumbai. A newly opened engineering college (which serves students commuting from Mumbai) is the only multi-storeyed modern construction which is located near Dholpur – it sticks out from the landscape and is visible for miles around. The main reason for its location here was the easing of planning restrictions to promote educational establishments in rural areas (Gol, 2007) and the availability of cheap land. Also visible in the surroundings are brick-making kilns on disused fields on which once rice paddy was the dominant crop.

With the introduction of the Land Ceiling Act in the 1950s, as part of the land reforms, Shivaji farm was split up from a much large land-holding. Presently Vikas owns approximately 40 acres of land. Although the original objective of these land-reforms was the achievement of more equitable

distribution of land, however a majority of land-owners have still retained their social hierarchy (Das, 2007b, Ghatak and Roy, 2007, Nanda, 1999). Shivaji farm is a good example of this because their land holding was split up within the family, and moreover their family has always been socially and politically well connected to local politicians, the local MLA⁶⁴ and also the village *Panchayat*⁶⁵. In previous years Vikas had even served a term as the *Sarpanch* as the head of the village *Panchayat*. Moreover, during an interview with one of the other brothers Rakesh showed me photographs with local politicians. Also interviews carried out with the local Engineering College and schools confirmed that the family collectively exerted substantial influence across the area. They were also well known to local shopkeepers in Saharanpur, Dholpur and also many of the auto-drivers I spoke to.

To the family and farm, the connections to nearby urban zones were most important for the day to day functioning of the farm and everyday life. Besides the train link with Mumbai, the farm was also well connected with Badlapur, Saharanpur and Kalyan, all nearby small towns which are good places to market their perishable fruits. The family also relied on supplies and groceries from Saharanpur and Kalyan. The closest health-care facility is located in Saharanpur. Two of the brothers, Ashok and Rakesh, live in their ancestral home in the nearby Dholpur village, while Vikas lives currently with his son and daughter-in-law in the largest farm-house on the farm itself. They also own properties in the nearest town of Kalyan 30 km away. Vikas's son Kuldeep manages the largest agri-tourism farm, while Vikas, being the oldest of the brothers, now leads a semi-retired life owing to his failing health. Vikas's grand-

⁶⁴ The locally elected Member of Legislative Assembly

⁶⁵ The local village governing body, traditionally consists of five elected representatives. Of them the chairperson is the head or the *Sarpanch*.

son Rahul, who is approximately 25 years old, lives in nearby Kalyan with his wife and two young children three and five years of age. He commutes on his scooter to the farm from Kalyan 30 km away to help his father Vikas with the day to day running of the farm and business. He cited his children's education as the main reason for living in Kalyan. Although I also interviewed the other two brothers Ashok and Rakesh, I focused mainly on Vikas's agri-tourism business since it was the largest and most successful – being the oldest of the brothers, he had a larger family with his son, daughter-in-law and grand-son all working together to run the agri-tourism farm.

A wide range of visitors came to Shivaji farm, especially since the farm was close to small towns and relatively near Mumbai; it offered good connectivity via roads and public transport. The overnight staying facilities were relatively basic and cheap; hence most visitors (approximately over 80%) came only for the day. The visitors who stayed overnight did not stay longer than one night. This also meant that the socio-economic profile of typical visitors was relatively narrow – it was mostly the lower middle class urban/peri-urban people who commonly came here. The most common group of visitors were groups of school children from nearby villages and towns – they were brought to the farm as a part of educational visits organized by their schools.

Shivaji farm's ***crops and agriculture*** are affected by its peri-urban location only 60km from Mumbai. Good transport links, and close proximity to the urban market, have facilitated the diversification of its agriculture into high-value-crops of fruits and flowers. The farm's location within only one and half hours from Mumbai's Dadar Market, one of the largest flower markets in India, has been the key reason that the farm has diversified into growing flowers and fruits. The farm has moved away from paddy and wheat, the crops which it

traditionally grew, into flowers and fruits such as *Mogra*, mangoes, *cheeku*, jackfruit, and custard-apple. Moreover, the cultivation of flowers and fruits is also less labour intensive as traditional crops of cereals. Other crops that are grown here in limited quantities also include *haldi*, cashew-nut and black-pepper. The owners also have plans to diversify into fish farming and have partly excavated a pond which they planned to complete in the near future.

Due to the farm's peri-urban location, its greatest challenge to agriculture was the shortage of "cheap" labour. Labourers who traditionally worked here on very low wages, had now several other employment opportunities in nearby farms, towns, in construction or as migrants into the city. The most serious vacuum, however, is created by the presence of the nearby government promoted MIDC industrial zone⁶⁶ in Badlapur. The situation, according to both Vikas and Rahul and several participants in Dholpur, has become even more acute in the recent past few years. They spoke at great lengths about the problems they faced in getting reliable workers and the hardship due to the escalation of the daily labour rate locally to around Rs.250-300⁶⁷. Moreover, they felt increasingly under threat from the new urban people who could afford to pay higher salaries. They also felt betrayed by a sense of change, which they thought was also responsible for the "irresponsible" behaviour of the labour in misusing alcohol because of their increased affluence:

P: Roads have been built... that's why things have improved now... otherwise the situation was bad... people used to work for 10 rupees or 15 rupees... for one hour walk.. and then work for 25 rupees... the Adivasis have worked for 25 rupees in front of me...

⁶⁶ MIDC or Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation zones are promoted by the government to encourage industrial growth mainly in peri-urban locations. They started in 1962 in Thane and provided with land, resources, water and other infrastructure to facilitate economic growth.

⁶⁷ The exchange rates in 2011 when fieldwork was carried out was approximately Rs.90 to £1.

Me: hmm.. but now things have changed?

P: now you can't even get them for two hundred rupees...

Shopkeeper in Dholpur

P: Because wages are higher so people don't want to do farming any more the outgoings are higher and commodity prices are lower... there is no profit... you can buy it for cheaper in the market...

Me: that means there is no advantage in farming...(there is no benefit) [...]

P: Nowadays [alternate] employment is greater... people from Mumbai come here... they construct small farms [holiday cottages]... they pay people more money.. [getting] so much money from farmers is not possible... that's why too many people cannot do farming.. they can get something [food] from outside [open market] for three rupees.. labourers charge 200 to 250 rupees... so why will these people be farming...(they will have to do something else) they just drink alcohol and go around...

Irrigation department employees in Dholpur

The shortage and cost of labour had a detrimental influence on the level of agriculture in the area. The cultivation of traditionally grown crops of rice and wheat has almost completely finished in this area. As quoted above, farming itself is not profitable any more unless high value crops are cultivated. Indeed, the large proportion of land has turned into uncultivated scrub, as farmers prefer not to cultivate their land, but still want to retain possession as they are aware of rising land value and the investment potential. In this context, agri-tourism was seen by the farmers as a way of retaining the land. In doing so, farmers divert their time into tourism, is seen as a more profitable way to earn livelihoods. The popularity of HVCs also was attributed to the fact that fruits and flowers are comparatively less labour intensive as compared to grains. To grow fruits and vegetables, although higher skills are required (for planting, grafting and pruning), these tend to be for shorter durations, as compared to growing grains, which requires lower skilled labour for longer time periods.

The peri-urban location of this agri-tourism business attracted visitors such as groups of school and college students, office groups and marriage parties from nearby small towns and Mumbai. All agri-tourism activities for these visitors centred around accommodation in the form of a large open courtyard with a *dhajji-floor* flanked by single storied small buildings containing two rooms, a semi-covered kitchen, and a public toilet facility (see Figure 10 and Figure 13). A foot-path led from the courtyard about 100 meters away to a landscaped semi-covered look-out over the river which stood precariously on the edge of the steep slope down to the water. This compound contains ornamental planting, semi covered shading devices, and concrete/stone seating and parapets which are all painted together in gaudy colours to give the appearance of a landscaped space for the day trippers (see Figure 9). The courtyard, with the kitchen and rooms etc. gave the impression of being a formal space where eating, speeches, marriages, teaching, and so on could take place. Whereas the lookout is an informal space: landscaped into the overhanging slope it provides opportunities for smaller groups to enjoy the scenery and environment (see Figure 14).

Shivaji farm's agri-tourism business also attracts relatively fewer overnight visitors from Mumbai. The accommodation for overnight visitors is a single building with four rooms located at the highest elevation in the farm on the bank of the river. The strategic location of the building gives the guests dramatic views across the river, and it offers a degree of separation for visitors from the main agricultural activities that centre around the farm house about ten minutes walk away. The building is basically constructed with concrete block-work walls and a lean-to metal sheet roof. The roof extends over balconies attached to the rooms looking across to the river, with basic plastic chairs provided for the

comfort of the guests. Inside each room was an inner cubicle which functioned as a small bathroom. The facilities, including the furniture and decorations, were basic, and designed for people not staying for longer than one or two days. All the food for overnight visitors was cooked in the main kitchen within the farm house.

Figure 9 Functions courtyard in Shivaji farm showing the detailed decorations of a parapet wall.



Figure 11 Semi-covered picnic area overlooks the river in Shivaji farm.



Photo by Rohit Madan

Figure 10 Functions courtyard with kitchen area in the background in Shivaji farm.



Photo by Rohit Madan

Figure 12 Landscape garden near the river in Shivaji farm.



Figure 13 Functions courtyard with toilet facilities at the back in Shivaji farm.



Figure 14 Viewing platform overlooks the river in Shivaji-farm.



Agri-tourism visitors interested in farming here are given guided tours of the farm by Vikas's son Kuldeep, the main manager of the business. The visitors were guided along rough cobbled paths with signage pointing out to various species of trees or plants. Also visible throughout were signs prohibiting visitors from drinking alcohol, smoking, swimming, plucking fruits or flowers and advising them to stay on the path. These indicated that the farm deals with large groups visiting here during the day.

The location of the farm next to the river and the ability to pump water from the tube wells ensured self sufficiency with respect to its water and irrigational needs. Thus, in contrast with some other farms in the surroundings, Shivaji farm felt no need to conserve water. Some distance away the farm had constructed a small bund or a small dam made with concrete on a stream connecting to the river. While in more modest farms this is very similar to watershed management bunds designed to prolong the availability of water beyond the monsoon

season, here it was only used for recreation. During the rainy season it became a swimming pond for the visitors.

The peri-urban region attracts migrants from other areas, as compared to the other case studies which were more rural. In fact, the farm employed six permanent workers all of whom were not local. In contrast to the other cases, these were all employees from other *talukas* in Maharashtra, and one person from another state altogether. The employees are expected to work on the farm, help out both with the agri-tourism operations and the general upkeep of the farm. Except for the cook, the others did not appear to have pre-determined roles – they all chipped in as and when needed. They spend a lot of time picking flowers to be sent to Dadar Market. Other than agri-tourism, the family also ran various side businesses including a landscaping service and a nursery. When required, the employees would be driven by Kuldeep to nearby clients to work as assistant gardeners in their landscaping business. As part of the nursery the farm also offered potted plants and saplings for sale to visitors.

2: SAHYADRI FARM

***Sahyadri farm*⁶⁸ is located** on the banks of the Koyna dam backwaters, approximately 140km south of Pune and 24km from the hill station of Mahabaleshwar. The closest town Tapola is seven kilometres away. It is a major tourist attraction because of its location alongside the massive artificial Shivasagar Lake. It lies within the administrative boundaries of Jaoli *Taluka* within district Satara. The journey from Pune takes approximately three hours by car. The state bus services operate from Mumbai and Pune to Mahabaleshwar; thereafter there are regular services between Mahabaleshwar

⁶⁸ Names changed to preserve anonymity.

and Tapola. Sahyadri farm is about five kilometres off the main road – a motorable dirt track heads off from the main road steeply down the hill past the closest village called Mezgaon, towards the water line, 50m above which the road ends at Sahyadri farm. Owing to its remote location, most visitors arrive here by car or by hired taxi.

Sahyadri farm is a **small sized farm** occupying approximately 25 *guntas*⁶⁹ of land (0.6 acres) on the edge of the Koyna backwaters, Maharashtra's largest dam reservoir called Shivasagar Lake. This was created by the construction of one of India's most ambitious hydro-electric dams in 1964. As a result, a fertile river valley was submerged and this resulted in large scale dispossession of local communities from fertile agricultural land. To the west of the reservoir is the Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary⁷⁰, which is one of the most bio-diverse regions in the Western Ghats and is a protected forest. The local communities, however, are unable to access these resources owing to strict statutory restrictions on the forest and the water reservoir. The denial of water to local farmers by the state is one of the main reasons that farming cannot support rural livelihoods, and consequently this area is subject to large scale out-migration (see section 4.3)⁷¹.

Sahyadri farm sits on a south-east facing hill that slopes steeply towards the water edge. Above and on the sides of the farm are small terraced fields. The approach road runs below the farm, between its terraces and the water's edge. The slopes are approximately 2500 feet above sea level and therefore

⁶⁹ Gunta is a local measure of land. 1 acre = 40 guntas

⁷⁰ Refer to Maharashtra Forest Department website for more details:
http://www.mahaforest.nic.in/sanctuary_detail.php?sat_id=26&sid=33

⁷¹ While the Land Acquisition Act may overtly appear to have become more sympathetic to rural communities, on the ground, by means of these covert tactics the state takes possession of the land by forcing farmers to sell their land – this land is then employed it into more commercially profitable land-use.

have an average forest cover with a mix of trees belonging to the Moist Mixed Deciduous category⁷² (GoM, 2014).

Sahyadri farm's climate is affected by its location within the Western Ghats under the broad category of the Ghat Zone in Maharashtra's agro-climatic zone categories (refer to Table 2). The annual rainfall is very heavy – over 5000mm. The average annual temperatures here are lower than other places in Maharashtra at around 22°C, with an average maximum of approximately 28°C in April, and the average minimum is 18°C in December. The soil is categorized as the *Warkas*: a lateritic variety that is light, shallow and eroded; it is coarse in texture and yellowish-red in colour – which is typical of the hilly slopes in the Ghat Zone (GoI, 2007). Being distinctly acidic with low phosphorous and potash content, the soil has very poor fertility and supports little other than hill millets.

With a few exceptions (including Sahyadri farm and the adjacent bungalow), farmers do not have permission to legally pump water from the reservoir – most agriculture carried out here is therefore rain-fed. Watershed management is also not commonly prevalent. A few nearby villages have availed of the governmental subsidies and loans to construct tube-wells, but the hilly terrain makes their success intermittent. While drinking water is publically supplied through gravity fed pipes, the lack of irrigation is the most important agricultural problem. Combined with difficulties of hilly terrain and poor soil fertility, this makes agriculture unproductive in this area.

Due to poor farming prospects, the main occupation in this region is tourism. This is because visually the character of the landscape is still rural, the

⁷² The main species are *Pterocarpus marsupium* (Bija), *Salmalia malabaricum* (Semal), *Terminalia bellarica* (Behada), *Dalbergia latifolia* (Shishum), *Syzigium cumini* (Jambul), *Terminalia tomentosa* (Ain), *Lagerstremia parviflora* (Bendara) etc. (GoM, 2014)

hilly landscape with a lake is dotted with small villages of single or two storied traditional mud construction. Small terraced fields are interspersed within average to thin mixed deciduous forest. The main Mahabaleshwar-Tapola road has brought about a few commercial concrete constructions of 2-3 storied buildings, which are small shops or highway restaurants primarily catering to tourist day trippers from Mahabaleshwar. A number of farmers have constructed green-houses in which they mainly cultivate flowers or vegetables to be sold in Mumbai and other cities, but these are few as this area is quite far from the markets. There are one or two large bungalows owned by city elites which are starkly visible because of their incongruous scale. By and large, however, the visual character is of unspoilt views over rolling hills across the lake. It is a beautiful idyllic landscape which attracts tourists from all over Maharashtra and India.

Figure 15 The boat club in Tapola near Sahyadri farm.



Boating is the main activity and attraction for tourists around this entire area, also the main form of transport along the lake's 50km long shoreline that connects over 50 villages. Nearby Tapola is the focus of boating as a boat club is located here. Even though it is a very small town with a population of only 448 people, the fact that hordes of tourists descend makes it look quite urbanized compared to the predominantly rural surroundings. Tapola's main street has a handful of small shops which cater to the locals and tourists. It has a health centre, two or three small hotels for overnight visitors, a school, the bus-stand and a few small government offices including the gram-panchayat.

Agriculture in this region is not successful due to the hilly terrain and lack of irrigation. However, tourists and affluent middle class urban consumers drive the demand for strawberries – consequently, strawberry farming is the most successful commercial crop here. This, however, is the domain of very few rich farmers, who take the advantage of a climate (cool winters and not too warm summer) that supports strawberry cultivation. Mahabaleshwar is very well known strawberry producer, strawberries (and associated products) are sold here to tourists and are exported to Mumbai and beyond. Since the varieties grown are imported, and their cultivation is resource and technology intensive, high levels of irrigation, chemical sprays, fertilizers, and also skills are needed. The level of investment required from farmers' means that strawberry farming cannot be carried out by small marginal farmers. While the inputs are expensive, the returns are profitable – the strawberries are known to be sold during certain seasons at rates up to Rs.800 (approximately £10) per kg to rich urban tourists. Strawberry farming in this region is an example of how changing food habits of middle class urban elites are transforming the cultivation priorities of agriculture within the wider countryside. Even though strawberry farming did

not bring the direct benefits of providing food to villagers, the strawberry farmer I interviewed explained that there were several other indirect benefits connected with agri-tourism:

Me: but these [strawberries] are cash crops..to sell this you can only get money in return..you can't feed these to local people..previously people used to plant wheat..rice..people used to consume these..but the village people will not consume these..

S: no no.. the village people.. these go to Bombay so much.. every day from Mahabaleshwar at least 3 trucks..you know the large trucks LP..they are filled completely and go to Bombay's Crawford market..and Vashi market..from there all the produce..you know it is very good for health..it is very good for the blood..if you go to Mapro garden..towards Panchgani..there it's called Mapro garden.. near Panchgani.. they have a very big factory [and tourist sales outlet] there..their daily revenue is about 25-30 lakhs [rupees] everyday..so many tourist cars stop there..there its jams..all the things are made..chocolate is made..so a few people..who are the consumers..they eat quite a bit.. and also it is used in medicines[...]

Me: and the tourists who come here [...]

S: yes.. I used to sell at least 20-25 kilos every day..the tourists used to come here..in the season.. they used to come here..get inside..and pick with their own hands..then later give us orders..then we used to pack it and give it to them..

Neighbouring strawberry farmer

The farm has a fairly recent **history**: it has been co-owned since 2000 by two brothers Ram and Shyam who also live in Tapola. They manage the agri-tourism business jointly and take turns to commute here. Both have other professions alongside: Ram is a qualified medical doctor who operates a local medical clinic in Tapola, and Shyam also runs a local shop. They had bought the land originally from a farmer who had parcelled his land into smaller plots which were then sold to multiple buyers, including the city buyer who built the bungalow next doors as a holiday home in 1992. This meant that there was already an existing electric connection and access road very close to the plot, and this made the land an attractive purchase. The intention initially was to

commercially cultivate flowers – mainly *Gerbera* – an ornamental cut flower which has a market in Mumbai and other large cities. For this they had constructed two large green-houses and a pack-house by the year 2004.

The brothers decided to undertake agri-tourism when they visited another agri-tourism site close to Neral in District Thane. They had liked the concept of hosting tourists amidst agricultural surroundings, and therefore, having done some research, decided to start agri-tourism in this land they owned. Initially they built a straw hut, but without much success, and also they realized that this had posed a serious fire risk. The following year they had installed four tents with shared bathroom facilities – but this brought about limited success as the site was so remote. Eventually they had also set up a website which proved to be the most crucial tool to promote the business, enabling it to grow quickly. Shyam's wife also helps out in the business by managing the catering and kitchen. She accompanies her husband from Tapola, travelling by bike on most days especially when the place is busy. The brothers are both enterprising and locally influential. Shyam was the chairperson of the Tapola boat club and is a well known local figure, and both also know members of the local *Panchayat* committee.

Since Sahyadri farm was the most remote rural location, the infrastructure here was very basic. There was little or no mobile phone network and the owners and employees relied upon motor bicycles from Tapola to source small supplies. Larger items are delivered by the local businesses using *tempo* truck, while smaller items are transported on the bikes of the owners. The farm sourced its milk from a farmer in the village nearby. Boats form the most important form of transport in this area, connecting a large number of villages along the waters' 50km length. Besides buses, available from the main road five

kilometres above, commuters to Tapola use the government boat service on the lake.

The ***labour and employment*** in this area focus on the tourism industry, especially because there are limited farming prospects. In this region younger males migrate to Mahabaleshwar or to Mumbai for work. Those left behind generally are women and older people, a trend that has been observed elsewhere by several authors (Byres, 1999, Jatav and Sen, 2013). The remote nature of the site also means that all employment here is local. The farm is an exception because it employs around six young male workers, who otherwise will need to migrate to urban areas. All the employees belong to a single nearby villages about three kilometres away across the lake since they have been employed through personal connections with the owners. They commute using the local boat crossing across the river, but spend most nights in the farm itself. Except for the manager, all other staff members act as general helpers with flexible roles which include cleaning rooms, kitchen, serving food and gardening. The farm also employs a very old gardener who spends most of the day watering the ornamental plants in the farm.

A combination of tourists visiting here and difficult farming conditions means that the farms' activities are mostly non-agricultural. The very small size of the plot itself also means that the farm has to rely on a guided walk of the gerbera greenhouse and the strawberry plantation next doors, which is owned by a relative. According to the owners, there is mutual benefit in this because during season the strawberry farmer is able to sell produce directly to the visitors. Most other activities such as fishing, boating, canoeing, shooting and darts are activities unrelated to conventional agri-tourism but satisfy the "touristy" nature of this entire region. The farm promotes them also because it

charges visitors extra for these activities, which are important ways for the farm to earn extra revenue.

Owing to the poor agricultural prospects, most men in this area are relatively free from cultivation employment, and hence free to work with the agri-tourism sites. A majority of those employed here are men. Women were generally involved with staying in the village to take care of the (limited) cultivation and household chores. Given the relatively poor agriculture/other employment prospects, there is generally sufficient availability of labour in the region. Agri-tourism owners tend to be relatively flexible with regard to working. For example, they increase the number of employees during the high season (Christmas/New year and other school vacations) which does not overlap with the time of rice sowing (June/July) or harvest season (during October to December).

The **agri-tourism** businesses are low impact constructions resembling camp sites since there are strict planning regulations which prohibit the construction of large or permanent buildings in this area. Sahyadri farm consists of eight tents lined up in a row towards the rear of a plot that forms the main terrace (see Figure 16). The tents are built on an elevated concrete platform that forms a terrace in front of each unit, the edge defined by a metal balustrade and steps lead up to each tent from the linear lawn. The tents itself are made with canvas, and are aligned with the gable end facing the front lawn. At the gable end a zipped opening forms the entrance to each tent. The terraces in front of each tent are populated with plastic chairs and plant pots, and make a good place for visitors to sit outside their tents. Each tent is covered by a higher gable roof made with recycled plastic sheet material in order to protect the tent from the weather. All tents have an attached basic bathroom towards the rear of

the tent made with concrete block-work surfaced with tiles and basic plumbing (see Figure 18). The bathrooms are supplied with hot water, which runs off a wood burning stove. The water has a high mineral content and appears cloudy as it is pumped up from the lake. As it is common in other places in rural Maharashtra, the electric supply goes off during set times for a few hours every day. After dusk, and for approximately two hours every day, the camp uses a kerosene generator for lighting.

One of the large green-houses has been converted to house a large semi-covered multifunctional space used for dining, recreation and also houses an exhibition (see Figure 17). It was constructed with split levels with a covered room to serve as a kitchen and walls towards the higher side. The space has lots of plants, many of which are also on sale to visitors. At the higher level there are large posters fixed to the wall with photographs of tourists boating, walking in the Gerbera greenhouse, shooting, or carrying out other activities offered by the camp. Also located here were several Carom tables, other board games, and a large television for the benefit of visitors.

The profile of visitors coming to Sahyadri farm is different from the other agri-tourism sites visited. The farm's remote location means that visitors have to stay overnight and a majority are from Mumbai or Pune, but also from other large metropolises further afield such as Delhi, or from the other smaller towns of Maharashtra. Most visitors stayed for approximately one, two or three nights. What distinguished visitors coming here was the fact this region was an already established and well known tourism zone. Till a few years ago Mahabaleshwar and Panchgani, two well known touristic towns, would have been the only accommodation option; however in this area "agri-tourism" in the form of low-impact tents has become an alternative for those who want to experience

"nature" outside of these highly congested towns. Since permanent construction is not permitted, tents have become popular. Camping facilities are fairly basic; therefore the profile of those coming here tends to be the younger middle class people and also families with children after a little "adventure".

Figure 16 View of the tents in Sahyadri farm.



Figure 18 Interior of the tent accommodation in Sahyadri farm.



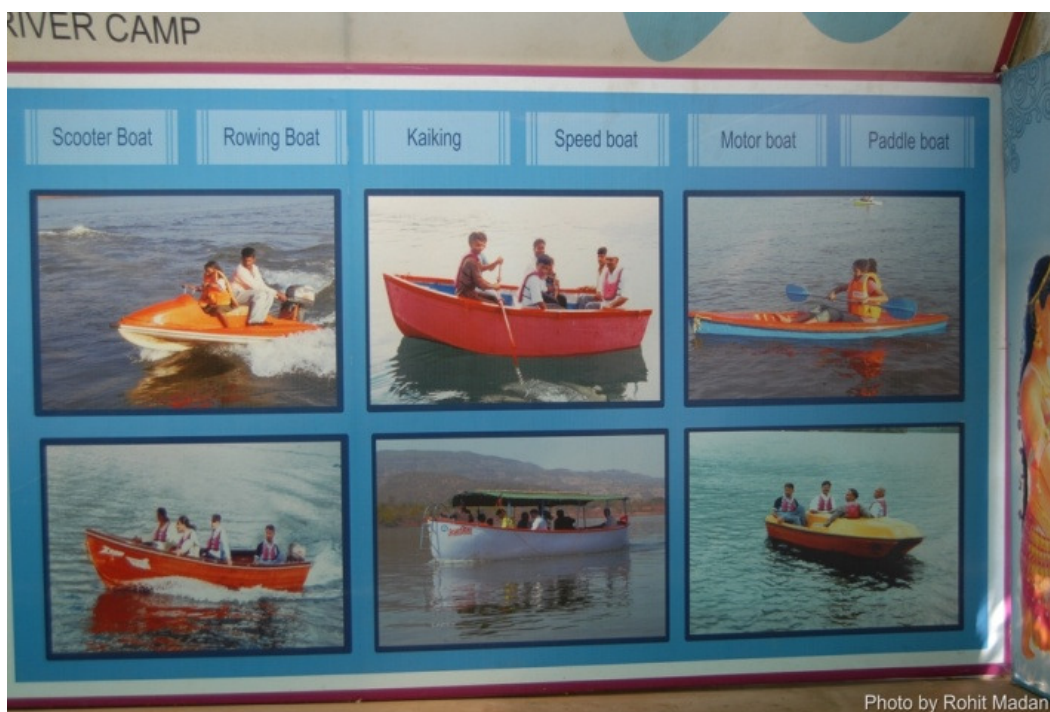
Figure 17 The recreation and exhibition area in Sahyadri farm



Figure 20 An activity poster displayed in the exhibition area in Sahyadri farm.



Figure 19 An activity poster displayed in the exhibition area in Sahyadri farm.



3: PRAKRITI FARM

Prakriti farm⁷³ ***is located*** five kilometres west of the centre of Baragaon⁷⁴ – a small historic agricultural town on the river Kamna in Satara district, 88 km south of Pune. The town is a strategic gateway to the hill stations of Mahabaleshwar and Panchgani. Originally Baragaon was an agricultural market town, but currently the MIDC zone located to the east of the town is its main employment focus. It has primarily an urban population of slightly above 31,000 people – of late the surrounding farm-landscape is being rapidly urbanized mainly because of its strategic location en-route to the hill stations. Driving to the farm takes approximately two hours from Pune. There are several state transport buses passing through Baragaon, therefore it is easy to reach by public transport. Visitors arriving this way have the option of taking a taxi or *auto-rickshaw* from Baragaon bus station to the farm for the last five kilometres of their journey. Because Baragaon is on the highway connecting the hill stations from Pune, the road is kept in good condition. Moreover, because the farm is located on the main highway leading west from Baragaon to Bara dam⁷⁵, this stretch of road is also well maintained. The farm is therefore very well connected to the city and benefits from proximity to a very popular tourist zone. The location of the farm in a very scenic area, with abundant water, food, fertile agricultural land, and only five kilometres from an urbanizing small town makes the conditions for agri-tourism very positive.

The ***climate*** of Baragon and its surroundings is affected by the location in the foothills of the Sahyadri hills at an altitude of 2350 feet, making it more sheltered compared to the hill stations of Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar

⁷³ Name changed to preserve anonymity.

⁷⁴ Name changed to preserve anonymity.

⁷⁵ Name changed to preserve anonymity.

located higher up. The average maximum temperature in April is about 34°C and the average minimum temperature in December is 10°C. The annual average rainfall is approximately 1800mm. The soil in the Kamna valley is a fertile mix between black, alluvial and lateritic varieties depending upon the local topography, it is mostly deep and rich in organic matter. In Prakriti farm the soil is black. It is located within Transition Zone 2 in Maharashtra's agro-climatic zone categories (refer to Table 2).

Farming and agriculture in this region are highly favourable mainly due to the fertile river valley that forms a band approximately two to ten kilometres wide of highly productive cultivation along the river Kamna. The landscape in the immediate proximity of the farm is primarily agricultural, sugarcane, wheat, haldi and other cultivation that are irrigated via a network of canals fed by Bara dam which was completed in 1982 for irrigation, drinking water and hydro-electricity, which it supplies to a number of the surrounding *talukas* including Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar⁷⁶. The valley location ensures that the water table is high and tube-wells are common in farms located slightly away from the canals. While the fertile belt is highly productive, as the land begins to slope towards the west the soil becomes rocky, and combined with the lack of water and poor soils, agriculture is much less productive. Therefore highly productive farm land and less fertile hilly tracts are very close to each other. This unevenness is pronounced by the varying availability of water which has reached only certain villages but not others. Partly this is the result of sugar factory politics. The Maharashtra government has been motivated by pressure from the powerful sugar cooperatives to provide subsidies, irrigation and

⁷⁶ While the agriculture surrounding Prakriti farm benefits greatly from the irrigation provided by the dam, a vast number of farmers were displaced when construction began in 1976.

guarantee minimum price for sugar. Several studies have highlighted the adverse environmental implications of sugarcane mono-cropping, especially in terms of threat to other crops, unfair channelling of water and the poor welfare standards faced by temporary migrant contract workers employed on farms (Lalvani, 2008, Kalamkar, 2011, Das, 2001) (also see section 4.1).

Owing to the good agricultural prospects, and also nearby industrial employment, labour tends to be hard to find in the area. The employees in the farm were mostly all land owning men from nearby villages. Their wives managed worked on their own small farms (less than one acre in size) and also managed their households. Mostly the employees were middle aged or older men, who preferred agri-tourism as it was less strenuous work compared to factory employment. Although it paid less, it meant that employees could remain in their village, and did not need to migrate to the city for employment. All the men who worked on the agri-tourism farm were skilled gardeners. They were able to undertake the work of tending to the garden alongside housekeeping tasks. Prakriti farm did not undertake commercial farming as it was too small to do so. The kitchen garden was the only cultivation within its premises; it generally served the purpose of supplying the farm's kitchen, but it also served as a showpiece for the farm's visitors.

The landscape around Baragaon is mostly rural, but displays urbanizing characteristics in ways that are unique compared to the other case studies. This is because of the town size of around 31,000 people, its location near a tourism zone, highly productive agriculture, but also its dramatic green landscape. The Sahyadri hills form a dramatic backdrop to the west. There are several small villages of populations between 200 and 600 people dotted around the landscape. Bara dam itself is only four kilometres west of the farm and it is

popular with tourists who come for boating. Consequently, along the highway that leads to the dam, several small hotel/restaurants have been constructed. A few brick kilns were also visible along the highway, which was evidence of increasing construction activity around Baragaon (see section 4.3). In the immediate vicinity of the farm, there were two temporary small labour camps of sugarcane migrant labourers living in squalid conditions in a camp in the open field. Even though the land around Prakriti farm was very productive and agriculture was mostly profitable – it was clear that owing to the reasons of location, tourism and connectivity – more economically profitable uses were gradually replacing agriculture.

Around Prakriti farm two most commonly reasons cited to me for farmers' frustrations with agriculture were: (1) commodity prices which farmers received in the open market were constantly fluctuating and not guaranteed, and (2) owing to the increase in population, the area of agricultural land had to be split up down the generations and divided between brothers. This meant family members no longer could rely solely on farming and had to either move to the city for alternative employment or find a more profitable use on the land.

Me: People want to do less farming... and want to do jobs in offices more?

P: no no... here it is like this... population has increased... and farmland is still the same and then one or two have stayed in farming... if all of them had stayed in farming then how could they have managed...

Me: so the population has increased and the land is still the same

P: the land is still the same

Me: so then it won't be sufficient (it won't be sufficient)

P: so then they get into labourer jobs etc. and go out...

Me: and the other thing is also that like haldi's price has reduced (yes...)

P: exactly that's the problem... the level of prices in the market are a big problem...

Neighbouring farmer and owner's brother

Prakriti farm's history goes back several years as it was part of a much larger land-holding which was split between five brothers, which was typical of this area where land is split down through the generations. The farm was jointly owned and managed by two of the five brothers – Aditya and Rahul, both of whom moved out of the village and worked most of their lives in Pune. The other three brothers own separate plots of land adjacent to the farm and have continued farming. Now Aditya and Rahul commute here from Pune to manage the agri-tourism business on the piece of land that they inherited from their father when he passed away some years ago. The older brother Rahul is retired and manages the farm during weekdays, while Aditya works as the senior marketing director for a milk cooperative in Pune, manages the farms during weekends. The two brothers grew up here and were educated in the local school in the nearby village Dhulegaon; they graduated in Baragaon and obtained post-graduate degrees from Kolhapur. In other words, amongst all five brothers, both Aditya who has an MBA degree in Marketing, and Rahul has worked for 33 years for a bank, are both highly educated and have lived in Pune for most of their working lives. Like most other people, migrants to the city from this area mostly retain strong connections with their extended families and land. They have used their education and skills to carry out agri-tourism as a profitable business on their agricultural land – this is part of the wider trend of converting land to uses with the intention of maximizing profit.

Aditya's wife Laxmi also helps out in the business remotely from Pune – she manages the internet bookings system and also coordinates food and supplies for the farm. Rahul's son Sanjiv helps out with the business mostly during weekends and during busy periods. The successful running of this agri-tourism business depends not only upon the management skills within the farm

itself, but also on the skills of those who managed the internet website and

Figure 21 A view of the landscaped courtyard surrounded by the accommodation in Prakriti farm.



booking system located remotely from the city.

Having worked in Pune with influential jobs, the brothers are very well connected with politicians such as Ajit Pawar⁷⁷, the Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra. The owner proudly informed me that the minister had been present at the inauguration of Prakriti farm two years ago and pointed out photographs displayed on a notice board in front of the office. The brothers' good connections also aided them to get a loan for funding the project at very good rates from the government bank NABARD⁷⁸. Besides this, the brothers also have good local connections with the Panchayat in Dhulegaon, whose approval was necessary to obtain the statutory planning permission to construct

⁷⁷ Ajit Pawar is the nephew of Sharad Pawar, the union minister for Agriculture in the central government.

⁷⁸ National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development - NABARD

the project. What became clear during the fieldwork is that successful agri-tourism businesses in rural areas had linkages of skills, education and influence with urban areas.

The *agri-tourism* business within Prakriti farm gives an impression similar to that of a well managed resort – with its garden containing a large lawn and ornamental planting – it appears very clean, manicured and efficiently run (see Figure 21). The owners own five acres of land. The agri-tourism business occupies approximately one and half acres, which is fenced off from the surrounding fields. There are five single storey cottages with sloping mono-pitched roofs, each housing two room with attached bathrooms, arranged in a linear fashion around a large well planted garden. The landscape is organized with paths, lawns, flowerbeds and small palm trees all following clean straight lines with clearly demarcated areas. Towards one end of the complex is a cottage with a semi-covered space which houses the kitchen and dining area. The highest point in the complex is a water-tank which is aesthetically screened – all elements combine to show that an aesthetic is being created is that of cleanliness, neatness and quaintness. There are numerous signs informing visitors of the "do's and don'ts" that they must adhere to whilst in the farm. The main entrance is through a very tall gate – altogether giving the impression of a private sanctuary or a space where only the privileged rich were welcome. The regular availability of water and electricity added to the feeling that the farm strongly contrasted with the character and resources available to villages in the immediate proximity.

Each room is well designed and furnished. The entrance is well defined with a canopy and light. Inside each room there is a double bed, side tables, two chairs and a table, built-in wardrobe and French sliding glass doors which

lead onto a patio that overlooks a private kitchen garden where vegetables are grown. The attached bathroom has a unique feature which is a tiled open to sky courtyard – I was informed this was for bathing under the rain during the rainy monsoon season. This formed an interesting feature with light penetrating from above – thus making the bathroom light and airy. All the fixtures were fairly luxurious and modern. Moreover, each cottage was installed with solar water heating panels which supplied hot water all day long. As with other rural areas in Maharashtra, there were regular power cuts during predetermined hours during the day. To counter this, the farm uses a diesel powered generator when occupancy is high or during special occasions.

The farm employed eight permanent staff, of which one was a cook. The rest of them were general helpers – flexible in their jobs, either tidying up the garden, serving food from the kitchen, cleaning the rooms or helping out to get supplies. All of them, with the exception of the cook who was a migrant from Uttar Pradesh in north India, were local villagers from within a radius of six kilometres. Moreover, there were two part-time women also from nearby villages responsible for cleaning dishes/laundry. The profile of people employed, of mostly people from close to the farm, also was a reflection of the level of urbanization achieved. Shivaji farm, which was the most urbanized and closest to Mumbai, employed mostly migrants. Shayadri farm was most rural and therefore employed only locals. Prakriti farm, in turn, was located within an intermediate context of urbanization and this reflected in the profile of its employees, most of whom were locals.

The profile of agri-tourists in Prakriti farm tends to be slightly more affluent visitors mainly from Mumbai and Pune. The farm's charges were approximately 50% higher than the other case studies – those arriving at the farm were

therefore, all mostly from the slightly richer middle class. The farm did not permit day visitors, therefore, all visitors stayed for at least one night, and the majority stayed for two or three nights. The farm's "resort like" ambience of being a "secure" and gated place – a place of calm resonated with slightly older and retired visitors and families with children. Since Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar were also nearby, there were a few people who arrived here because they were interested to visit these places but desired an accommodation outside the busy touristic zones. However, at least 75% of the visitors who came here were repeat customers who saw Prakriti farm as a destination in its own right.

4.5. Summary

Whilst the wider research focuses on how stakeholders understand sustainable development within the everyday practices of agri-tourism, these subjective constructions around agri-tourism and sustainability are mediated by the urban and agrarian environmental influences. This chapter has therefore tried to understand these issues which make Maharashtra different from the rest of India, and how these unique environmental conditions manifest themselves into the local examples of agri-tourism was illustrated by the three case studies. These three different examples of agri-tourism, each with unique challenges and characteristics involving ownership, landscape, urbanization, rural-urban linkages, expertise, skills and farming characteristics (as highlighted in each case study in section 4.4) connect specific problems with its bigger picture (i.e. sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3).

One of the underpinning arguments of this chapter is that agrarian livelihoods have come under increasing strain due to rapid urbanization and

neo-liberal capitalistic production, and this connects with the emergence of agri-tourism and multifunctionality. Rather than to portray urbanization simplistically as a problem (which in literature is common), the idea is to discuss how these transformations can lead to a range of theoretical pathways for multifunctionality to emerge: (1) multifunctionality may be employed as a coping mechanism in response to decline and livelihood stress; (2) it may be a land-use transformation strategy for maximizing commercial profit from the land; or (3) it may even be simply a way for the farmers to retain their land and not sell it. In practice, agri-tourism may result from a combination of all these options, but understanding these perspectives will be important as they are connected with how stakeholders interpret sustainable development in the everyday life of agri-tourism. Moreover, all aspects of agriculture and urbanization which make Maharashtra's context uniquely different from the other states are also inherently connected with agricultural livelihoods.

This chapter highlighted the uniqueness of Maharashtra's environmental context including the variations in climate, soil, geology and rainfall that farmers have to contend with. It positioned the state with respect to the rest of the country, but also highlighted how different districts and *talukas* have to cope with significant environmental differences. The state has an arid climate with unpredictable rainfall, inconsistent access to irrigation, varying soil fertility – but 55% of its population still relies on farming as its primary source of employment. Maharashtra is the third most urbanized state within India with approximately 44-45% of its population living within urban areas – this means there is severe pressure on land, especially within peri-urban locations where farmers are either pushed out of agriculture altogether or forced into an intensive modernized production mode. The overt and covert tactics employed by the

state in bringing land to its most profitable use, which Ploeg (2010) has referred to as "commodification of land in the face of capitalism", were also highlighted throughout the chapter. Farmers, except for the powerful sugarcane growing elites, remain low on the priority list for the state in the assignment of utilities, benefits, and resources. Where long term sustainable methods of providing irrigation by watershed management exist, the government instead takes ill-planned short term measures in granting licences to dig tube wells which results in the inequitable distribution of water resources.

The intention of this chapter has not been to attribute specific practices on the ground to specific environmental issues, indeed to isolate specific issues would be an essentialist approach. Rather the intention was to problematize for the reader the environmental influences that illustrate the complexity and hybridity within each agri-tourism case study. For example, this chapter showed how policy mediations by the state in trying to reduce the influence of large land owners by the introduction of the Land Ceiling Act within southern contexts was largely unsuccessful – whilst the size of land-holdings reduced, the land owner's social influence did not. Within a complex environment, where there is a range of complex inter-connected processes, simplistic policies that target only a single aspect are likely to fail to achieve the desired result.

This chapter has adopted broadly an approach which has tried to provide an overall context for agri-tourism in Maharashtra by tackling a wide range of issues and a context that is hybridized. In doing so, it has tried to raise questions by departing from the simplicity of binary answers. Rather, the approach has been to problematize and expand the set of parameters that define the environment. The idea is to be able to cope with a context that is rapidly evolving, but also to recognize that what appears as negative or

"unsustainable" from one perspective might be another person's gain. For example, whilst urbanization was responsible for increasing daily labour wage rates, the benefits and negative impacts from this are not simply positive or negative for the owners and labourers; rather, these transformed the inter-relationships between them, affecting their skills, job-options, migration, education, lifestyle, and so on. Whilst the framework adopted by this chapter handles issues separately, it is important to recognize that in reality these issues are all inter-related – isolation of certain issues from others poses the danger of reinforcing binary thinking. It is important therefore for the reader to bear in mind that to give definitive answers was not the intention here, rather this chapter tried to bring the reader closer to the context in preparation for the detailed analysis which follows next.

Chapter: 5 Perceptions of Rurality and Urbanization in Agri-tourism Citizenship

This chapter critiques environmental responsibility in agri-tourism and examines how new forms of citizenship are being forged in rapidly urbanizing city-regions of the neo-liberalized southern context of India⁷⁹. The agri-tourism discourse is relatively new to India, but several Indian media articles and studies have started to focus attention on its growing popularity – most borrowing from the western environmental conservation tradition of seeing agri-tourism as bringing urban people closer to "nature" (Joshi et al., 2011, MM, 2011). Some articles go as far as referring to agri-tourism as "sustainable development" (Kumbhar, 2009). Gopal et al, in proceedings from an Indian Tourism Conference article describe agri-tourism as: "predominantly small scaled, nature friendly, "ethno-cultured", in other words "sustainable" (Gopal et al., 2008, p.514). What is common to these constructions of agri-tourism is the distancing of its discourse away from mainstream tourism towards what is perceived to be a "greener" more "sustainable" alternative tourism.

In light of the unquestioning portrayal in populist media discourse of agri-tourism as "sustainable", this chapter unpacks this assumption by focusing on how stakeholders interpret sustainable development within everyday interactions. By doing so, it directly addresses the third research question:

How is environmental sustainability subjectively interpreted by stakeholders (agri-tourism farm owners, employees, urban visitors and

⁷⁹ Neo-liberalization in India began in the 1990s. As previously discussed in Chapter 3, it has resulted in two major policy developments, which are focusing on the achievement of high levels of economic growth. Firstly, policies are driving urbanization as the driver of economic growth. Secondly, the agricultural sector is being encouraged to shift towards greater productivity and efficiency through intensification, and also through the removal of subsidies.

the wider rural community) within the locally situated everyday practices of agri-tourism? How do these practices transform ecological citizenship within agri-tourism?

Specifically, by examining how stakeholders perceive "rurality" and "urbanization", and how these perceptions relate to environmental responsibility as a vital constituent of ecological citizenship, this chapter uncovers the socially constructed nature of sustainable development. With the help of empirical evidence in the form of stakeholder narratives, this chapter argues that the perceptions of "urbanization" and "rurality" are central to the enactment of sustainable development within agri-tourism to fulfil various political objectives. It uncovers how in agri-tourism, "rurality" is the most fundamental commodity, which is locally constructed and consumed by the urban visitors. These processes of construction, marketing and consumption bring to the fore wider politics of entrepreneurship, profitability and circumstantial distress which influence these processes. The states of being seen as "urbanized" or as being "rural" are locally constructed, and underpin the manner in which agri-tourism is practiced and therefore ecological citizenship is enacted.

Agri-tourism is often situated within the peri-urban environments where urbanization is transforming the rural landscape rapidly. The construction of this landscape as a rural idyll, therefore, is even more significant and contradictory here since agri-tourism has to grapple with the complexities brought about by the condition of "hybridity". The peri-urban fringe displays a complex and dynamic mix of rural-urban characteristics – although the landscape may appear visually "rural", multiple rural-urban linkages such as the flows of people, money, goods, services, knowledge inherently link these places with urban areas (Tacoli, 2006). Not only do these socio-economic linkages connect agri-

tourism to the city, but in these hybrid spaces, perceptions of urbanization shape the discourse of agri-tourism. This chapter, therefore, also deals with the second research question in this study:

How are rural-urban linkages transforming in the face of rapid urbanization in this region, and how are they negotiated within the agri-tourism discourse?

Using quotations from the interview narratives conducted with stakeholders, along with fieldnotes, the analysis in this chapter focuses on decision making around consumption, environmental stewardship, learning and responsibility in agri-tourism – or in other words, the main subject of analysis is ecological citizenship (EC) of stakeholders. By shifting the focus from the wider public realm to the private realm – the analysis shifts from how the wider discourse of sustainability in agri-tourism is locally interpreted by stakeholders through the framework of EC in agri-tourism. Analysing EC specifically means focusing on how stakeholders perceive ecological responsibility, and also how they view and negotiate entitlements in the face of neo-liberal agrarian transformations. Many argue, the new battle grounds over climate change and the environment within liberalized contexts have shifted to the private domain – the choices that individuals are making in everyday life have greater impact globally (Dobson, 2003). In the global south in India, while neo-liberalism has increased the consumptive capacity of certain privileged social groups, EC must be (re)framed to take on board the viewpoints of those who are not so privileged, such as marginalized groups and poor people. In this context, the ecological responsibility and entitlements of individuals are the most important aspects of "sustainability", which are the main focus of this chapter.

This chapter uses the theoretical grounds for ecological citizenship (as described in Chapter 1) to examine agri-tourism through the EC framework. The neo-liberal context provides citizens with greater capacities to make decisions around the environment – in the case of agri-tourism; the EC framework establishes how we need to view "environmental responsibility" in terms of consumption/provision of rural goods and services (Kovach and Kristof, 2009, Andersson et al., 2009, Marsden, 1999). The uneven terrain of development and justice in Maharashtra makes it necessary to carefully consider the balance between entitlements and responsibility. Moreover, within the context of rural-urban hybridity, the idea of what constitutes environmentally "virtuous" behaviour needs to be critiqued through a cosmopolitan, non-territorial and inclusive framework of citizenship (Dobson, 2003).

The first part of this chapter, through participant narratives and fieldnotes, analyses how the rural idyll is locally constructed. This process is central to the packaging/consumption of the hybrid rural-urban landscape – relates to the localized playing out of ideals, on the one hand of landscape conservation, but also on the other hand ascribes to entrepreneurship/modernization. Through constituent elements such as food, landscape, architecture, the construction of the rural idyll tries to allude to certain goals such as uniqueness, austerity, tradition, vegetarianism, simplicity – which are either/both conservationist or entrepreneurial/modernist in the construction of the rural idyll. These are balanced with safety, comfort and recreational needs – therefore the rural idyll is also manipulated through the needs of successful entrepreneurship. The rural idyll in agri-tourism is the focus of this section; this chapter argues that this is the most significant aspect of the relationship between the rural and urban. By analysing the construction of the rural idyll by stakeholders, this chapter

answers the second research question. Through the participant narratives around rurality, this chapter helps to distinguish between the levels of environmental responsibility, and its manifestation into different forms of agri-tourism practices: (a) which result from the virtuous behaviour of individuals, (b) which result from solely entrepreneurial goals, and (c) from a combination of the two. Moreover, there is also a need to understand how the citizenship of stakeholder groups is affected by these constructions around the rural idyll, especially how their access to environmental entitlements and justice is being transformed.

The second and final part of this chapter shows how the multiple and varied interpretations of agri-tourism across various farms all contribute towards the formation of a collective discourse of agri-tourism in Maharashtra. Perpetuated by the media and textual representation of agri-tourism (through advertisements, articles, websites), the agri-tourism discourse has a strong tendency to acquire a standardized identity across the whole state in order to increase its visibility as an industry. Besides going against the grain of heterogeneity and site specific characteristics, this is an "essentialist" ideology that promotes a wasteful and unsustainable consumption of nature.

5.1. Analysing the rural-urban dimensions of consumption and responsibility

Just as Massey (2004, p.11) explains that the identity of "place" constitutes of multiple individual perceptions of particular sites (whereas the site or "place" becomes defined through these numerous understandings), examining how agri-tourism sites develop into places of multiple and changing individual perceptions about the "rural" and "urban" is the objective of analysis

in this section. The role that individual perceptions play in executing citizenship in agri-tourism relies upon multiple, complex and conflicting local interactions between stakeholders. Significant also to this are how attitudes, values and perspectives of stakeholders affect the local political interactions through which "urban" and "rural" are being categorized. How do these categories affect environmental responsibility through the actions and values of individuals in the process of both production and consumption in agri-tourism? Addressing this issue, the chapter attempts to unpack how urbanization relates to functionality, living standards, level of education, awareness – all of which transform the capacities of individuals towards citizenship.

In order to answer the second research question: "how rural-urban linkages are transforming in the face of rapid urbanization, and how they are negotiated within the agri-tourism discourse in Maharashtra"; to start with, the meaning of "hybridity" is unpacked. This reveals the flexibility and changeability of "urban" and "rural" categories, which applies to all three agri-tourism case studies. It is important to start with hybridity because it highlights how aspects of "place" are highly complex, they apply to various sites in different ways, and are fundamentally connected with the environmental attitudes of agri-tourism's stakeholders. The quotations from stakeholders around Shivaji farm that follow (the case study closest to Mumbai) reveals how rural-urban linkages of the flows of materials, goods, knowledge and values have transformed the "rural" and "urban" into almost ambiguous categories. Most significantly, rural attitudes of consumption have altered to the extent it is almost impossible to distinguish these from urban attitudes.

HYBRIDITY

Like they show villages on TV and all that is finished.. That is only for the TV for people who don't know how village life is... Now this is a village only in name... Now everyone is educated and everyone has access to everything... I use the internet... I have a car so does he.... Everything is there and our houses (yes).. In most houses there are ACs... TV and fridge you can forget about ACs are there... Only in the TV I had seen or in the film and serials (hmm).. They show villages... Like that there is no such thing remaining...

Quote 1 Acharya: farmer near Shivaji farm

Along with urbanization comes the heightened awareness of the transformations that are taking place in the environment – explicit in the quote above from a farmer near Shivaji farm (located only 60 km from central Mumbai). Villagers are acutely aware that they are part of a transitory landscape that is neither completely "rural" nor is it "urban" – that their current state is temporary and they feel highly unsettled as a result. Hybridity is visible not only physically through the presence of construction and infrastructure, but also as a state of mind that affects people's values, attitudes and perceptions of the environment. There are practical implications of hybridity on everyday life – from learning and education, material aspirations, consumption, mobility, and also the way environmental responsibility is viewed. Acharya points out rural lifestyles have now transformed through the increasing use of technology, gadgets, mobility and consumption habits, where the rural lifestyles now resemble urban lifestyles much more than ever. This sentiment is widely echoed by most participants; when asked what transformations have taken place in the last five years in the local environment, Supriya, a school teacher near Shivaji farm replies as follows:

P: everything is being modified... Everyone is becoming modern [short laugh].. Previously children used to be fine... Now they have caught the outside air [*bahar ki hava lag gayi hai*]

- Me: and mostly in what ways
- P: no some of it is positive also... Some good things
- Me: in eating and drinking or wearing clothes?
- P: in eating and drinking the smallest of children now know what Chinese food is...
- Me: they know everything? (yes).. Even these children here who come to your school? (yes).. and in wearing clothes etc?
- P: not too much in clothes... Because they are small children... But those who go out to college.. It affects those people... They all use modern clothes..

Quote 2 Supriya: School teacher near Shivaji farm

To explain why villagers in peri-urban areas close to Shivaji farm feel they see themselves neither as "urban" nor as "rural", often stakeholders quote high levels of migration and commuting into Mumbai as the main reason. A large number of people here have either relatives or family members living and working in Mumbai. Links with the city are enhanced by the commuter train network; they are now ensuring high levels of movement of people, goods, and services to and from the city. These linkages have now become so engrained into people's lives, that hybridity itself has become an essential part the rural-urban identity:

We don't choose on the basis of if they are from the town or the village... Only those who pass in the interview get admitted... Even I am from the village... And there are four or five other people from the village... It's nothing like that that they have come only from the town... People buy a bungalow or a flat in the town and that's why they live there... But actually they are all from the villages

Quote 3 Smriti Irani : Director of Engineering college near Shivaji farm

Smriti works as a director in the Engineering college near Shivaji farm. When asked during her interview if most students studying in the college consider themselves to be urban or rural, she provides an answer that sheds some light on the fluidity of these categories. She claims in the quotation above that although people may work, own a house and live in the town, a majority of

them still also own land in their villages of origin. As a result, they often return at regular intervals to visit their family and friends and maintain strong associations with the rural. For these reasons, they do not consider themselves entirely as "rural" or "urban".

THE "IDYLLIC" LANDSCAPE AND RURAL GOOD AND SERVICES

This hybridity within the environment provides a backdrop for agri-tourism, but also generates tensions within agri-tourism which are fundamental to its practice. In many ways, the process of constructing the "rural idyll" as a landscape of imagination is similar to the conservationist perspectives adopted in western agri-tourism discourses, which strive to conserve certain aspects of the environment deemed to be worthy of preserving. In their narratives, stakeholders describe the landscape as "natural", "beautiful", "pure", "healthy", and "peaceful", in a similar way to how Halfacree (1996) and Horton (2008) in their studies explain as "constructing the rural idyll". In Maharashtra's agri-tourism, the stakeholders construct the hybridized rural landscape, making it appear distinct from the urban through a politically charged process. By manipulating the "rural" and "urban", the objective is to make agri-tourism more attractive for urban people. While overtly the construction of the rural idyll appears to solidify the boundaries between the rural and urban, the following analysis reveals that the process of constructing the rural idyll takes place amidst multiple perspectives, perceptions and influences. Therefore, the process cannot be simplified; rather it needs to be understood as a rich and hybridized web of multiple rural-urban interactions.

Figure 22 Examples of agri-tourism publicity images from the MART/ATDC website (source www.agritourism.in)

संस्कृतीचे संवर्धन निसर्गाचे संरक्षण



लोककलेची संस्कृती जपूया, वारसा टिकवूया !

Agri Tourism INDIA Presents
महाराष्ट्राची
**पतंग
जत्रा**

बारामती कृषी पर्यटन, पळशीवाडी

संस्कृतीचे संवर्धन निसर्गाचे संरक्षण



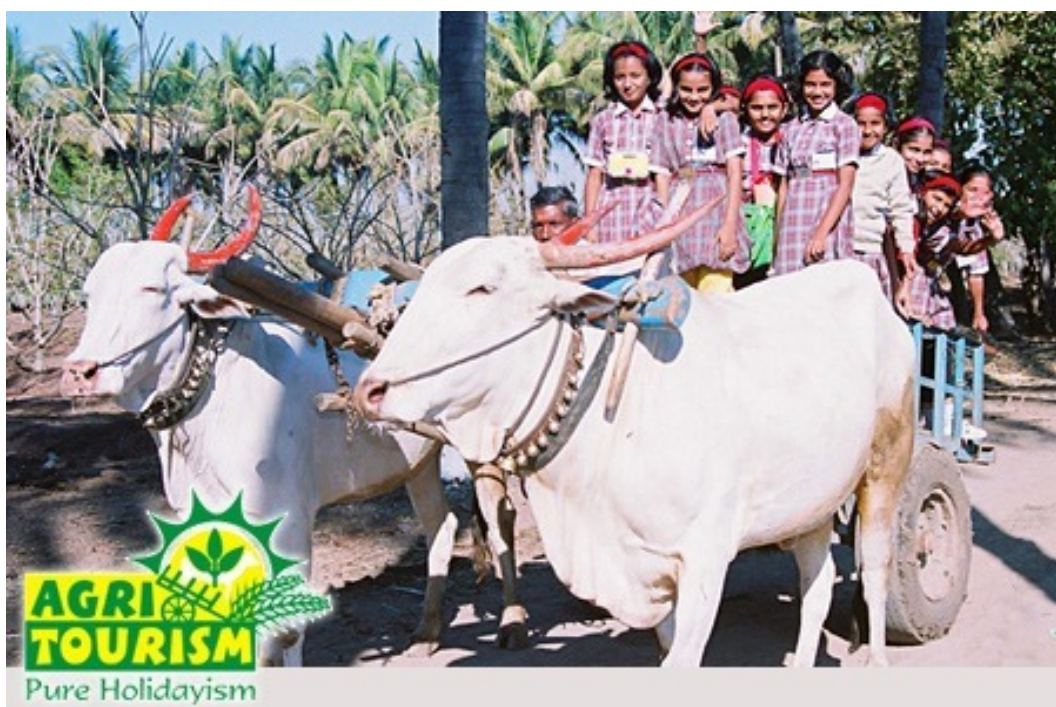
कृतज्ञतेची संस्कृती जपूया, वारसा टिकवूया !

Agri Tourism INDIA Presents
महाराष्ट्राची
**पतंग
जत्रा**

बारामती कृषी पर्यटन, पळशीवाडी



Figure 23 Examples of agri-tourism publicity images from the MART/ATDC website (source www.agritourism.in)



While the construction of the "rural idyll" is highly significant and explicit in agri-tourism, the process of making the countryside appear more attractive is not limited to agri-tourism. Attracting visitors to rural areas for encouraging them to consume rural goods and services (RGS) applies to several other development categories. Highly visible in peri-urban Maharashtra are the images on billboards along the highways, in newspapers, and other advertising media, of life and recreation in the countryside – all portraying rural life as idyllic

– something the affluent mobile urban middle classes increasingly aspire to achieve. The desire to consume the countryside through idyllic rural living is making commuter/second/holiday homes and "farm houses" very popular – a trend that is transforming the social, economic, and ecological landscapes especially within the peri-urban fringes. Although agri-tourism is not significant in terms of scale or impact within the wider context, it provides a good example of how the rising affluence of the middle classes and shifting urban patterns are transforming the nature of consumption around Mumbai and Pune.

The analysis of the agri-tourism narratives that follow have a much wider significance in understanding how neo-liberal markets in South Asia are influencing the re-negotiation of the "rural" and "urban" – processes which play an important part in legitimizing economic development. The key to this analysis is how some individuals (as citizens) are key players in the enactment of the neo-liberal agenda. The analysis needs to operate at different levels in order to expose the complexity and interconnected nature of agri-tourism. It does so by answering key questions around which this section is structured. Firstly, how is the wider rural landscape constructed as idyllic – especially in a context where there is ever increasing presence from industry, infrastructure and construction? Secondly, with the influences of modernization in agriculture, including mechanization, mono-cropping, and chemical use, how is farming constructed as idyllic? Thirdly, at the level of the farm itself, how are the ever increasing urban influences of consumption, comfort and facilities reconciled with the desire to construct the farm as an idyll? Finally and most importantly, affecting all these levels is the overarching question of how people's access to natural resources, their rights and justice are being affected.

NATURE, BEAUTY AND ENVIRONMENT

P: Now in Pune the weather is very hot.. here the weather is really pleasant [*mausam khulla hai*]... the weather is better (it is cooler here).. yes it is cooler here and the air is fresh.. you say about Pune (because of the air and the temperature)..

Me: and what else is better here compared to Pune.. what do you think?

P: If you say compare it to Pune then.. the congestion due to crowds of people in Pune.. the congestion because of vehicles.. it is more peaceful here.. now in Pune even if you stay in the five star hotels there still is the noise from vehicles.. the hot weather.. what it is like here is that it is all very peaceful.. it is also cooler.. that's why people come.. now whoever has money they will come.. but those who don't have money.. the Pune-wallas.. where will they go.. they will go here and there only.. close-by somewhere.. and here.. there is another thing.. at first Mahabaleshwar was very popular.. because at first there was nothing here.. possibly in our district this is the first one.. now big-big people who settle down up there are coming here.. they are rich people.. they all come and stay here.. they like it here..

Quote 4 Chandrashekhar: Employee at Prakriti Farm

Chandrashekhar, a Prakriti farm employee who lives in Bhiwani village approximately one mile away, during his interview outside the farm office explains how the environment around Prakriti farm is idyllic. In the interview extract above he uses adjectives such as "peaceful", "natural", "pleasant", "cooler", and "fresher" to describe the general landscape in the local area. Further, he emphasizes how the rural area is very different from urban Pune city, where a majority of the farms' visitors came from, which he describes as an environment that is: "congested", "crowded", "noisy", "polluted" and "hot". While "idealizing" the rural landscape, Chandrashekhar claims that "at first there was nothing here", hence acknowledging that the landscape in itself cannot attract urban people unless it is developed for tourism. Urban people most often visit Mahabaleshwar, which is a popular hill resort town approximately 20 miles away, but now this area where the farm is located is becoming increasingly popular since agri-tourism has started (and also other developments have taken

place). The key point that emerges here is that in constructing the landscape around Prakriti farm as "idyllic"; Chandrashekhar is acknowledging the dualistic presence of the urban as essential for "value" to be created within the rural landscape. The only way for the landscape to acquire a distinct "rural" identity is by distancing itself from the perceived problems with "urban" life and environments. This in itself is insufficient to attract people – rural places need to be developed to satisfy urban needs in the process of value creation.

AGRICULTURE AS "NATURE"

It's green because as you have seen all over there you can see this greenery ... if you come in the summer... You have visited our website isn't it (yes).. The photos which are on the website... They are all from the summer season so you can find greenery (twelve months a year it is green) the land is very fertile and water is available here in plenty... because we are surrounded from four sides with the water... From this side there is the Kamna river (yes).. And there is a canal over here.. And there are two small streams over here... (yes).. And the dam is also here... (so there is no shortage of water as such)

Quote 5 Sanjiv: owner of Prakriti farm's son

Agri-tourism by definition showcases agriculture, but because in Maharashtra it is facing modernization and acute pressure from rising urban demands for food and resources, its construction as an idyll brings about contradictions. In the quote above, the participant Sanjiv highlights how resources such as water, fertility, and greenery are available in abundance and plenty – a narrative that contributes towards the notion of agriculture as self sufficient, peaceful and hence idyllic. A part of the attraction here, the abundance of water (also the greenery/fertility) is conveyed by Sanjiv as an important feature to "sell" the rural idyll. He pre-empts the urban anxiety around the lack of resources outside the city, consequently he tries to alleviate concerns through a "narrative of plenty". The availability of water is not only

essential for agriculture to be successful and "green", characteristics important for its portrayal as idyllic, but also most importantly the free availability of water is critical to making the tourists comfortable – especially because the visitors want to get away from the urban context where they face water shortages in their everyday life. The associated agricultural infrastructure around water, such as dams and canals, are part of the modernized agricultural landscape, although were never designed to contribute to recreation, but in this narrative are constructed as being a part of the rural idyll and contributing to it. An important aspect therefore emerges: that the manipulation of agriculture as idyllic is not limited by the modernized or hybridized characteristics of the environment.

The following interview extract from a conversation with Mohan Singh, chairman of the agri-tourism cooperative, builds this argument further:

PT It's not like that.. basically..for example... I have a land and I am a well progressed farmer..ok..I have a better chance of doing agri-tourism because I am a progressed farmer.. I want to do new things in the farming...I want to do a technological farming..err.. practices...advanced farming practices...so people will visit more.. since I am a professional farmer I have various crops..

Me there is more to see?

PT more to see..because the basic principle of agri-tourism is that the farmer should have on their farm three basic things... that is things to see on the farm..things to do at the farm...and things to buy at the farm..so.. for more progressive farmers.. it is more likely they will do agri-tourism because...for example.. one acre of traditional crop might give you for example..*Jowar*..crop can give him 30,000 rupees gross income.. but if you consider tourism...that might give 1 lakh rupees...progressive farmers are always looking out for incomes and opportunities..

Quote 6 Mohan Singh: Chairman of agri-tourism cooperative / policymaker

Mohan Singh heads an agri-tourism cooperative that is based in Pune. He is a well known personality within agri-tourism circles in Maharashtra because of his connections with politicians, but also as the head of the largest agri-

tourism cooperative he claims to exert considerable influence over Maharashtra's state government bureaucrats. His viewpoint implies that agri-tourism is most likely to be carried out by farmers, who already have access to capital and are able to modernize. By believing so, however, and in using the term "progressive", he is automatically excluding the majority of farmers who are too small to be able to access capital easily. His (and many other privileged) viewpoints assume that undertaking agri-tourism falls within the remit of farmers who are already elites with influence, wealth and power. Therefore agri-tourism in Maharashtra (within news media and in policy circles) is most commonly associated with development, modernization and entrepreneurship, but not with equity and empowerment.

Mohan Singh's viewpoint is that modernized farming (as opposed to small scale traditional farming) is not necessarily incompatible with agri-tourism. He believes that entrepreneurial farmers, who are more willing to modernize, display a higher capacity to carry out agri-tourism. According to the participant, an affinity towards modernization makes multifunctionality more likely, and therefore presents visitors with a wider array of activities to make agri-tourism richer, both in terms of learning and range of experiences. Specifically, the participant highlights three aspects of the visitor-nature relationship within the consumption of the rural idyll. Firstly, through the act of "seeing", the urban visitor "consumes" the countryside. Thus the rural idyll is constructed through visual manipulation of the environment to satisfy political objectives (such as competitiveness and standardization, which are unpacked in greater detail later). Secondly, through the act of "doing" something, the urban visitor engages with the landscape. Therefore, the ways in which activities are carried out becomes an important tool of enactment of the rural idyll through practices

(which in turn contributes to the evolution of the discourse of agri-tourism, which this study discusses later). And thirdly, the participant points out that the visitors must be able to "buy" things. Therefore, the way that value is assigned to material objects through local meaning construction is an integral part of agri-tourism's "production" and "consumption", and is therefore an important avenue that this analysis unpacks later.

The construction of cultivation (irrespective of whether it is modernized, traditional, organic, or intensive) as idyllic, has consequences of becoming divorced from "reality". The "reality" implied here is a version of the rural landscape which is sympathetic to the needs of the entire rural community, especially to the needs of those groups who are increasingly becoming marginalized, such as small farmers. There is a growing tendency for the rural landscape to be constructed as the rural idyll in a way which prioritizes the needs of urban tourists and the more powerful stakeholders (such as agri-tourism owners). Reality here is not a fixed rigid notion of the rural – rather, it is a changeable hybridized working landscape where social needs are grounded in the transforming physical and ecological local characteristics.

In Prakriti farm cultivation is a central attraction. This is reflected in the architectural/landscape design of the farm itself: small vegetable plots form the backdrops to each of the rooms, where a small private patio overlooks the plot and the farm grows beans, radishes, cauliflowers, cabbages, and other vegetables which the kitchen uses to prepare meals for the visitors. What grows there is determined by the needs of the visitors, as opposed to the crops grown around in the vicinity, which includes sugarcane, *haldi*, ginger and *jowar*. The following quotation from the interview with Aditya, the co-owner of Prakriti farm, highlights the contradictions in how cultivation is seen and valued here:

How farming is carried out... That in front of the dining they [the tourists] sit and watch how flowers and vegetables are grown... In the morning he went for a walk and showed his daughter how vegetables are growing... Where the tomatoes are where the carrots are... And then he asked to purchase a little bit of everything... If you want to give something as a token because it is grown here.. that is fine... That you can give... But it is not to sell in the market... If the children want something they can have it...

Quote 7 Aditya: co-owner of Prakriti Farm

While the cultivated landscape is made an essential part of agri-tourism, here it turns into an object to satisfy the curiosity of the visitors in the form of vegetable plots within the compounds of the farm. Aditya describes how cultivation is a major attraction in the farm for visitors who often use it as an educational tool to teach their children about growing food. Moreover, the vegetables grown are also gifted to the visitors. Visitors to the farm are given a guided tour of what is being grown. The farm therefore becomes a point of interest and opportunity for interaction between the visitors and the hosts. Careful tending to by the employees (who doubled up as gardeners), the availability of tube-well water, and the remote planning/direction from Pune of Laxmi (wife of the owner) – makes all of this possible. While I was initially impressed by the farm's apparent self sufficiency, I noted that the method of growing vegetables is not organic – rather I myself observed artificial fertilizer being sprinkled and insecticides being sprayed. Moreover, the vegetables which are produced are not able to make the farm self sufficient, since most of the supplies are brought in by car by owners from Pune where they live. Here, the food production process is merely caricatured to satisfy the curiosity of visitors.

To summarise, agriculture plays a central role in the construction of the rural idyll in agri-tourism. While there are several (mostly western) studies that adopt a conservationist attitude towards treating the rural as an amenity that must be preserved, in Maharashtra the narratives around agriculture depart

from this dominant agri-tourism perspective. In a context where rapid urbanization is producing changes, agriculture (along with the rural) is hybridized – urban/modern influences are complicating the agrarian landscape. What these quotations show, however, is that the changes in agriculture such as modernization, construction of dams, canals, mono-cropping, do not deter agri-tourism stakeholders from constructing the rural as idyllic – making the landscape more attractive for the sake of attracting urban visitors. Another issue that has a significant impact on the citizenship of stakeholders emerges – the conventional understandings around "sustainability", for example organic methods of farming without pesticides or insecticides, are often unimportant to those undertaking agri-tourism and do not affect the construction of the rural idyll.

CONSERVATION DIMENSIONS OF RURAL IDENTITY

The previous section demonstrates that agri-tourism stakeholders construct the rural idyll within urbanizing landscapes in flexible ways, but equally common are tendencies that view agri-tourism through a conservationist framework. The overarching desire to present the rural as unique and distinct from the urban – with aspects within the environment which are deemed worthy of conservation – involves using several elements associated with agri-tourism to evoking feelings of "nostalgia" or "tradition". Firstly, there are activities that cater to tourist's demands, such as providing food, products, handicrafts, and farm-activities through which rural identity are constructed. Secondly, the physical environment of the farm itself (the landscaping, architecture and decorations) are all carefully designed and managed to reinforce the image of the rural idyll.

The following section analyses how food, traditional dishes, "indigenous" crops, ways of cooking, and attitudes to alcohol consumption are used by participants as part of the enactment of the rural idyll. Moreover, it focuses on how activities such as trekking, traditional decorations, are all used as "authentic" elements to represent the rural. The analysis also examines the social and ecological implications of attitudes within agri-tourism that embrace an inflexible "preservationist" approach.

Attitudes around food are perhaps one of the most important aspects through which participants (owners and workers) convey feelings of nostalgia and tradition. A number of participants, including agri-tourism owners took great pride in describing to me how they serve traditional Maharashtrian vegetarian food to the visiting agri-tourists. They are especially keen to showcase a variety of traditional millets locally referred to as *Nachni* in the Konkan region, which is becoming increasingly rare for farmers to grow and for people to find. With a sense of nostalgia and pride, many rural stakeholders describe its health benefits and superior taste:

In this area we are able to grow only rice and nachni.. you must've seen nachni.. the roti made with it is so tasty.. and it's like a tonic.. in earlier days our little children couldn't get milk in this area.. so we used to give them nachni to eat.. you know we have the tava... we heated the black grain on it.. little by little it was heated.. and it's husk was removed.. after that it was ground in the chakki.. you know the hand-chakki..

Shankar: farmer near Sahyadri farm

It nowadays is increasingly rare for farmers to grow it because of its low productivity and low market demand. The urbanized population are no longer consuming Nachni in everyday life; they rely upon wheat and rice – which they see as the modern symbols of prosperity and progress. Furthermore, a large number of agricultural workers have moved to cities and cheap labour for

farming is not available easily. Those who farm devote their energies into more "productive" and profitable modern crops such as strawberries or sugarcane.

In this context, the owners of the agri-tourism sites, who are farmers themselves, who have grown up in the area, out of a sense of nostalgia promote Nachni to the visitors. For them, Nachni is a symbol of the past. It is a marker of their rural identity, which is eroding away with the onset of modern farming and urbanization. Moreover Nachni is a crop grown in areas of poor soil in drought stricken conditions; therefore promoting this crop to visitors also is functionally advantageous and cost effective, especially since very little water is required to grow it. They see marketing Nachni, one of the unique aspects of traditional food within the Konkan region, to the agri-tourists as the perfect way to reinforce their identity as "rural". As Shankar explains above, not only is the grain itself considered tasty and healthy, but also the process of grinding it in a traditional hand driven stone mill and preparing *Chapatīs* (flat bread) from it evokes emotion and nostalgia. While western perspectives may view the conservation of a traditional crop as a shift towards greater biodiversity (McGehee, 2007) or stronger multifunctionality (Wilson, 2008), in this case, the desire to preserve Nachni comes more from an acute sense of nostalgia for a lifestyle that is being rapidly transformed in the face of urbanization. Local residents feel that they can latch onto an element of the past by promoting and preserving the grain. Through this promotion, residents are expressing a sense of pride for the rural environment, and also a sense of helplessness due to the environmental transformations. Whilst nostalgia plays a part in its conservation, Nachni also becomes for the agri-tourism providers, another unique element through which they are able to build an identity for the agri-tourist experience.

A popular aspect of food which participants (owners) market as an "authentic" rural experience is food cooked over the *Chulha* – a traditional firewood cooker. They claim that food cooked over a wood burning fire is popular because of its unique smoky flavour and superior taste. It is claimed by participants that this is a unique selling point of their agri-tourism business since it is unavailable in the city. In reality, the availability of cooking gas cylinders in remote rural locations is quite unreliable, as they are difficult and expensive to transport. Moreover, with widespread and regular power-cuts, depending upon electricity for cooking is not always a dependable option. On the other hand, firewood is readily available along with dried up *Uplas* (sun dried cakes made from *gobar* or cattle dung), which in some cases, are a more readily available alternative than bottled gas or electricity.

Besides promoting traditional grain varieties and using the traditional way of preparing food cooked over the *Chulha*, rural identity is reinforced by agritourism owners also through the choice of food itself that is consumed. Most agri-tourism owners strongly promote vegetarianism and see it as an important aspect of traditional food in rural Maharashtra. The following quotation from the interview with Vishal Abdullah, secretary at the ATDC agri-tourism cooperative, illustrates some of the reasons behind this trend:

P: If you see Baramati then drinks smoking and non veg... They are not allowed out there... In the Agri tourism centres these three things are not allowed... (hmm).. Even if you get an accommodation package and say you want to stay there... And it's a non-veg package... Even that is not allowed... non-veg is strictly not allowed...

Me: so what is the reason non-veg is not allowed?

P: with non-veg drinking [alcohol] is connected

Me: means those who eat non veg also drink?

P: they will also drink... Means it goes with it anyway... So because of that

Me: so because of drinking the atmosphere there is ruined... if families etc. come...this is a problem? (yes)

Quote 8 Vishal Abdullah: Secretary at ATDC agri-tourism cooperative

Vishal Abdullah implies here that food in agri-tourism needs to be about simplicity. Simplicity is synonymous with a sense of austerity, which he believes should be a characteristic of rural living. Agri-tourism providers generally (barring one or two exceptions) are keen to promote vegetarianism because they see it as "pure", "simple" and "non-indulgent" food. Since most rural poor suffer from poor nutritional standards (Kadiyala et al., 2011) and are unable to afford meat or poultry, vegetarian food is the norm in most rural places. Besides affordability, the majority of people living here are practicing Hindus, and for them, religion restricts their consumption of poultry or eggs on certain days within the week and on festivals.

Vishal Abdullah explains that non-vegetarian food is not encouraged also because of "practical" aspects. It is culturally associated as going hand in hand with the consumption of alcohol, which most participant owners feel leads to annoyance for visiting families or those with children. Within the relatively conservative context of rural Maharashtra, traditionally the consumption of alcohol has been carried out within the private domain by adult men alone. With increasing middle class affluence and changing attitudes, alcohol consumption is generally becoming far more socially acceptable, especially within upwardly mobile urban classes. The perception within agri-tourism is that the "rural" must disassociate with this "urban" indulgence, and that within agri-tourism there is no place for alcohol, not only due to the potential threat from bad behaviour, but also because its consumption will inculcate values that are contrary to the value of austerity that agri-tourism aligns itself with.

While participants explicitly explain how maintaining rural traditions by consuming Nachni, or cooking food over the Chulha, and vegetarianism are important aspects of food consumption, equally important are the implicit utilitarian practical reasons why they choose to emphasize these aspects. In the quotation earlier, Shankar, a farmer in the neighbourhood of Sahyadri farm describes Nachni as the "poor man's food", which was traditionally consumed by poor rural people who could not afford the expensive cereals such as wheat or rice. This explains also why participants are promoting vegetarianism as well: meat, fish and poultry are generally harder to source in remote locations, and therefore the cost of simple vegetarian food is much lower than providing more expensive non-vegetarian food. Therefore, in order to attract the widest clientele, food costs are kept low and vegetarianism is promoted. The lack of electrical power in rural locations also makes refrigeration difficult. Generally, there are logistical (and therefore economic) challenges to providing non-vegetarian food at agri-tourism sites, and therefore "austere" living satisfies multiple objectives and practical problems. While generally most visitors accept this "simplicity", for some upwardly mobile urban middle classes there are contradictions and tensions arising from what they demand and what is made available (which will be discussed in the next section).

Besides food, the manner in which the environment within the farm (and immediately beyond) is manipulated and designed shows a conscious motivation on the part of the stakeholders to reinforce tradition and rural distinctiveness. For example, through the landscape and architecture within the farm and village, tourists are given a flavour of what the "authentic" rural ought to be. The floors and walls within the agri-tourism compound within Shivaji farm are meticulously painted with a brown coloured mixture of cow dung or *gobar*

and mud (called *leepa-poti*); the pathways are carefully painted with traditional coloured patterns; and the decorations include flagstones and patterned parapets, coloured driftwood objects, decorative mill stones, displays of earthen pots, and flower arrangements. These are all ways through which the "traditional rural environment" for the agri-tourism experience is reinforced.

To include in the analysis what constitutes "authentic" or "good taste" is unhelpful as it cannot be unbiased; however, what is more relevant are the motives behind the process adopted by stakeholders to ratify certain elements/aesthetic as "authentic" and as representative of rurality. While the interpretations of what constitutes as "rurality" relies upon varying individual perceptions and site conditions, what is clear is that the experience for the tourist is clearly managed through the way the landscape is designed, pathways are maintained and boundaries (of where visitors may or may not go) are clearly demarcated. Signage is commonplace – it is informative, telling people about species/plants, but also prohibits visitors to "keep out" or "not consume alcohol". Tourists are seldom left to their own devices to discover the environment.

Smaller agri-tourism projects rely upon the wider village environment to produce the "rural" experience for the tourists. Businesses, such as the one that Jaipal and his wife Madhu own, described to me how they take the visitors along a pre-determined path to ensure they are able to see "traditional" village houses and the process of *leepa-poti*:

We provide them with breakfast.. *Poha* or *Upma*.. we serve them Maharashtrian food.. after having eaten breakfast.. they relax a bit.. then he [the husband] takes them along for swimming.. boating... then we do trekking etc.. no first we go for trekking.. [...] that also we purposely take them through the village.. we don't cut that village part (walk through the village).. we make the point that they should see the structure of village or how they paint it with cow dung.. if you want I'll show you.. we show them how people used to live before and still the old houses are there..

no one stays.. it's a different part.. that the houses are there.. so we show them these houses and how the cattle are kept inside it... and suddenly they have some.. *desi* hens etc.. and we cross through the village and go to the river..

Quote 9 Jaipal and wife Madhu: agri-tourism owners near Sahyadri farm

The participants here are describing a "truly authentic rural experience" they provide for urban visitors. This includes breakfast consisting of vegetarian Maharashtrian dishes. Thereafter, because their farm is very small with little to see or do, the owner (husband) takes them for a walk to the lake or to nearby hill top viewpoints. He makes it a point to go through the village, where he lets the tourists not only walk through the village, but also enter the house of one of his relatives – who own a traditionally constructed Konkani hill house with traditional elements such as a semi covered veranda, stone floor, traditional mill stone, mud walls, clay tiled roof, and integrated cow shed. Depending upon the enthusiasm of the visitors, he gives them the opportunity to experience milking the cow for themselves. Moreover, he makes it a point to point out the process of *leepa-poti* if construction or maintenance is being carried out by one of the villagers. By describing to me this experience (and also taking me in person later to experience the walk myself), they convinced me that it is not necessary for a person who wished to carry out agri-tourism, to actually own a lot of land or agriculture. All that is needed is some enthusiasm and imagination.

FUNCTIONALITY, CONSUMPTION AND RESPONSIBILITY

Constructing the "rural" identity as idyllic to evoke nostalgia by emphasizing its distinctly unique characteristics is important for the stakeholders, but this process is not always straightforward. There are many instances when catering to the practical and functional needs of the visitors conflicts with the needs to present an idyllic picture of the environment. In these

instances, agri-tourism providers have to negotiate with the multiple interests. On the one hand, they have to cater for the needs of providing "urban" visitors comfort, cleanliness and facilities, which is important for increasing business prospects and a "positive" image for their future business profitability. On the other hand, however, they are aware that creating a distinct rural identity equally makes good business sense. In this section I will present examples where these conflicts became explicit. Through these narratives, the idea is also to clarify further how rural and urban perceptions and environmental responsibility underpin these decisions in agri-tourism.

In the following interview extract with Sanjiv (son of the co-owner of Prakriti farm) the conflict between managing the needs of visitors, against the image that the farm desires to convey for itself, become apparent:

- P: We did not want to commercialise this place and we haven't kept a swimming pool... Because people sometimes ask why don't you keep a swimming pool..
- Me: so you think the swimming pool is contrary to or conflicting with the ideals of Agri-tourism (yes.. yes).. So what are the ideals of Agri-tourism? If someone asks you to describe the farm what is special about it?
- P: basically what we wanted that people in the city manage to spend some time with their children.. that's why mostly we haven't kept TVs as you have seen (yes).. Only in two rooms we have kept a TV... Because sometimes people come for five or six days want to see the news
- Me: so in some ways peoples' comfort is catered to? (yes).. the other thing is that all the staff here wear a uniform (yes).. Are there any reasons for that?
- P: people can identify the staff easily
- Me: to avoid confusion (yes to avoid confusion)
- P: and it also because they go into the rooms to clean them... if they are not in uniform=
- Me: =for security (for security) and so that there is some professionalism as well?
- P: Yes.. that's why we have a uniform... also their identity is also a little different... They [staff] also like it...

Me: but doesn't it feel a little like this is influence from the city? Because since you are trying to portray a rural image (yes).. So do you think it is compatible with that?

P: there needs to be a uniform because day to day activities become easier (okay.. okay).. Because *dhoti* or pyjama will get spoilt very quickly and they are not practical

Quote 10 Sanjiv: Prakriti farm's co-owner's son

The participant starts with distancing agri-tourism from "commercial tourism" – he agrees that even though "people sometimes ask" for it, providing a swimming pool is contrary to the agri-tourism identity that the farm wants to adopt. While the participant does not make absolutely clear which identity the farm actually wants to adopt, he agrees that giving in and providing everything that tourists' desire (such as a swimming pools and televisions) is not a sensible strategy. He is aware that this amounts to "commercial tourism". Like most other agri-tourism participants, he explicitly and consciously emphasizes that what they are undertaking is "alternate" tourism – in their understanding this is very different from commercial mainstream tourism. In this instance he points out that even though there is demand for it, the farm consciously is not providing a swimming pool. Whilst the participant is keen to display virtuous environmental behaviour by not providing a swimming pool, I am not entirely convinced this is their only motivation. Providing a swimming pool not only means a considerable capital investment, but also departs from the "rural look" that the farm tries to project. Further, it becomes apparent that decisions such as these are made on the basis of improving business prospects, more than any other reason. On the subject of providing televisions, the participant agrees that virtuous behaviour implies encouraging families to spend more time with their children, as opposed to watching television. The final decision is, however, a compromised solution – for those visitors who absolutely cannot do without, and will not come if this facility is not made available – televisions are provided

in two rooms out of ten. The farm therefore chose to reach a solution that is a compromise between being environmentally conscious and giving in to tourist demands.

Prakriti farm also makes another concession. As I observed, this is the only agri-tourism site that requires staff to wear a uniform: trousers and a half sleeved shirt which displays the farm's logo on it. Questioned on why this is the case, especially since wearing a uniform comprising of western clothes for the staff results in a very "urban" and professional look, Sanjiv claims that it makes the identification of staff easier for visitors. It enables visitors to distinguish the staff from the drivers who often accompany the visitors. Also, visitors are able to identify those entering their rooms as genuine staff members, which is important for the confidence of visitors who are generally worried about their security whilst in the rural area. He claims that the staff members feel "a sense of pride" in wearing the uniform, and that the chosen western outfits are more practical and easier to manage, compared to the Indian *Dhoti* or *Pyjama*. What is common to the reasons he lists is that the use of a uniform is primarily designed to make the visitors more comfortable and welcome in the farm. This is done by adapting the farm's environment (within which an important element is how the staff look) to appear more "urban". By consciously adopting clothes which appear "professional" and "smart", the owners are keen to portray an image that aligns with skills, cleanliness and professionalism – qualities which they perceive their "urban" clients are used to and appreciative of.

Even though agri-tourism's practice is characterized by imparting to the rural an idyllic identity, the way stakeholders perceive the "rural" and "urban" exposes unexpected biases. Imparting a rural identity to the peri-urban is a strategy to attract those driven by nostalgia or seeking experiences that align

primarily with agricultural interests, leisure, rural culture, lifestyle and learning. On the other hand, there are motivations associated with familiarity, urban conveniences and comfort, which have to be balanced alongside these primary needs. Understanding how agri-tourism stakeholders (both owners and employees) negotiate and balance these complex motivations is important to identify how they perceive "urban" needs in the first place. This becomes clear in a conversation with Narendra, the co-owner of Prakriti farm. In the following interview extract he makes it clear that even though agri-tourism is located within the "rural", its success relies upon its construction as "rurality", but this cannot be complete without the coexistence of what is perceived to be "urban" attributes such as "skills" and "quality" within its experience.

Me: when you conceived this project..constructed it..were there any difficulties such as difficulties to get materials..cement etc..or labour problems?

S: no no no...the contractor we used..the contractor was from Pune.. let me give you an example...painting contractor.. we didn't employ a local person..because we wanted quality..

Me: so is the local construction quality not good quality then?

S: yes.. you know what it's like... the painting contractor was from Pune... all the painters..they are a private limited company..their experience..their finishing you can see for yourself.. from Pune.. they were here for 1.5 months

Me: so all the labour who came here.. all come from Pune?

S: yes..if you see for example this material..this door..all this is from Pune..the sliding window contractor was from Pune..the skills are mostly within the city only..

Me: the skills are in the city?

S: yes..the locals cannot be so skilled

Quote 11 Narendra: co-owner of Prakriti farm

Narendra makes explicit his desire to make visitors comfortable by ensuring that the buildings are finished to a high standard – needs which he believes (or rather perceives) must be satisfied for the profitability and success

of his business. He reveals his bias of urban preference by conveying that he has greater confidence on urban contractors, as opposed to the skills which are available locally. He believes that urban contractors are able to provide construction quality which is far superior compared to what is locally available. The main reason why he makes this decision is because he pre-judges the needs of urban visitors – that they would prioritize a high quality building with superior materials and finish over a more austere facility, which places greater emphasis on agricultural activities and learning.

While his biases in favour of urban skills can be seen as damaging and unjust to the local community, Narendra is only reflecting wider trends that I came across in other areas. Rural people often aspire towards urban lifestyles, skills, education, living standards – feelings that rural areas are inferior and less developed persist in many walks of life. Several rural stakeholders take it as a given that rural areas will become urbanized – that this is inevitable (and good) for the area. Narendra's claim that urban skills are superior, most likely results from the tendency of skilled people migrating to urban areas as the general norm. The main point that emerges is that even though constructing the "rural idyll" overtly appears to override every other trend, "urban" desires/perceptions act in parallel with "rural" constructions in hybridized and complex ways in the everyday practice of agri-tourism.

Agri-tourism's practice relies upon constructing the rural idyll in an environment that is urbanizing, which no longer is "pristine". To be successful as a business, therefore, the urban visitor's demands of functionality and consumption have to be met through careful management (by the owners and workers) both within and outside the farm. Substantial effort from the agri-tourism stakeholders goes into the careful control of the experience to ensure

that the recipients are satisfied. Again, the preconceptions around what the urban visitors want are important to the attitudes that owners and workers adopt. This becomes explicit in the following two examples. Firstly, a key quality which farmers think the visitors desire is a "clean" and "sanitized" landscape. Secondly, agri-tourism owners/workers also feel that health and safety are very important concerns amongst visitors, who treat the "rural" with unfamiliarity and suspicion.

The owner of Prakriti farm, Narendra, describes the importance of "cleanliness" to the visitors. He concludes that for agri-tourism to be successful, the interactions of visitors with the village environment must be carefully controlled:

- N: cleanliness.. is the main thing (meaning?) in the village the roads etc should be clean..what they say..err.. side..waste water...drainage..sewage.. should be drained properly.. not just left to drain anyhow.. drainage should be improved slightly..also electricity.. needs to be improved [...]
- Me: in the compound everything is very clean..but if someone walks to the village?
- N: yes.. in the village.. if you went to the fields.. there is no problem...if you went here and there.. there is no problem.. this place is separate from the village..I think we are 2.5 km from the village..it is off the village..this Pasarni village.. it is off the Pasarni village..from here the other village starts [...] so we take them..sometimes children are curious..
- Me: yes.. they need some experience.. so be it that it is a slightly controlled experience..so they don't need to experience the village as it is..because this may overcome them..if too much manure is seen or dirt is seen?
- N: absolutely.. that has to be considered..
- Me: should it be a slightly controlled experience?
- N: a little bit yes..they shouldn't feel we have come only to the village.. they should feel good about it..it should be a little different..because if you made huts.. they won't stay there

Quote 12 Narendra: co-owner of Prakriti farm

For Narendra, the experience should not overwhelm tourists – it needs to be carefully "controlled" and make them "feel good". What Narendra hence

describes is that the needs of urban visitors often may not concur with the "reality" of the landscape on offer. Although the owner acknowledges that it is important for visitors to have the freedom to visit the village, according to him, their access must be regulated and controlled. Moreover, he believes, wherever possible, the village should be cleaned up and "sanitized". The owner realizes that the most common way for agri-tourism farms to get business is through word of mouth, and therefore it makes good business sense to ensure that the visitors have a "positive" impression of their agri-tourism experience. If they are to stay within the confines of the agri-tourism farm, they may feel restricted, and may well even feel that the experience is entirely controlled and fake. As a compromise then, when they go outside, they are always guided, and their route is carefully managed to avoid the "dirt". Since this experience is likely to be conveyed to friends and relatives who may be prospective clients – this is therefore vitally important to farm owners.

While managing the impression of the agri-tourism farm, a factor which stands out is how the unfamiliarity of the urban visitors with the rural environment is dealt with by the owners/workers. In the following extract during a conversation with a worker of Sahyadri farm, he conveys how it makes good business sense to keep the visitors safe by minimising the risk from "natural elements" such as insects and snakes.

Me: Have there been any instances of trouble such as bee stings or scorpion bites?

R: here our system.. our system here.. once a week we spray a medicine.. here and there so that no scorpions or snakes come.. you will not find a snake around here.. once a week we spray the place.. due to the smell of the medicine.. here nothing comes.. (means you spray)... yes.. we spray.. for six years we haven't faced any such problem.. because that much risk we have to take.. because when we are doing a business we have to be cautious..

Me: hmm.. okay that's why you spray?

R: yes.. we spray.. once a week..

Me: have you been spraying since the beginning?

R: yes.. since the very beginning.. because if there will be a problem then our name can be ruined..

Quote 13 Rattan: employee of Sahyadri farm

Rattan is revealing here a practice in which the priority is to keep visitors safe by spraying insecticide, as opposed to keeping environmental harm to a minimum. It shows how shortcuts are often taken by the owners, who do not invest time to brief urban visitors properly about the practicalities of rural living. Rather, the easier way out is taken by spraying the compound with insecticide. This illustrates lack of confidence on part of the rural owners to trust the urban visitors with responsible behaviour. The resulting "sanitization" of the environment is a common issue in agri-tourism. Not only does this take the form of spraying with insecticides; it also results in the careful maintenance of paths, burning (as opposed to composting) dead leaves because of the fear of snakes, spending time, effort and money in maintaining lawns, and keeping the landscape neat and tidy – all to carefully manage the agri-tourism experience. This example reinforces that the creation of the rural idyll is a carefully controlled process – the most important aspect of which is the role that attitudes and perceptions of the urban lifestyle play in shaping this process.

5.2. Standardizing agri-tourism

The narratives so far highlight how multiple stakeholder interactions and local constructions of the "rural" and "urban" result in the hybridized practice of agri-tourism in Maharashtra. The analysis focuses on the consumption of rurality within the ecological citizenship framework: examining entitlements responsibilities of stakeholders through their interactions with the environment.

Moreover, the most important environmental influence results from rapid urbanization in this region. Also the analysis illustrates how multiple interpretations of the ideals of sustainable development, affected by interactions with a multitude of environmental factors, give rise to complexity in agri-tourism's local practice – the simplification of which remains difficult and undesirable. While these narratives emphasize the richness and complexity of place identity within several agri-tourism farms, the final section of this chapter attempts to thread the main strands of emerging theory into a convergent discourse of agri-tourism in Maharashtra. Massey (2004) claimed that commonly the local is portrayed as falling victim to the overwhelming forces of globalization – seeing agri-tourism sites simply as the products of wider economic, political and environmental forces is overly simplistic and essentialist. The agency of individuals within agri-tourism sites who are responsible for their place identity plays an important part in shaping the agri-tourism discourse. Just as Massey argues "places are also the moments through which the global is constituted, invented, coordinated, produced" (Massey, 2004, p.11); this concluding section focuses on how the discourse of agri-tourism in Maharashtra (and eventually the global sustainability discourse) is produced through apparently disparate themes. Several different agri-tourism sites, at first generate narratives which are highly rich and varied, but these thread together into a collective agri-tourism discourse. This chapter argues that the construction of rurality as "idyllic", rather than the appreciation of heterogeneous and varied landscape characteristics, is a fundamental feature of the agri-tourism discourse. Homogenizing the landscape has implications of power and representation on wider discourses that include (but go beyond) agri-tourism.

The narratives in this chapter highlight how the values, perspectives and attitudes of individuals play a part in interpreting the global discourses on sustainability and consumption in everyday life. While it is of paramount importance to acknowledge the multiplicity of agri-tourism sites – how these farms contribute to the evolution of a wider agri-tourism discourse in Maharashtra, the mutually co-constitutive process of agri-tourism, relies on the responsible behaviour of stakeholders in the production, consumption and management of rural good and services (RGS). Through the analysis, this chapter tries to advocate the examination of environmental responsibility to be judged from a locally grounded level, i.e. evaluated on the terms of each individual and their specific capacities to make a difference. There are however universalizing trends that emerge – trends that in turn impact on the capacities of individuals to display/hinder environmental responsibility.

A SIMPLIFIED AND UNIFIED DISCOURSE

The power and precision of high-modernist schemes depended not only on bracketing contingency but also on standardizing the subjects of development. Some standardization was implicit even in the noblest goals of the planners. The great majority of them were strongly committed to a more egalitarian society, to meeting the basic needs of its citizens (especially the working class), and to making the amenities of a modern society available to all.

(Scott, 1998, p.345)

In his ground breaking book *"Seeing Like a State"*, James C. Scott speaks about the failure of the modernist state to adequately incorporate flexibility and local nuances in its form of governance, which relies heavily on simplification and standardization of procedures. Even though the motivations are egalitarian, in the end this still results in dissatisfaction and poverty due to the lack of flexibility and sympathy. Within agri-tourism, a similar tendency to achieve standardization through the simplification of the meaning of its discourse across

the state of Maharashtra is highly apparent. Certain features become common to the majority of agri-tourism sites. For example, it is common in agri-tourism to (1) provide "ethnic" vegetarian Maharashtrian dishes – *Poha* and *Upma*, (2) cook food over the Chulha to achieve a distinct smoky charcoal flavour, (3) paint parapets and other landscape elements with *leepa poti* or coating with *gobar*-mud mixture and decorating them with coloured patterns, (4) construct single storey buildings with low visual impact, and (5) use signage, website material and publicity literature incorporating logos of MART or ATDC. These are all examples of standardization, which contribute towards a homogenous identity of agri-tourism across the state of Maharashtra.

Standardization is achieved through agri-tourism's practice, but also its publicity through many different modes: through newspaper articles publicizing agri-tourism, in publicity brochures and websites produced by the ATDC (Agri-tourism Development Corporation – a Pune based agri-tourism cooperative), but also by numerous multiple individual agri-tourism businesses themselves. Moreover, ATDC carries out workshops as part of an extensions programme for "entrepreneurially inclined" farmers to educate them about the meanings and practice of agri-tourism. While these are significant processes through which standardization is being achieved across the state, it is argued that the origin of standardization happens at the level of the grassroots – multiple stakeholders providing agri-tourism feed into the collective body of knowledge that becomes a powerful overarching discourse across the state; and thereafter this becomes a powerful driver of agri-tourisms' practice across Maharashtra.

Standardization, in this case, is an essentially political process. It tries to achieve greater economic profitability by maximising agri-tourism consumption in the pursuit of a neo-liberal capital oriented agenda. A universal understanding

of agri-tourism spreads across to "consumers" as it is essential to construct agri-tourism as a "sustainable" form of tourism. Standardization becomes a way of providing the tourists what they desire universally in agri-tourism – across many different landscapes, farms, locations – the meaning of agri-tourism becomes a constant. The spreading of familiarity reassures the consumer – that if they are undertaking agri-tourism, they know what to expect and what to get for their money. By providing a standard service for agri-tourism, the consumer no longer questions what is being provided. Standardization perpetuates irresponsible aspects of agri-tourism. For example, the spraying of insecticide, inorganically grown vegetables, the sanitization of architecture, and consequent waste of resources, are all behaviours that are unquestioningly adopted within agri-tourism's practice.

The image of the rural as green, pure, clean and beautiful is translated by the owners of Prakriti farm into providing visitors a highly manicured garden/lawn where vegetables and ornamental plants are grown to recreate the "rural idyll" within the boundaries of the agri-tourism farm (see Quote 5). While the vegetables grown became an educational tool and a point of engagement with the urban tourists, what is not questioned is how they are grown. Along with the lawn and the garden, these vegetables require high levels of chemical fertilizer and irrigation from the tube well owned by the farm – they rely upon the ground water pumped up using a tube well. These highly scarce resources are thus unquestioningly diverted away from cultivation and farming activities towards perpetuating an artificial and divorced reality of the rural idyll to benefit the tourists' expectations. Standardizing these practices encourages agri-tourists to consume unquestioningly, thereby incorporating poor practices into wider behaviour. Standardization works very well for publicity. Even though

many agri-tourism sites have unique landscapes, social, or agricultural characteristics, potential consumers feel reassured if they understand what agri-tourism means and what to expect from these diverse locations as a standard experience.

Whilst standardization through greater publicity attracts customers, the process can lead to difficulties within its local practice. Universalising agri-tourism clashes often with the specific local needs of the local community or specific environment characteristics. This chapter argues that the tendency to standardize is visible in the construction of agri-tourism as a "rural idyll". Portrayal as distinct from the urban; with more positive attitudes including weather, freshness, peace, greenery, tradition, culture, uniqueness, purity, health and safety contribute towards an essentialist consumer led bias. Shaped by what the customers desire, as opposed to providing heterogeneous solutions that are inspired from the local characteristics/needs, means that farms are increasingly, through their zeal to conform to the standardized agri-tourism discourse, growing apart of the landscapes, communities and local environment that they formed part of. This is leading to the lack of engagement from the communities around the farm, and also lack of interest from the visitors in the area surrounding the farm itself (an aspect which is covered in greater detail in the following chapter).

One of the effects from the conformity of standardized agri-tourism is the pressures of unrealistic expectations this places on the local community/environment, and often this results in the lack of consultation or engagement with the local community. Villages have increasingly hybridized, and now display ways of life which are highly influenced by the values of "modernism", education and consumerism (see Quote 1). The result is a

mismatch between the hybridized ground reality and the expectation from the standardized agri-tourism discourse. Standardizing sanitation and cleanliness are controlling the access of tourists away from the villages and thus curbing interaction with the villagers (see Quote 10). Another example of how rural communities are left isolated is how the perceived lack of rural construction skills leads the owners of Prakriti farm to bring in labour from Pune, rather than employ local people (see Quote 11).

Just as the conservationist western agri-tourism discourses (McGehee et al., 2007, Tew and Barbieri, 2012) lacked flexibility within a rapidly transforming landscape, by imposing the ideals of an imagined rurality on a working landscape, where the nature of work is itself is transforming (from cultivation to non-cultivation in this case), in this case the end result is a far cry from "sustainable". The walk which Jaipal takes with his visitors will be hard to imagine within a scenario where rapid urbanization has transformed the environment (see Quote 9). While the environment around the farm changes, either the farm becomes an isolated pocket which has bypassed urbanization or the farm cannot continue to provide agri-tourism. Only if the meaning of agri-tourism remains flexible and adaptable to the dynamic environment of Maharashtra's rapidly urbanizing landscape, this form of diversification can creatively survive and provide farmers with realistic multifunctionality options.

Chapter: 6 *Learning and Citizenship in Agri-tourism*

At the core of ecological citizenship is the notion that social learning leads towards greater environmental responsibility (Blackmore, 2009). Liberal societies now incorporate citizenship learning within formal education (Dobson, 2003), and greater community participation in environmental policymaking has increasingly become the norm (Fischer, 2000). This chapter, however, departs from these traditional understandings of citizenship learning⁸⁰ – it argues that in emerging context such as India, informal learning associated with everyday social interactions constitutes an important dimension of environmental responsibility, which has so far received very little attention. The idea is to unpack agri-tourism through learning associated with social capital. As Ecclestone and Field (2003, p.269) put it: networks with high level of trust and reciprocity can influence favourably the transmission of competences, innovative ideas, lessons of experience and information between individuals and organizations. In particular, social capital can provide a mechanism for understanding what factors lead to or hinder the exchange of tacit knowledge and embedded skills, as well as of scarce and valued information."By focusing on the everyday interactions between agri-tourism farm owners, urban visitors, workers and members of the rural community, the chapter aims to unpack how human-human and human-environmental relationships affect (or do not affect) the environmental awareness of agri-tourism stakeholders. In the rapidly urbanizing contexts of emerging countries, there is increasing detachment of the urban middle class from the "rural" environment, and the opportunity offered

⁸⁰ This study focuses on the more informal forms of learning and knowledge transfer which it argues include everyday interactions in agri-tourism; as opposed to traditional forms of learning which are formally administered or managed, such as academic education or community planning participatory workshops.

by agri-tourism for bridging this knowledge gap is quite significant. The production of knowledge through increasing rural-urban interactions, however, is an intensely political process – it is embedded within multi-level power relationships and agencies of stakeholders. Not only is the production of knowledge politically biased at the individual level, but politics also affects the collective discourse of sustainable development in the entire region. In analysing learning interactions within agri-tourism, this chapter tries to understand how the capacities of agri-tourism stakeholders are affected through knowledge production, and consequently how they become empowered or disempowered citizens in the process. This chapter builds upon the answer to the third research question; by focusing on learning and citizenship, it specifically deals with the latter part of the question:

How is environmental sustainability subjectively interpreted by stakeholders (agri-tourism farm owners, employees, urban visitors and the wider rural community) within the locally situated everyday practices of agri-tourism? How do these practices transform ecological citizenship within agri-tourism?

The previous chapter examined how the construction of the rural as an "idyll" was a process central to attracting visitors from the city. To attract tourists, the ordinary landscape must be represented as an "extraordinary" landscape (Urry, 2011), a process which becomes even more contentious in the south, where representations of the rural as "backward", "lagging behind", and "regressive" are common portrayals across policy, media and academic circles alike (for example see GoM, 2013, Prashad, 2014). In binary opposition to the rural, the urban is considered "developed", "progressive" and "modern". In this context, agri-tourism is seen as an opportunity for urban people to come in

contact with rural and agricultural life – learn from its culture, traditions, food-production processes, biodiversity, and way of life – a process which is commonly assumed by academics and policymakers to benefit environmental responsibility via a better understanding of rural culture. This chapter unpacks the connection between environmental responsibility and ecological citizenship by analysing the everyday politics behind two binary forms of knowledge – traditional and modern knowledge. It argues that the tensions between traditional and modern knowledge are at the core of negotiations, and therefore affect the capacities and (dis)empowerment of stakeholders involved.

This chapter first establishes how the "extraordinary" landscape is constructed through "traditional" and "modern" knowledge within agri-tourism. It examines how reductionist constructions of products, crops, culture and religion are used to portray the "traditional". At the same time, agri-tourism is often associated with narratives of becoming "modern" and "progressive" as a way of countering the narratives of rural stagnation. Both these representations are essentialist and problematic, driven by the desire to represent the rural as "interesting" and "extraordinary". How does this separation, therefore, from the "ordinary" everyday life within the rural affect ecological citizenship is the question that this first section tries to answer.

The second section examines how networks of knowledge between the rural and urban are used by farmers to re-define their identity as entrepreneurs (Seuneke et al., 2013). Farmers who own agri-tourist sites occupy an already privileged position: they are generally farmers of higher than average farm size, and have relatively easy access to capital, knowledge, skills and socio-political networks. With relative ease they are able to tap into the urban services such as website and graphic design, in order to help with the identity-shift that

transforms them from family farmers to entrepreneurial professionals. In a sense, agri-tourism serves to reinforce the divides between poorer and richer farmers. What are the implications of this on the capacities of less privileged social groups?

The third section shifts the focus from the owners to the employees – it argues that they are the most important stakeholders in agri-tourism affecting interaction since they bridge the learning gap between the visitors, the wider rural community and the agrarian landscape. In this context, employee's biases play a very important role in shaping the visitors' knowledge of the rural landscape. Since most employees were local farmers themselves, they must undergo a process of formal or informal learning to acquire additional skills (such as language, behaviour, mannerisms and housekeeping) to enable them to serve the visitors. Informal interaction with visitors constitutes an important part of learning for employees. Learning through informal interactions, however, is mediated by the tendency of agri-tourism to be promoted as an entrepreneurial business. This practically results in high levels of emphasis on providing visitors with comforts, facilities, and also presenting the rural as a sanitized construction to increase business profitability, as opposed to focusing on learning, knowledge and environmental awareness. Since employees occupy a strategic space between the rural and urban, this section tries to determine how local and contextual factors affect their capacities to influence interactional learning in agri-tourism.

The fourth and final section evaluates how learning affects citizenship. It discusses how the underlying tendency to essentialise agri-tourism as "traditional" or "modern", by presenting the rural as an extraordinary landscape runs through several aspects of agri-tourism. It summarises how these aspects

appear within the local interactions – how they connect agri-tourism to the wider agendas of capitalism. Specifically, this section summarizes the limiting/facilitating factors that affect the citizenship of stakeholders – in other words, the factors responsible for transforming the capacities of workers, owners and the rural community to undertake environmental responsibility, claim entitlements and participate in decision-making.

6.1. The politics of learning

The tourist gaze is directed to features of the landscape and townscape which separate them off from everyday experience. Such aspects are viewed because they are taken to be in some sense out of the ordinary. The viewing of such tourist sights often involves different forms of social patterning, with a much greater sensitivity to visual elements of landscape or townscape than normally found in everyday life.

(Urry, 2011, p.4)

In agri-tourism the process that transforms the rural into an "extraordinary" landscape relies on the production of knowledge through local politics of representation of elements such as food, crops and cultural traditions by the stakeholders. It is not by coincidence that the rural landscape is represented by stakeholders in a particular manner which appeals to tourists; through social negotiations and the control of specific elements, certain narratives of the landscape become more dominant over others. The responsibility of knowledge production that leads to this "departure from the ordinary" does not lie with the visitor or the host – rather, through multiple local interactions between visitors, owners, employees and villagers, these narratives are absorbed unquestioningly into everyday life. Two discourses dominate agri-tourism narratives in Maharashtra: knowledge production appears to glorify and support "traditional knowledge" and "modernization". While the "traditional" and "modern" appear outwardly to be divergent tendencies, what unites these two is

the desire to create interest in the landscape – in a manner similar to what Urry (2011) describes as directing the tourist gaze away from everyday life. In some ways, agri-tourism is similar to conventional tourism – it is possible to theorize it through a framework of production-consumption relationships. In its practice, stakeholders are socially constructing parts of the landscape into a "product" which can be consumed by those who are visiting agri-tourism. This allows the analysis to question how production and consumption relate to ecological citizenship: by focusing on the constructions of modernization and traditional knowledge production, how are the duties and entitlements of stakeholders towards the environment affected in the process?

IS AGRITOURISM TRADITIONAL?

The construction of certain elements within the agri-tourism landscape as "traditional" is linked to rising levels of consumption, brought about by increased mobility of the middle classes. Moreover, this practice also reinforces the idea that agri-tourism relates to ethical consumption that is deemed by stakeholders to be "sustainable". The previous chapter argued that agri-tourism's standardization and simplification were necessary to make it recognizable and palatable to a wider urban audience. Standardization and simplification drive tourism and thereby make agri-tourism commercially viable. The objective of this analysis is not to simplify the relationship between discourse and local practice; rather it is to try to understand the complexity of factors through which the meaning of "traditional" is artificially negotiated within an increasingly hybridized context. The political manipulation of knowledge through the local consumption of "rural products" such as traditional crops and herbal medicines,

but also the consumption (and learning) associated with rural culture, festivals, religion and ceremonies and other art forms, is the subject of this section.

In agri-tourism, traditional knowledge is advanced through the promotion of particular ***crops, produce and food products*** that are considered indigenous – for example, *Nachni* or Millets⁸¹. So far these varieties have been cultivated only by tribal farmers who are under ever increasing land pressure.

Focusing on agro biodiversity... diversity actually provides food security... Diversity of agriculture provides security against climate change or related challenges... the increasing aridity. Water scarcity and all that... So we organize an exhibition where community based groups from 6 states participated... They are like six dots on the Indian map but they could bring about 1000 varieties or a 1000 varieties of different crops... So there were I think more than 600 rice varieties.. Some drought resistant some shower resistant... Many were aromatic varieties... We only know about basmati.. There are some varieties which actually grow under shade... There are very few varieties like that... There are salinity tolerant varieties... there and our crops with a high mineral... And they are known traditionally to the communities of these properties so I think... And one of the major concerns by these tribal and traditional farmers that till now they are sustaining these because of various local and their own inspirations or their own requirements... there is a requirement that I have a particular function in my family next year so I would think of a certain traditional varieties to feed my guests... So there are few varieties which have a religious or ritualistic significance... So these are the factors which have kept by now but they are thinking there needs to be the market... Market not merely in the Mumbai-Pune major centres... but market consumption... Consumer interest in agriculture in smaller towns...(even and rural areas) rural areas... So how to strengthen the demand for the sensible things which are eco friendly (indigenous varieties) yes... So this agricultural tourism and all those things support this biodiversity conservation aspect of it give in that it is actually presented in an interesting manner... Also the values conveyed... Some of the efforts like cooperatives of farmers in Karnataka called *Samraj Samrudha*.. They have actually achieved quite a lot in terms of modernization understanding what the urban masses actually want they have come up with the diabetic rice..(right) just a red rice which you can find in every state of our country which lead a healthy life... because of this so called green revolution and the dominance of rice and wheat... but now the dieticians and nutrition experts are waking up to the nutritional value of these millets... There is *Jowari*.. there is *Bajra*.. There are *Ragi*..

⁸¹ The previous chapter discussed how *Nachni* or Millets was used to exemplify an rural product as part of the local "authentic" agri-tourism experience.

feeler millet and their offer fantastic nutritional benefits there are nutritional reports available I think they are some exports also which are happening from remote areas... So the challenges are how to take this to our own people...

Virendra: member of a Pune based environmental NGO

Virendra, a member of a Pune based environmental NGO, describes how they organize exhibitions where farmers are invited to (re)introduce indigenous crop varieties that are being lost. He claims their NGO has nearly 600 varieties of rice on record – some are rain storm resistant, drought resistant, salinity tolerant, are aromatic or have other benefits. Moreover, less known cereals such as Rabi and Millets are being revived – that partly this was driven by higher levels of awareness of urban consumers in matters concerning health, environment, biodiversity and ethical consumption. He describes a specific rice variety favoured by diabetics which has become very popular through clever marketing and promotion by a traditional food cooperative. He claims that this rice is available all over the country and is an example of the success that is possible through good entrepreneurial networks and organizational support.

Agri-tourism stakeholders also feel that promoting traditional products, and especially *traditional herbal medicines*, to agri-tourists provides an opportunity for their skills to be valued and for additional income.

We have local herbal remedies too..but you know nowadays no one uses these herbs..first to last people take medicines.. but the medicines have a bad effect on the body and what happens with *Ayurved* is that even though its [effect] might be late.. but it will cure the illness completely from the root.. but people nowadays do it less... trust it less..and we people also give *Ayurvedic* medicine..but with *Ayurvedic* medicine what happens is the [reaction] is late..what people feel nowadays is that the medicine should act instantly..but with [modern] medicine what happens is that one illness is cured but another four diseases crop up..

Milkha: farmer near Sahyadri farm

Milkha, a farmer near Sahyadri farm, describes how he practices Ayurvedic medicine using herbs collected from the forest to treat common illnesses and snake bites. He acquired this knowledge while working as an assistant with an Ayurvedic doctor in his village. Since Sahyadri farm is cut off during the rainy monsoon season for three months, this knowledge is essential for survival in the village. Shankar, a neighbouring strawberry farmer near Sahyadri farm, also claims to be knowledgeable about locally available herbal medicines and he offered a different perspective on how this knowledge is valued. He asserts that traditional Ayurvedic medicines offer a holistic long term cure for illness – but it takes people longer to get better. He believes that while it is possible to alleviate symptoms from diseases in the short term quickly with modern (non herbal) medicine, for a long term cure traditional medicines offer better prospects.

There are numerous other examples of traditional knowledge in agri-tourism. The overarching theme which emerges from these is that owners/employees believe that for future survival traditional knowledge has to integrate better within current market based value chains. As we see in the example cited by Milkha, traditional knowledge can no longer rely on the attributes of "necessity" and "survival". Rather, its value has to emerge from competing with other "modern" products and services. In these changed circumstances, agri-tourism is seen as a good platform for bringing urban people in contact with rural traditional knowledge in order to make products and services associated with it more current and economically sustainable.

Commodification of traditional knowledge does not remain confined to material goods such as produce and medicines. A similar process also applies to ***cultural art forms and traditions***. Cultural practices such as ceremonies

and festivals are seen as the means through which the rural-urban divide can be bridged for learning about "rural culture" in agri-tourism.

P: We show these folk songs.. and err.. the way they worship god.. so this is a local tradition.. so.. that is an opportunity to the artists themselves to perform and err.. earn some money and the same way it's an opportunity to entertain the tourists.. that is part of.. err.. tourism activities we have here.. *Jagaran* and *Bharud*.. the purpose is to bridge the barrier between the rural and cities.. okay.. that's the concept..

Me: what do you mean by the barrier between the rural and cities?

P: suppose.. people from the town visit here.. (yeah) they may not know what *Jagaran* is.. what *Bharud* is.. also about what rural culture is.. (right) the people from the cities they don't know.. even if they know.. but their children don't know.. (okay.. so it's a barrier in terms of knowledge)..yeah.. suppose you are the guest here.. [...] this is an opportunity for your children to see this culture.. so automatically you will bring your children here as a tourist...

Nitin Kumar: Manager at agri-tourism cooperative

Nitin Kumar claims that agri-tourism goes beyond learning about farming – rather, it is about imparting value to rural culture and traditions by exposing visitors to folk songs, dance, prayer and festivals. Nitin highlights a commonly held rural belief that urban people are disconnected from everyday rural life. He claims that the benefit for urban people in getting a firsthand experience of rural culture is to bridge rural and urban knowledge – provide urban people with a taste of rural life through culture. He believed that traditional rural festivals such as *Patang Mahautsav* (Kite festival) can be celebrated, or ceremonies such as *Bail-parao* (bull worship) can become ways of attracting the agri-tourist. Nitin also describes ceremonies as being part of the attraction in agri-tourism. In this quotation, what is particularly important is the assumption that the cultural experiences provide an "authentic" representation of rural life.

In agri-tourism, cultural aspects are often subject to **market influences**, which can be counterproductive. Nitin (in the quotation above) claims that, besides providing a rich learning experience for urban visitors, these cultural

activities also present good opportunities for rural artists to earn money. For artists performing *Bharud* (singing/recital) additional income is an extra benefit, and some may argue that this is possibly a good way to save traditional art forms from dying away. One of the problems, however, is that the decision around the inclusion of an art form is often based upon its appeal to tourists; consequently, "marketability" is prioritized over other positive attributes. In other words, the process of knowledge construction through cultural activities is politically motivated by the need to earn revenue, which results in the interests of certain privileged forms of knowledge being promoted, and those of others with real merit and worthiness being repressed⁸².

Another problem with linking the conservation of culture with commercial market interests is that this induces an element of stage performance and artificiality within the art form itself. This is explained by Virendra, a member of an environmental NGO in Pune during his interview.

Agriculture has culture embedded in it... it is a culture... and it's not only just a few types of food on offer... there are many other things connected with that... there are rituals... so if any agri-tourism enterprise is able to offer these... every village will have a *Powada* singer or a local musician... for villagers it's a part of everyday life to spend evenings singing *taal bhajana*.. singing *bhajan*s of various Maharashtrian saint poets (yes).. it's not an economic activity... it's a value system (yes).. it has altogether a different role... so if you go and make it as a staged activity... the whole.. I think charm is lost... not only the charm is lost but you have actually introduced a very unsustainable value in it...

Virendra: Member of environmental NGO in Pune

Virendra raises the important issue of representation of culture to urban visitors about the **authenticity** of what is represented⁸³. If what is being presented is far removed from the reality of rural life, it tends to lose purpose

⁸² For example, Mosse et al (2002) write about the exclusion of tribal communities in Western India from not only mainstream developmental decision making, but also their culture is systematically repressed (also see Hill et al., 2010, Jackson and Chattopadhyay, 2000).

⁸³ Refer to chapter 3 for further discussion and an analysis of literature around the connections between authenticity, rurality and agri-tourism.

and meaning. Virendra highlights that agri-tourism should not be a "staged performance"; rather, culture should represent everyday life. Art forms such as singing *Bhajans* in India are a part of everyday life. Virendra emphasizes that through the element of spontaneity, *Bhajans* are not only a form of communal prayer, but also a way of capturing the essence of rural problems, life and interactions with nature. They are sung traditionally in households and ceremonies – their main purpose is learning, interaction and cohesion. The participant conveys that by commercially staging this art-form, its "essence" is lost. According to Virendra, by commercialising these activities, the emphasis is on entertainment, rather than education. By shifting the focus away from learning and education, therefore, the link of agri-tourism's practice with environmental responsibility is weakened.

MODERNITY WITHIN AGRI-TOURISM

Me Let me put it this way...there is another point... is it only the farmers who are not doing very well in terms of agriculture doing agri-tourism?

PT It's not like that.. basically..for example... I have a land and I am a well progressed farmer..ok..I have a better chance of doing agri-tourism because I am a progressed farmer.. I want to do new things in farming...I want to do technological farming practices...advanced farming practices...so more people will visit me.. because since I am a professional farmer I have a large variety of crops...

Mohan Singh: Chairman of agri-tourism cooperative / policymaker

One of the main characteristics of agri-tourism in India is how it is considered a part of agricultural modernization, which is starkly different from how it has been theorized in western literature (Wilson, 2007, Nilsson, 2002, Barbieri, 2010). Most western authors see agri-tourism as a part of agricultural multifunctionality, where it signifies a shift from productivist agriculture towards post-productivity. The shift towards agriculture, where the focus is no longer solely on intensive food production, is seen by many as a shift towards higher

sustainability, ethical and organic farming, and an increasing focus on leisure and education (Wilson, 2008, Marsden and Sonnino, 2008, Wilson and Rigg, 2003, Nilsson, 2002, Sonnino, 2004).

Contrastingly, it is common to find the stakeholders describing agri-tourism as an extension of agricultural modernization in Maharashtra. This is because stakeholders see it as a means of progressing beyond the "economic and social stagnation" associated with rural areas. Stakeholders tend to simplify any form of development as positive progress – a way to move beyond rural poverty and decline. To an extent, this mindset is attributable to the way in which the stakeholders perceive urban areas. They are aware that, since the 1990s, the years when India's markets were opened up to neo-liberalism, urban areas have become the focus of development, industrialization and affluence. They view rural areas as "lagging behind"; therefore, agri-tourism is seen as a way of catching up with urban areas. Consequently there is a great deal of emphasis on the business and entrepreneurial transformations of rural farmers. The farmers who align themselves with business ethics and are able to shoulder higher risk and responsibility in diversifying farming activities are seen as self sufficient, "modern" and "progressive". Mohan Singh's narrative in the quote above is typical of how agri-tourism farm owners are viewed by policy makers. It does not give any consideration to the complexities and nuances of agri-tourism's actual practice, for example it does not consider how richer entrepreneurs carrying out agri-tourism may add to the existing social inequalities and injustices. Since this perspective is biased by the motivations of profitability and progress, it becomes an essentialist and simplistic way of seeing agri-tourism's practice.

An important reason why agri-tourism is seen as a "modernizing" process also relates to a much wider social trend emerging in India about the importance given to education generally. One of the major reasons for the rise in affluence of the middle class in India has been the association of development with education. Considerable emphasis is placed on children's education because of the visibility of high end jobs available in the close proximity of urban areas. Initially this was an urban trend; more recently, however peri-urban areas where agri-tourism is located have started also to be affected by this mindset.

So far we have worked only in the fields... that's why we haven't been able to develop very much... we haven't been able to provide our children with what they needed... so that these children have a brighter future through education the future is secured... there is no doubt in that... only through education people's lives can blossom... people's perspective on life changes for the better... and that's the reason the parents want their children to be engineers and doctors and to be educated in good places... and even if you are doing agriculture... You need to be educated and know of the latest knowledge for agriculture to develop well.

Ananth Kumar: school teacher near Prakriti farm

Ananth Kumar, a school teacher near Prakriti farm, speaks about education as being critical to move people out of agriculture from the traditional way of life of "working in the fields" to become "engineers and doctors". He also emphasizes that development and progress also mean modernizing agriculture. He highlights that the future can be prosperous for farmers if they wish to remain in farming, only if they are able to gain the latest available knowledge to be able to modernize farming methods. In practice, this commonly translates into agri-tourism becoming a way of showcasing the latest technologies such as sprinklers, drip irrigation, new tractors, sericulture and mechanised dairy farming. Agri-tourism, therefore, acquires an entirely different meaning in the

context of an emerging southern country. It becomes the means of educating not only urban visitors of the rural way of life, but also a way to spread knowledge about agricultural modernization between other farmers through horizontal networks within the rural areas itself.

The best example is a very well known agri-tourism farm in Maharashtra: Baramati is a one of a kind and highly significant farm not only because of its size and political influence, but also because of its purpose of showcasing agri-tourism to other farmers. It is important therefore to understand the historical context through which Baramati, a 110 acre farm, owned and managed by an agricultural trust, came into existence. The Pawar agricultural trust in Baramati was set up by the Pawar family in the 1960s – one of the richest and most politically influential farming families in Maharashtra (ADTB, 2014). The original purpose of the trust was to coordinate and provide local farmers with irrigation through the construction of percolation tanks⁸⁴ in the drought prone district of Baramati (Singh et al., 2004). Eventually the trust took over 110 acres of land transferred to it from the Pawar family, and its activities included using the land for demonstrating and teaching farmers with the latest agricultural techniques associated with India's Green Revolution. The trust established an agricultural college and grew in its capacity to influence farmers across the entire Maharashtra state by educating and training them. Later the trust established the first so called agri-tourism business under the control of ATDC (Agri-tourism Developmental Corporation) – a cooperative which began to promote agri-tourism across the state with a marketing office located in the city of Pune. ATDC offers agri tourism training and accreditation to farmers undertaking agri-tourism in Maharashtra. Whilst the activity of tourism on farms was prevalent in

⁸⁴ For more information on how percolation tanks work refer to Singh et al 2004

various forms historically, the beginning of the ADTB trust and the setting up of ATDC contributed towards the formalization of these activities, which began to be known as agri-tourism within Maharashtra's media and policy. The activities of these organizations (which includes displaying techniques such as drip-feed irrigation, sericulture and grafting) contributes towards the association of agri-tourism with agricultural modernization and the simplification of its discourse in Maharashtra (refer to chapter 6).

Using agri-tourism to portray farming as "modernized" is problematic on several different levels. Advocating Green Revolution technologies is short sighted and does not pay due attention to the long term sustainability of the environment with respect to externalities and the high environmental cost paid by small farmers⁸⁵. Perhaps even more problematic is that agri-tourism's focus on modernity distracts from the real value of the learning interactions within agri-tourism – that of learning about the complexity and hybridity of everyday life within the rural environment. The portrayal of farms as both "traditional" and "modern" isolates them from the environmental problems facing rural areas generally. The "staged" agri-tourism practiced by these farms makes little reference to the actual environmental problems that farmers were facing beyond the boundaries of these sites – reducing water tables, labour problems, loss of soil fertility and rising input costs.

6.2. Towards entrepreneurship

The perception of the rural as systemically underdeveloped, combines with the de-regulated/devolved neo-liberal governance (described in chapter 3), incentivizes, but also puts greater burden on farmers to take on

⁸⁵ Refer to the more detailed discussions earlier in chapters 3, 4 and 5

entrepreneurship roles. As Ananth Kumar put it: villagers are always conscious that they need to "progress". The awareness of lagging "behind" developmentally filters through all aspects of rural life. There is widespread belief that a systemic lack of education, combined with the constraints of peasant farming (refer to chapter 5), are largely responsible for the lack of impetus and capacity building required to make progress. In this context, those entrepreneurs who break away from this "systemic stagnation" are admired. Entrepreneurial capacity is linked to the existing networks of skills, knowledge and power hierarchies within the social landscape. Richer and more powerful farmers with better access to capital and skills are in a far better position to be able to tap into these resources and diversify farming activities, including agri-tourism. This section therefore examines how the "modernizing" mindset manifests within the realm of the individual farmer in the form of entrepreneurship. It examines how entrepreneurship links with networks within the rural and urban to broaden the capacity of farmers to carry out agri-tourism.

FARM OWNERS AND THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRANSITION

While the farmer's capacity to undertake agri-tourism relates to the networks of knowledge and skills at their disposal, their access to these is highly uneven owing to a number of factors, but most important of all is their hierarchical social position. For the two brothers who own Prakriti farm, this comes not only from their political connections, but also from the employment experience of working in Pune. This experience helped them in being able to access finance by negotiating the red-tape associated with the government sponsored loan which helped to set up their business. Also their working experience is displayed by the efficient running of their business through

management procedures which are well defined and made clear to the employees. They also have considerable influence over the local village governing body called the *Panchayat*, whose permission is necessary in the statutory approval required to construct their agri-tourism business. Rajnath, the *Panchayat Sarpanch* of Bhiwani village near Prakriti farm, explains why the brothers are so powerful.

P: those who have large farms can do it.. who have a large amount of land... Those who have up to two acres or one acre cannot do it... if you have eight or ten acres then you can do it...

Me: yes they can do it because they would also have the knowledge... and also they would have the money

P: they should have the correct processes in place

Me: also you need to have some networks... you need to know people... if you don't know people then how will they come... and like you said that people come after seeing the internet... the small farmer will find it difficult to have the internet... how can they come... so all these things are difficulties?

A: the person who does Prakriti farm... he was highly educated... he is a person from outside [the village]... he has been a manager in a bank in Pune...

Me: he had a job in Pune (yes).. means that he has knowledge of the city...

A: this Sam Sharma⁸⁶... (yes).. He is his friend... He has given him all the information...

Rajnath: farmer near Prakriti farm.

Rajnath explains that the owners of Prakriti farm have the experience of being employed in a bank in Pune, which gives them an edge in terms of education and entrepreneurial skills above other farmers in the area. The reason they were able to experience was because they were sent to the city by their father at a very young age. Owing to the size of land their family owned, their father had been able to afford city-education for the two sons. Approximately 40 years of senior management experience in the city not only helps both the brothers develop their entrepreneurial skills, but also this has

⁸⁶ He is an important politician in Maharashtra's state government (name changed).

brought them in close contact with highly senior politicians and bureaucrats. Their networks have been useful in setting up the agri-tourism farm, but also in ensuring a wide client base for the business. Firstly, their political networks made it easier for the brothers to put together a convincing business case (which included an architectural design) to enable them to effectively access finance from the bank. Secondly, the brothers also enjoy high social standing within the village itself; many of the neighbouring farmers are related to them; moreover they exert influence over the *Panchayat*. The advantage of this was that the *Panchayat* did not object to their design proposal for the project; this had ensured a hassle free planning approval process.

Unlike anyone else in the village, the brothers are able to travel abroad and acquire firsthand knowledge and experience of designing and managing tourism resorts. This has brought fresh ideas into their project and also has given the brothers an edge over their competition. This has been possible also because one of the brothers is retired and hence flexible with time. In his interview Narendra, one of the two brothers who co-owns Prakriti farm, describes this to me.

P: I had planned that I would do something here after leaving the bank.. my daughter lives in America..she got married and went there..so I went there for six months..for relaxing a bit..having left the bank..after that there is an architect called Mr Shiva Singh⁸⁷.. he and I had been talking... about our plans.. he had visited Thailand.. Malaysia.. Singapore.. then later to Hong Kong.. so he had told me that.. you do something.. since you have come from America.. go to Thailand Malaysia Singapore because they are much further ahead of us in terms of tourism..

Me: so you've been to Thailand=

P: =Thailand Malaysia Singapore.. it was good to visit these places.. if one has to do something.. so one should be aware of what is going on elsewhere.. so to see how they have done it I took a lot of photos of these places.

⁸⁷ Name changed

Narendra: co-owner of Prakriti farm

Narendra claims that quite a few of the elements which are present in their farm have resulted from ideas they have acquired while travelling across Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. Their experience of travelling abroad influenced their vision for the farm, but also facilitated their ability to collaborate with the architect who designed the project. Clearly, their exposure to the outside world and experiences of travel were of benefit to their vision for Prakriti farm. The ability of the two brothers to be able to travel abroad, and their skills from past work, experience and education helped them to convert ideas into an operational business. The capacity to carry out agri-tourism therefore relies upon a range of interdependent factors, the most important of which is their hierarchical power position within the socio-political landscape.

The entrepreneurial capacity of farmers crucially relies upon their ability to network across the rural-urban divide and to tap into a range of professional skills within the city. The importance given to the graphics, design and running of websites is perhaps the best example of skills that owners/employees claim are critically important to running agri-tourism. Prakriti farm claims that they received 90% of their business from the internet; clearly for publicity and marketing, websites are considered very high priorities by all the agri-tourism businesses. A common feature in all these agri-tourism farms is that the expertise needed to design, manage and run these websites is always located in the cities of Mumbai, Pune and Satara. Rattan, an employee at Sahyadri farm, during his interview describes how this process of collaboration with urban professionals takes place.

Me: Even though the agri-tourism site is here.. from outside have people... the professionals from the city.. what work have they done here? For

example the posters that have been put here.. so where were these done?

R: that was done in Satara.. from here that is 80 kilometres... Satara..

Me: and the internet you had said there is a website.. who did that?

R: that was in Pune.. there was a person from there.. I told you in the afternoon.. he had called up 2-3 months ago.. he came and saw.. shot a few photographs.. then he made it [the website] himself..

Rattan: employee at Sahyadri farm

Also in the case of Prakriti and Shivaji farms, website and graphic design professionals came into contact with the owners through family relatives who are working and are settled in Pune and Mumbai respectively. What becomes evident here is that the rural-urban linkages of knowledge/skills exchange are vitally important in agri-tourism. Through mediations with these linkages of knowledge exchange, rurality is constructed and this leads to a hybridized conception of agri-tourism. The website graphics or imagery, as a result of these entrepreneurial collaborations, is highly complex in its evolution. It is impossible to pinpoint the origin of this imagery as rural or urban, as it goes through multiple processes of mediation through collaboration by both rural and urban actors. Even though agri-tourism may be located in the rural (or peri-urban) region, it cannot be claimed that its imagery is not influenced by urban ideas as the result of the entrepreneurial process.

The transfer of skill, knowledge and collaborations is not always a rural-urban phenomenon. Rather, it is fairly commonplace to observe rural-rural collaborations. Although there are some exceptions⁸⁸, generally owners/employees are keen to learn from each other and are often inspired by the examples of successful entrepreneurs around them. There are several narratives of learning from other farmers near the area, and also there is

⁸⁸ Jaipal, a small agri-tourism farmer near Sahyadri farm narrated how narrow minded everyone in the village was and how they did not share information about government schemes with each other.

willingness to help others through knowledge and experience sharing⁸⁹. The willingness to network and share knowledge is partly a result of being compelled by the harsh context where the shift towards entrepreneurship is extremely challenging. At the same time, those who have "made it" are highly revered and glorified within the farming community. The importance of networking with other entrepreneurs was often highlighted by the stakeholders.

Have you been to ABC yet? (No) have you met XYZ yet? (No) oh..really.. have you not been to their place yet? Their [agri-tourism project] is very good.. he has been our teacher here.. and he has won so many awards.. *Krishi-bhushan* which is Maharashtra's and India's main farming award.. he is a man who knows A to Z about agriculture... he went to America... after doing an MS in Agri he went to America.. now he has come back here... people like us have learnt from him.. whatever I have learnt about technology and farming I have learnt from him..the other thing is he is a MS Agri from '62... he did an MSc in Food..Science.. Technology..but then he left it all and came back here..he converted barren land into cultivation..and started his *krishi-paryatan* [agri-tourism]

Akshay: farmer near Shivaji farm

Building contacts and networks through "word-of-mouth" is a common way for agri-tourism farms to expand their skills and knowledge⁹⁰. For example Akshay, a farmer near Shivaji farm, highlights how he has benefited from the technical knowledge around modern methods of farming from an entrepreneurial farmer in that area. During the process of recruiting participants I became aware that the rural-rural networks were limited to participants of similar social stature which has consequences on the learning process within these networks – this means that mostly the beneficiaries of this method of knowledge exchange remain the elites within the rural area.

⁸⁹ Participants shared with each other knowledge about governmental subsidies, schemes, agricultural technology, exhibitions, their experiences of bureaucratic processes and red tape.

⁹⁰ Accessing the same networks benefited this research as it allowed participants to be recruited through snowballing (refer to chapter 2).

Although the transformation of farmers into professionals carrying out agri-tourism through entrepreneurial skills is much revered and constructed as desirable for development, in reality the benefits and opportunities are not evenly distributed. Closer analysis reveals that highly unequal hierarchical structures are important inhibiting factors for farmers who are less powerful. Firstly, although the biases of the rural being seen as underdeveloped by policymakers places farmers under ever increasingly pressure to transform, there is little state support to enable them to do so. Secondly, the harsh socio-economic context within which farmers operate makes it difficult for them to access the networks of knowledge. And thirdly, rural farmers who become entrepreneurs do so not only because of their already privileged position, but also because the knowledge exchange that takes place is limited to the networks of farmers of similar social stature.

EMPLOYEES AND SKILLS

It [agri-tourism] didn't take off so well because they were not able to reach out to their clients... they didn't have..either internet presence or they lacked the ability to communicate with the urbanite.. which I feel is probably a huge handicap for the Indian farmer.. that he is not able to converse in English or in Hindi.. and is not bold enough and doesn't err.. you know sort of feels shy to reach out and communicate with the urban client.. so I think if that.. there was a little bit of help in that respect... many of these farmers who've dared to do something different by trying out agri-tourism would be successful because there is plenty of demand..

Arjun Sharma: chair of Pune based environmental NGO

The transition of farms into entrepreneurial businesses has far greater impact on employees than on anyone else. Small farmers lack experience and language skills, which leaves them in a vulnerable position especially since formal training is not mandatory. Moreover, employees are the interface between the wider rural community and the visitors; hence they face the

greatest challenge compared to anyone else. The burden of entrepreneurship favours an environment where the focus is on maximizing profits and providing amenities and comforts for the visitors. Moreover, although formal training is available, owners tend to rely more on informal methods such as in-house training and even interacting with the visitors itself as a way for them to gain experience. The focus on maximizing profit and visitor comforts constrains their learning potential, and is consequently disempowering in relation to their capacity for ecological citizenship.

Agri-tourism employees are expected to be general helpers in the farm, good communicators and also proficient at interacting with the visitors. They have to help out with the cleaning and upkeep of the rooms, the common areas, serve food and work in the garden. Not only are they expected to deal with this range of housekeeping and gardening tasks adeptly, their role of interacting with visitors also means they have to hone skills such as good manners, a good sense of hygiene, good communication skills and the ability to provide information to visitors. While most employees are rural people who have grown up on farms and know the basics of agricultural cultivation and general cleaning, what really stretches their abilities is gaining proficiency with a second set of skills, which relates to interacting with visitors. Consequently, employees who are able to interact with tourists are valued more by the employers. In the interview with Chandrashekhar, an employee at Prakriti farm, it emerges that his work experience in the hospitality industry is considered highly desirable by the farm's owners. He is seen as confident in dealing with urban visitors compared to other employees⁹¹. Therefore the employees who are already

⁹¹ Prakriti farm's location not far from the tourist centres of Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar was advantageous in this respect as many of the villagers around the farm worked in the countless number of hotels in these towns.

trained in hospitality skills face fewer problems starting work in the agri-tourism farms, compared to villagers who have no experience of working outside the village.

P: the owner asked me where I worked..(yes).. what I have done..(yes) then I told him what experience I already had

Me: he liked it that you already had experience?

P: yes.. yes..

Me: that you have already worked in a hotel?

P: that's why the owner agreed for me to come to work here.. then we talked about the wages.. and I also thought that it's very close to my village.. and I don't have any brothers I am alone.. if there is a problem it's only ten-fifteen minutes away.. I can always go home to check.. I don't need a vehicle

Chandrashekar: employee at Prakriti farm

Although formal agri-tourism training is offered by MART/Baramati, since its fee represents a significant monetary investment, the popularity of the course is limited. Most often it is only the owners who attend the course because it is part of the agri-tourism licensing process⁹². In conversations with stakeholders, those who have been on the course feel that it is slightly basic, that it does not compensate for getting first hand experience and that it is a "money-making-racket". Nevertheless, the course has its proponents who describe its usefulness to me.

P: there is a fee... it's a five day training programme... all accommodation... lectures... material... are all included...

Me: So what is the benefit to them from this? Knowledge increases of course but do they also get some certificate?

P: they get the certificate because it's a training centre... but the training also tells them about the meaning of agri-tourism...the farmer doesn't know what is agri-tourism... and then what is taught is how each of them... those who have been farming from before... how they can do agri-tourism on their farms... what is the minimum requirement to start agri tourism... then about marketing... about who is their customer... In

⁹² The license's main advantage the farmer's claimed was permission to use the official MART logo on publicity materials.

the five days of training then the pilot-project of 110 acres in Baramati... you must've seen on the net... they are shown that farm.. they tour the farm and then there is the research centre where they have lectures and training... it belongs to Mohan Singh... it costs 4900 rupees [approximately £55]

Vishal Abdullah: employee at agri-tourism cooperative in Pune

On the other hand, for agri tourism workers interacting with the urban tourists is valued as an important way to improve their knowledge and skills. The stakeholders believe that increased interactions with urban visitors are of greater benefit to the employees in several different ways. Firstly, an overwhelming majority feel that speaking to the visitors helps them to practice their (Hindi and English) language skills. Often the workers employed here are primarily Marathi speakers and, as a result, lack confidence in their communications with tourists, compared to their colleagues who have had urban work experience with higher language skills. Secondly, since education and learning are given a high priority, they feel that interacting with the visitors will be useful for their children's future as it will bring information about career opportunities in the city. There are instances when visitors are interested in employing villagers in the blue-collar sector. Several stakeholders narrate how people they know have been recruited in the city to work as private drivers or domestic help. Often there are unexpected benefits from the interaction resulting directly from the knowledge/skills of the visiting agri-tourists themselves. Jaipal, the owner of an agri tourism farm near Sahyadri, claims that, on one occasion, an engineer who happened to be their guest was able to solve an issue they had struggled with relating to a defect with their plumbing water supply. From these examples of increased interactions between employees and urban visitors, an overall theme emerges from stakeholder narratives. The workers highly value this interactional opportunity and believe

that this is one of the most important benefits of agri-tourism, and that eventually this will lead to greater opportunities for the enhancement of livelihoods.

6.3. The workers: facilitating interaction?

The villagers, owners and employees commonly believe that urban visitors lack any understanding of the rural lifestyle. It was commonplace for people to feel that urban visitors lack awareness of the basics of farming and problems which rural communities are facing. This detachment from the rural, they believe, results in the lack of empathy with rural issues – which eventually filters through into governance in the form of anti-rural policies (refer to Chapter 3). The stakeholders therefore feel that it is desirable to increase rural-urban interactions through agri-tourism – this will not only benefit the understanding of urban visitors, but also learning in the rural community itself. The critical aspect, however, is the level and quality of interaction between urban visitors and the rural community: while workers are in a good position to facilitate this interactional learning, there are several impediments to this. Firstly, the visitors often are ill informed about the objectives of agri-tourism, which inherently make them lack the motivation to learn. Moreover, the culture of entrepreneurship and profitability pervade agri-tourism and the owners are very cautious about the reputation of the business; this results in the tendency to control the movements of the visitors – discouraging them from venturing outside the boundaries of the farm. Moreover, the focus of agri-tourism activities is on visitors' comfort and entertainment, as opposed to learning. Further, the interaction between the visitors and workers is impeded by the inherent power differences between the two stakeholder groups.

And we feel surprised at the tourists who come here... they eat every day at home... but what is *dhaniya* [coriander] they don't even know that.. that this is coriander... they look surprised when we tell them... so we people wonder if these people ever go into the kitchen or not.. leave the question of outside but even in their own homes... everyone has a kitchen... even though you may have someone else cook for you... but even then at some point you would have to go to the kitchen.. so even something as basic as coriander some people don't know.. so for people like these this [agri-tourism] is very important..

Hiralal: employee at Prakriti farm

Most rural stakeholders believe that urban people are very detached from rural life generally; therefore the ***lack of knowledge of visitors about the rural*** is a common problem. Their understanding of the process of food production, agriculture and rural livelihoods is limited – this disconnect, they believe, is the most important reason why urban people are self centred and lack empathy towards rural problems. Logically rural stakeholders feel that increasing interactions between rural and urban people through agri tourism is positive – that it will help others to sympathize with their problems. They believed that, since agri-tourism facilitates this interaction and learning within urban visitors, this can only be beneficial for them.

if you imagine you have always lived in Mumbai.. your child doesn't even know.. how *mirchi* is grown.. how *mooli* is grown.. how *gobhi* is grown.. how is this *sabzi* growing.. if you can tell your children.. that *gajar* is grown underground.. flowers come over the ground.. (they can benefit from learning).. yes.. children can get some learning (that's a benefit) yes.. that's a benefit.. now think you are an NRI who has come from abroad.. they also have less knowledge about farming.. how are fields sown.. how long it takes for them to grow.. how long it takes for it to harvest.. all this knowledge can be gained by them

Chandrashekhar: employee at Prakriti farm

Most employees strongly believe that ***agriculture should be central to agri-tourism learning***. When probed further about why they believe this should be the case, they told me that agri-tourism should reflect the activities which are central to the lives of the rural community. Moreover, since agriculture was their

way of life, it was what they felt most knowledgeable about – it became therefore a node of interaction and a way to connect with the urban visitors. They considered that getting tourists to participate in farming activities will be a good strategy for getting visitors interested in agriculture (and their way of life), but also it will encourage them to make purchases – therefore it is good economic sense to make agriculture central to agri-tourism.

Urban policymakers such as Mohan Singh, the chairman of an agri-tourism cooperative in Pune, offer a slightly different perspective on the centrality of agricultural learning within agri-tourism.

Today's new generation of the tourists..they want to explore new place..and they want to get enriched about that new place.. and they also want to have the experience of fantastic experience of that place..so this is the generation of the tourists.. and that is the reason agri-tourism is giving them the new exploration .. new village exploration...new rural activities.. and they are getting enriched about the agricultural knowledge where how the food comes.. how.. whatever food we are eating how it is grown at the farm level..so that knowledge enrichment knowledge is happening there..and also they are experiencing .. you know .. the village.. authentic culture and experience..

Mohan Singh claims that visitors have a natural sense of curiosity and want an experience that is alternative to mainstream tourism. They are seeking an experience that appeals to their sense of adventure – an alternative form of tourism, since the conventional tourism experiences no longer satisfies their needs. Learning about rural culture, farming and village life represents for them a totally new and different experience and Mohan Singh believes that this is a very important factor which drives agri-tourism in Maharashtra. While this is an interesting perspective, through interviews with other stakeholders and also from personal observations, certainly the "sense of curiosity" does not appear to be the single driving force for agri-tourism. Although it may be one of the

contributing factors, the actual situation appears to be far more complex and heterogeneous.

Agricultural learning is important for increasing environmental awareness across both rural and urban agri-tourism stakeholders, and often it is formally administered through specific activities, tours and exhibitions. Very often agri-tourists include students from schools or colleges, for whom the agri-tourism experience is part of the curriculum. School children frequent agri-tourism sites as part of a supervised group on a daytime excursion. In other instances, urban visitors are led by agri-tourism employees on a tour to see the farming, crops, cattle, horticulture, or exhibitions in the farm.

What happens is that we ask one person [employee] to escort them... So then that person tells them [visitors] everything... Also we believe that it is better because he can explain things comprehensively... And because there is interaction with him... then the visitors can also ask questions... Whereas if we had only displayed information... questions that a few people ask about how many days it takes to grow things... and what all is used to grow them... how seeds are planted... people ask these kind of questions... do you plant seeds or buy saplings... So they are slightly inquisitive... although it depends on the individual if they are inquisitive... it's easier to provide them with this information directly

Sanjiv: son of the co owner of Prakriti farm

Sanjiv describes how they prefer a member of staff to give a guided tour to visitors as this encourages interactions with the staff. In reality, however, the interactions with staff are limited. The staff-members show the visitors generally only within the compound what is growing – a tour which feels like it is not spontaneous, but well rehearsed. While these are worthwhile activities, commonly stakeholders assume that agricultural learning is the same as learning about the rural lifestyle – a distinction which, this chapter argues, falls well short of learning about rural lifestyles with a view towards advancing environmental responsibility and citizenship. Often agricultural learning is highly

doctored to suit the needs of the urban visitors, as opposed to providing a wider understanding of the problems which rural communities are facing. This is especially true in the Mumbai-Pune peri-urban region, where the experience of agriculture within agri-tourism farms provides the visitors very little resemblance with the changing realities of hybridizing rural agriculture and livelihoods outside the farm. On the other hand, the informal interactions between the rural community and urban visitors are far more likely to benefit learning by giving visitors a more realistic experience of the rural.

The employees of the agri-tourism sites occupy an important role in facilitating the interactions between the visitors and the wider village community. For the visitors the employees are the face of the farm, and the people they interact with the most. Almost all the employees live in the nearby villages; therefore, they can easily assume the role of representatives of the entire rural community. In Prakriti farm if a visitor wants to visit outside the farm, it is the duty of one of the employees to accompany them. It is therefore the employees' responsibility to be informed about controlling the interaction of being briefed by the owners about where to take the visitors. Mostly this includes farms or dairy visits to the nearby relative's farms, who are known to the owners, but also the local village attractions in the neighbourhood including the canal, the river, the temple and the dam – places which are assumed will satisfy the curiosity of most visitors. The village is actively avoided during these trips. The reluctance to encourage the visitors from interacting with the villagers is due to a number of reasons which are discussed next.

Me: Have you ever interacted with them, or spoken to them ever?

P: no I haven't... They don't talk... They just come and go... It's not really my business...

Me: they come from there only and then leave... Because look... One of the objectives of agri-tourism is that people who are coming from the cities... They get some knowledge about what happens in the village... What are people's problems... What problems farmer's face... And how is food produced.. But do you think these objectives are met here or not?

P: absolutely not... they just come... they sleep... eat...and go away

Me: they sleep they rest and then they go (and they go away)[laughs]

P: they just come sightseeing and then they go away... They are not really interested in how people are farming

Kapil: farmer near Prakriti farm

I had told you isn't it that 25% people are there who have an interest that they want to see a proper cow shed milking and so on.. So they go outside... Like I told you my uncle etc. They are there in the village.. So we take them there.. Some people come who want to trek through the fields... So we send one of our people with them... they go with them.. And sometimes some people want to try working in the fields themselves.. we have had a few people like that in the last two years... they were interested in going themselves in the mud and working...

Sanjiv: Prakriti farm's co owner's son

The **level of motivation of urban visitors to learn** is an important factor in how the rural community views the visitors in the quotation above. On the one hand, Sanjiv describes some exceptional visitors who are interested in learning about life outside the boundaries of the farm. Far more typical, however, is the response which Kapil provides: "they just come, they sleep, eat and go away". The visitors seldom came to the village to interact with them. Their main objective for visiting agri-tourism, they feel, is sightseeing, or relaxing – but they are hardly ever motivated to learn about farming, agri-tourism or about their lives – or even walk into the village. There are two main reasons for this, both of which result from the overarching desire of entrepreneurial success. Firstly, owing to the strong desire for owners to ensure that the reputation of their business remains good, they did not want to risk exposing the visitors to negative experiences outside the farm. Consequently, they actively and covertly discourage interaction. Secondly, owing to a strong desire for owners to ensure

that visitors "enjoy" their experience, they actively focus on making the visitors comfortable and maximising services and amenities on offer to them.

One of the reasons why visitors are ***discouraged from interacting with the rural community*** is that owners want to control their movements and experiences whilst carrying out agri-tourism. This is accomplished both through explicit discouragement, and through covert processes which are built into the design and management of agri-tourism.

Me: okay.. so your privacy and security is very important..even security is important..I have seen that there are two dogs and the gate is also very large..so can it happen that...the tourists who have come..they need to experience village life as well..don't they feel slightly cut off from the village?

S: if you think... even though farming is there in other places as well.. the car does not go everywhere.. cars can only go along the main road.. but inside where there are farms the roads are very narrow..you have to walk.. therefore...for adults it's possible to go and look at the farms...but for children won't enjoy it much..but you can see it all inside within our compound.. we have planted different crops..which we consume here...for example we have spinach..cauliflowers..

Me: so mostly the visitors remain within the compound?

S: yes, they stay within the compound..because they can see more here [...]

Me: so although they may go out within the compound there is plenty to see?

S: within our compound we have mostly everything..there are chillies..tomatoes.. whatever you want to see..the sweet dishes we cook..the carrots for those grow here.. we make milky-halwa.. the milk is also from here.. we make beet which also grows here..we use cucumbers too.. which also grow here..the city people who come here..the children etc..there is plenty for them to see inside [the compound]..they are different types of flowers..there are plenty of flowers here..we have ordered different type of plants here.. ficus.. we've specially ordered after surveying our soil conditions..the ficus has come all the way from Andhra [Pradesh].. and also mango and coconut..we ordered those from Tapoli.. all the plants are from different places

Narendra: co owner of Prakriti farm

Firstly, urban visitors are concerned about their own safety while they are visiting the rural areas and this is exploited in a number of ways. The relative unawareness of urban visitors of life within the rural areas, media reports of

robberies and crime, but also the widening disparities between social classes are factors responsible for making visitors' insecure about safety. This feeling is covertly exaggerated through the design and management of the agri-tourism farm. In Prakriti farm, for example, there is a tall perimeter fence and forbidding gates to protect the farm. The gates are locked during the night and two guard dogs patrol the compound. During the day the dogs are positioned prominently near the entrance to maximise their visual effect of deterrence. Moreover, visitors who do not have a reservation to stay overnight are actively discouraged by the management from entering the compound – the restaurant's use is restricted to overnight visitors only and those who are not residing are not allowed to use it. These measures ensure that visitors feel that their security concerns were being well catered for – the idea is to give the visitors an impression that this business (compared to other businesses) has taken their security very seriously. By focusing on the security concerns of visitors and erecting artificial barriers, the distrust between the rural and urban people is enhanced.

In trying to discourage outside interactions, Narendra also actively lists out the number of crops and plants which have been planted within the compound for the benefit of visitors. While the number of plants grown is large, the varieties do not reflect the trends of cultivation within the region. The emphasis is on exotic or ornamental plants, which have been ordered from far away, and the owners feel will impress those arriving here. Since visitors are reasonably unaware of the environmental consequences of growing alien species (for example, the high levels of irrigation and fertilizers required, or the manpower that goes into tending ornamental plants), the use of this form of landscaping is not questioned by them. As a result, the space created within the agri-tourism

farm starkly contrasts with the landscape outside and reflects little of life outside the compound. The choices made in choosing what to plant are based on functional aesthetics, rather than environmentally beneficial species that increase awareness and learning.

In the quotation above, Narendra employs excuses such as "the children won't enjoy it" or that "the roads are narrow you will have to walk" to encourage the visitors to stay within the compound. Stereotypes are employed in assigning characteristics to the visitors. It is assumed that most visitors will be family members with children, that children will not enjoy the activities associated with village interactions, and further that all visitors who come do not enjoy walking. These assumptions highlight that the owners are not concerned with inducing a sense of environmental responsibility; rather they tend to accept the general lack of concern of the middle-classes towards the rural environment. For example, parents are not being encouraged to expose their children to the rural environment. Moreover, the middle classes who have recently become affluent and are obsessed with their newly acquired cars are not being discouraged from driving everywhere. Farmers, in short, tend to focus on the comfort of the visitors and adopt an attitude which accepts the status quo.

The owners and employees ***focus on the comfort of the visitors*** as a priority during their stay. To this end the owners are creative in ensuring that the employees receive comfort focused training from elsewhere.

Me: Have you personally trained them or did you send them to NABARD or MART for training?

S: no..in Mahabaleshwar.. our relative who owns a hotel had come.. he had showed them how beds are made and so on... that in itself is a skill... how it must be correctly put.. because when people go into the room they must feel it is freshly made..

Me: so is comfort important?

S: they should feel comfortable.. this is my first experience

Me: and what about how to speak to people from outside?

S: no.. they have learnt that now..the good mornings.. byes etc.. that while passing by they should be wishing the guests.. and our staff is generally good.. no one has left us since we started

Narendra: co owner of Prakriti farm

Narendra, the co-owner of Prakriti farm, explains how important it is for workers to care for the comfort of the visitors – staff training therefore focuses on achieving this. Besides learning, the basic housekeeping skills, and ensuring they have good manners, the workers also are adequately trained on how to answer basic questions such as "what is growing in the kitchen garden" or "what are the local specialities of food available". However, when it comes to advocating good practice and environmental responsibility, employees lack awareness and training. For example, when they are showing the visitors plants which are growing, they do not make a distinction between organically and non-organically planted crops. They also do not make any distinction between commercially grown crops and traditional varieties. In disposing of waste, they are not particularly concerned about recycling or responsible waste management. To a large extent, this is due to a lack of management initiative and training. The emphasis on carrying out their duties of giving visitors information about agriculture within the compound and catering to their comforts/functional needs leaves very little time for staff to encourage tourists to interact with the rural community.

The difference in power between the visitors and employees is another obstacle that affects interaction and learning between the visitors, employees and the rural community. The stark difference in affluence and status between the visitors and employees/rural community brings about inherent biases to the fore.

Me: For the local communities.. what are the advantages for them from agri-tourism.. of course there is income from the employment.. (yes).. other than that what is the advantage?

P: so far nothing much.. but in the future the people who come from the city will be able to educate them.. if a large number of groups [of visitors] come.. then what is missing here is.. that they will train these people.. the first thing.. cleanliness... how to stay here.. how to speak.. how to cover food.. the importance of education.. if the people from the city come and tell them.. then I think this will be very good.. so all these things will be a plus for them.. otherwise the kids here they are educated and they settle here only.. after seventh or eighth [standard] they are not learning.. they just do farming..

Madhu: co owner of agri-tourism site near Sahyadri farm

Madhu, the co owner of an agri-tourism site near Sahyadri farm, describes to me how urban people and owners perceive the rural community. The overarching attitude is to homogenize the rural as "underdeveloped" – as a category which is trivialized by its need to change and develop. She focuses on the standards of cleanliness, hygiene and education within the local community. In claiming that these need transformation, she is implying that they need to come up to "urban standards". In constructing the rural as "underdeveloped" the participant is pushing the burden of change far more significantly onto the rural community. This implies that attitudes and behaviour must be adapted to meet the standards expected by urban visitors – that through changing how they behave speak and conduct themselves; the needs of urban people are prioritised. The focus here is on meeting the comfort needs of urban visitors. By prioritizing this, an additional objective is achieved: to ensure that the satisfaction of the customers is met, especially since they were likely to share their experiences and generate publicity for the business. Adopting an attitude where the urban visitors are part of an elevated vantage has unintended consequences. The value of learning about aspects of rural life, which may possibly benefit environmental awareness are also reduced and trivialized. As a

result, the bias of an elevated power position which visitors/owners subscribe to hinders the process of interaction and learning in agri-tourism.

BUILDING TRUST

One of the most common comment from rural residents is "***why do they [the visitors] never come to the village?***" As mentioned, the reasons for this is that agri-tourism farm owners do very little to encourage interaction between the urban visitors and the rural community. Moreover, the visitors themselves often lack the motivation to learn and interact. At the heart of this is a lack of trust between various agri-tourism stakeholders, which can be associated with the rural-urban detachment that has come to characterize the entire region. The context of neo-liberal affluence and urbanization exacerbates the lack of trust between rural and urban communities. There is a high level of fear in the imagination of urban tourists, who are influenced by media stories about rising crime in rural areas (Majumder, 2012, Bhalla, 2014), and are consequently discouraged from venturing outside.

The lack of trust felt by the rural community in turn, is to a large extent due to the lack of engagement and exclusion from the agri-tourism business and also a lack of understanding about what agri-tourism is about. Whilst the villagers are curious about Prakriti farm, they have very limited access to information about the running of the place. With the exception of those employees who work in the farm, and with whom they are already acquainted, they feel the place resembles a fortress and it is intimidating for them to walk past it. Moreover, the farm adopts a policy of opening its restaurant only to the

guests living there, which makes it extremely exclusionary and perpetuates the existing class divides⁹³.

To a large extent, the lack of knowledge about what agri-tourism is about within the rural community leads to **concerns about the environmental impact of tourism** and its effects on the village. When villagers are asked "can agri-tourism benefit or cause harm to the environment", this resulted in a wide range of responses. The rural community is apprehensive of tourists generally, especially since they are already facing harassment from visitors which is highly disruptive to agriculture and to everyday life. For example, a shopkeeper near Prakriti farm complained about the increasing influx of tourists who undertake paragliding from the nearby hill-station of Panchgani.

Me: They were saying that from above they come by parachute from Panchgani... but what happens if that field is damaged?

P: that does happen sometimes...

Me: and if there are any animals they may feel scared?

P: once they came and an ox fell... And then they did not even pay any compensation... They just run away but they were prepared because they had come from outside...

Me: because they are people from outside then they don't have that much knowledge or understanding about how to behave?

P: it's not their fault also... But the person who arranges the paragliding... They should be aware of what to do and what not to do... they should be guiding them... But just as long as they get their money... It doesn't matter who suffers... instead they behave like gangsters

Siddharth: shopkeeper near Prakriti farm

This apprehension around the influx of rural tourists generally speaks about the wider mindset of the rural community and the reasons why trusting tourists is not easy for them. The next example (from the interview with Arjun Sharma, chair person of a Pune based NGO) goes a long way towards

⁹³ In one instance I was asked by a village participant how much a cup of tea costs in the agri-tourism farm.

explaining the farmer's mindset when tourists are allowed access over cultivated farmland.

Some concepts in the west like u-pick farms.. where a family lands up at a farm and the farmer says you pick all you can just pay an entry fee of ten dollars.. they generally have a good time in the farm.. they are given a free hand.. I think.. in India this might not work so well [smirks].. you know when you have urban families visiting farms.. yes.. some of them may have some farming experience or some sensitivity towards farmers and farming.. where they would watch where they would step.. they would not destroy things... or just cut or just pluck fruits before they are ready.. just basically create nuisance for the farmers.. yes.. there is a danger of that happening.. so the farmer has to be very careful which areas he can define areas where the visitors are given a complete free hand.. and then define the areas where he's doing his serious production it doesn't let the tourists trample on the crops...this I'm saying for agri-tourism enterprises which are of a fairly large scale.. for small scale family size enterprises this problem will not occur because the farmer I would expect would accompany the visitors and guide them through the farm.. and every now and then give them instructions politely you know.. don't step on this.. don't pluck this.. don't break that.. so.. when the scale increases that is when you start having these side effects.. that you are actually damaging more in the farm than the fee that you paid to the guy

Arjun Sharma: chair of Pune based environmental NGO

The similarity between the two examples is the concern around tourism impact due to the lack of sensitivity from the tourists towards the farming processes. There is lack of empathy for farmers which results from ignorance, but also critically from the poor management displayed by the owners of the tourism activity. In both examples, it may be argued that a greater onus of responsibility lies with the owners, who are in a better position compared to employees (or villagers), with respect to awareness/knowledge about rural processes and farming welfare. While the tourists are not entirely blameless, the lack of briefing from the owners/facilitators makes the problems worse.

It can be argued that rapid development (and the consequent rise of tourism activities) leads to a regulation vacuum which is causing a lack of responsibility for owners and tourists. This may be the case as many of these

activities are resulting from the rapid rise in affluence of India's middle classes and the growing popularity of activities such as paragliding and strawberry picking (as the second example describes). While tourism activities have diversified rapidly, the legal and social etiquettes have been unable to cope. On the other hand, it may be argued that environmental responsibility and virtuous behaviour by tourists is beyond the realm of regulations and legal enforcement. The onus to behave virtuously lies with individuals themselves (Dobson, 2003). The question which Arjun Sharma raises about the concept of u-pick farms not working in India so well because of the endemic social attitudes of people is a relevant one. While western tourism activities and concepts are adopted within India by an upwardly mobile middle class, the question arises whether social learning has been able to advance at the same pace as the development. The problem with rapid economic development is that whilst the capacities to cause environmental harm are increasing rapidly, the learning about environmental responsibility lags behind.

It will be wrong to make a claim of homogenised attitudes of rural communities towards tourism. While rural stakeholders raise a number of concerns about agri-tourism being practiced close to the village, most also feel that this is a positive development for the local economy as this will increase employment prospects. Rural stakeholders have mixed feelings and reservations around some aspects of the potentially increased interactions with urban visitors. Pawan, an employee of the pumping station near Shivaji farm, highlights the main concerns which are representative of conversations generally with several other villagers.

Me: Here the people are simple.. their ways of dressing up and speaking or living is different... those from the city have cars... money... Their ways of speaking are different... Can there be any clash because of this?

- P: yes it can... The balance between the two is definitely harmed... For people living in rural areas... Their ways of living their culture are different from the educated... That's why there is always a gap between the two...
- Me: so do you think that the rural people have some advantage or disadvantage
- P: there is advantage but... They don't meet so much... they should stay together... If this happens then they will assimilate
- Me: so what will be the advantage from meeting each other?
- P: they will also benefit and progress...their attitudes and thinking will change...
- Me: and but can there be also harm like... cars have music... And also they have bad habits like alcohol.. So can their habits also get spoilt a little?
- P: yes they do get spoilt... there are both harm and benefits... Those people who live in the rural areas... They are generally away from the bad habits but they also get these addictions... this happens
- Me: but nowadays there is TV... there is internet... there are mobile phones... So do you think that this contact will make them such a lot of difference?
- P: not that much difference... But mostly it depends upon the type of people they are... some people are more prone to getting bad habits anyway... along with good things they also assimilate the bad things

Pawan: pumping station employee near Shivaji farm

According to Pawan, every aspect of the relationships and interactions between the rural and urban people is affected by the stark difference in education and culture between the two groups. Subsequently there are tensions in the interactions between them. He claims that the "balance between the two is definitely harmed"; Pawan indicates a sense of nervousness in what may result from the interactions, which he sees now as an inevitable part of the transition. He acknowledges that a "mixed effect" may emerge from the interactions. There is also recognition that, while agri-tourism increases rural exposure to the urban way of life, this is only a small part of much wider systemic changes which are resulting from urbanization and leading towards hybrid ways of life within the rural. When Pawan says "they don't meet so much" he indicates that there is insufficient interaction between the rural and urban. In

saying so, he indicates acceptance of the inevitability of urbanization, and the fact that there will be benefits, but harms are also possible. Further, by shifting the blame of bad habits onto the "type of people they are", he is attributing the shift in behaviour to individual agency, rather than wider structures and policy problems. In other words, by blaming individuals the wider consequences of urbanization are trivialized – and, in this way, the transition of urbanization becomes easier to accept.

6.4. Learning and citizenship

P: For me people who come here have a curiosity about the farmer... about what they are doing... they want to learn... about why it is called agri-tourism... the government understands it in this way... the visitors should get an understanding about how farmers are farming... by seeing what the farmers are doing they are gaining some satisfaction

Me: so by doing this will their mentality change? And will they think a little bit more about the farmers?

P: yes they will think about all the troubles that the farmers are going through... that will come naturally... people who are intelligent will understand this

Mahesh: farmer near Prakriti farm

The connection between learning and environmental responsibility in agri-tourism is fundamental in examining how the objectives of wider sustainable development are played out in the everyday life of individuals. In the rural south in Maharashtra, the modes of learning are fundamentally different from the north: formalized learning through schools and universities, media, internet, television and advertising largely play a lesser important role as compared to informal learning through everyday life and interactions. A large proportion of the rural population in India (and much of the global south) is engaged in small and marginal farming. To these populations, formal learning and modern methods of education (with the exception of a few areas) remain largely

unavailable. Social and individual learning relating to environmental concerns in the rural Maharashtra must therefore fundamentally shift focus towards the potential of everyday interactions between various social and community groups across the rural and urban divides.

In the Mumbai Pune city regions, owing to policies which favour industrialization and non-cultivation employment, rapid urbanization, infrastructure development and land-use transformations are resulting in a dynamic landscape subject to rapid transformations (as discussed in Chapter 3). Moreover, the agricultural sector is declining due to challenging conditions of the agrarian environment, combined with the neo-liberal market transformations that are inducing livelihood stress (see Chapters 3 and 4). Consequently, multifunctional agriculture and agri-tourism are gaining popularity, not only as the result of agrarian livelihoods stress, but also due to the entrepreneurial pressure on individual farmers to increase agricultural income to remain in farming. While these transformations have been rapid (especially since the 1990s, when India's markets were neo-liberalized), the same cannot be said for both regulations and social learning, which are crucial for shaping attitudes of people towards the environment but are severely lagging behind in multiple ways. Agri-tourism is no exception – there is no statutory guidance or policies to regulate the behaviour of tourists in rural areas. Moreover, because of the rapid evolution of agri-tourism's discourse within the state, farmers, employees and urban visitors are all grappling with social norms which normally regulate social behaviour and inculcate self-regulation, norms which are already established in older industries and tourism activities.

Owing to rapid urbanization and uneven economic development, the divides of empathy and understanding between rural and urban people, and

also between the rich and poor, have grown deeper. While economic development is benefitting the entrepreneurial capacities of those who are already powerful, most often in urban areas, the weaker social groups such as small and marginal farmers who inhabit the rural are being left behind. Modern life is also making it possible for the established urban rich (and also the upwardly mobile middle classes) to live sanitized lives which are removed from the messy realities of rural/poor areas. Consequently, the highly consumptive urban lifestyles are far removed from the rural – the consequences of the actions of urban consumers are seldom visible to them. In bringing the rural and urban closer through agri-tourism, there are ideally benefits in terms of learning, empathy and environmental responsibility.

In reality, this research finds that informal social interactions are not automatically achieved in agri-tourism. There was a high level of active and passive resistance to interactions, which result from wider contextual factors, but also from the individual agency of stakeholders. An important contextual reason is that in the Mumbai-Pune regions a wider policy environment favours deregulation and the free market ideology which boosts the entrepreneurial culture. An implication of this is evident in the representation of agri-tourism within media, publicity and advertising, which not only creates the standardized discourse in the state (refer to Chapter 5), but also constructs the rural into an "extraordinary" landscape (Urry, 2011). The implication on agri-tourism identity is that stakeholders try to emphasize aspects which portray agriculture/rural life as either "traditional" or "modern". In the process, aspects which do not subscribe to these constructions of "traditional" or "modern" are ignored. This results in the simplification and reductionist misrepresentations of the rural; in the end agri-tourism bears little resemblance to rural everyday life. This

misrepresentation of the rural impedes learning in many ways, but most importantly, it trivialized the complex problems of the rural landscape and diverts attention away from real environmental problems.

The entrepreneurship culture of agri-tourism is embedded deeply within social and class stratifications. In the case studies analysed, these divides are seldom bridged – especially the gaps between the rural poor and urban middle class, the rural elites who carry out agri-tourism and poor farmers are further reinforced. Entrepreneurs rely on easy access to networks of skills and knowledge transfer, collaboration and professional services – all of which are most commonly located within urban areas, but they need to be accessible to the rural "entrepreneurs" easily. These rural-urban networks are most easily accessible within the peri-urban fringe, and therefore often agri-tourism is located here; but also they are more easily available only to those in already privileged positions within the socio-economic terrain. The networks of specialist knowledge and skills therefore remain bounded by stratifications of social class; consequently agri-tourism's discourse tends to be constructed through a process that is bound by the limitations of knowledge within these elite circles. In agri-tourism this becomes explicitly clear through how the landscape is represented, which promotes business interests of entrepreneurs in an essentialist way. It contributes very little to social learning and empowerment.

Even though agri-tourism employees occupy a space between the rural community and urban visitors which is critical for facilitating informal rural-urban interactions, their role is unrecognized by the owners – their training and knowledge development is not a priority. The existing knowledge and skills of employees ranges from knowledge about traditional farming, but also some employees have the experience of hospitality and tourism employment in urban

areas – the peasant cultures of Indian villages have increasingly become hybridized (Chatterjee, 2008). These complex characteristics within rural employees do not fit within the "modern" or "traditional" representations of rurality within agri-tourism, and also the need to maximize the levels of functionality and comfort for the visitors requires specific skills. Consequently, the skills which are more in-tune with urban comforts and the hospitality industry are given greater value. This disadvantages rural employees who lack these skills. It not only leads to their disempowerment, but also reduces their capacity to become more environmentally responsible.

Moreover, representing agriculture as a "clean process" is an essentialist attitude which misrepresents agriculture, and is thus problematic in relation to social learning. It is very common for agri-tourism to use the planting of kitchen gardens or ornamental crops as the object of tourist gaze to satisfy a sense of curiosity within the urban visitor. This de-contextualized exhibition does not provide any contextual information for urban visitors to learn from. Consequently, agriculture which does not engage in hands on activities or encourage interaction with rural people is meaningless and even distracting from the real environmental issues faced by rural communities.

The lack of trust between the urban/rural elites and rural communities is at the heart of the growing rift between the two groups and why social interactions and learning are limited in agri-tourism. This rift is not only perpetuated by the wider context of policies favouring entrepreneurship, but also made more acute by social/class stratification. On the one hand urban people are worried about their security and do not trust the rural communities. On the other hand rural people were misinformed about the objectives of agri-tourism. The owners are the stakeholders with greatest capacity to facilitate in bridging this gap. They

are however more committed into achieving the entrepreneurial objectives of providing comfort, enhancing the agri-tourism experience for the urban visitors, than to the objectives of social learning and environmental responsibility.

In conclusion, social learning in agri-tourism is most successful and evident in the relationship between employees and urban visitors, where employees benefit through learning and enhance skills. Rural stakeholders note that the increasing rural-urban interactions are resulting in learning which (they feel) is bringing both benefits and disadvantages. The disadvantages they claim are in the form of "bad habits" (such as alcohol consumption and an increasing culture of consumerism), which urban visitors bring from the city to the rural. However, in reality, the pace of urbanization and proximity to urban areas is already bringing with it influences of urban lifestyles through the mediums of media, television, internet, employment and migration – agri-tourism is not especially significant in causing this hybridization of rural culture. Rather, the increasing interactions with urban visitors is bringing with it learning opportunities for the employees: higher levels of awareness of urban issues, skills, employment opportunities, and greater confidence of language are definitive advantages for employees. Moreover, agri-tourism employment is a reasonably high welfare mode of employment for semi-rural people in close proximity to their homes; within this rapidly urbanizing environment, has the potential of providing an alternative livelihood to at least a few families within the community.

Chapter: 7 Conclusion: Theorizing Citizenship in Agri-tourism

This research set out to examine agri-tourism in Maharashtra as a form of agricultural multifunctionality, situated within neo-liberal transformations and rapid urbanization. It aimed to theoretically ground sustainable development within the subjective understandings of everyday life (Escobar, 1995). Even though feminist/post-colonial authors lead the path for incorporating subjective and lived experiences of human-nature interactions into environmental discourses (Escobar, 1999, Gupta, 1998, Gupta, 2012, Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan, 2000a, Gidwani, 2000, Gupta and Sharma, 2006), the understanding of how everyday life is transformed by urbanization appears to be limited in the southern context of India. The overarching goal of this research was to examine sustainable development within agri-tourism through multiple levels of discourse and practice. The research was designed to answer three main research questions. **Firstly**, to examine the relationship of agri-tourism with wider understandings of sustainable development, and how this is interpreted within policies mediated through the agrarian constraints within India's environment. In other words, to examine how interactions between development goals, environmental governance and agrarian ecologies shapes agri-tourism's understanding and practice in peri-urban Mumbai and Pune. **Secondly**, how agri-tourism relates to the regional environmental tensions between the rural and urban areas in Maharashtra, and especially how urbanization is affecting the perceptions and practices of agri-tourism around Mumbai and Pune. Specifically, to examine how rural-urban linkages are transforming in the face of rapid urbanization in this region, and how they are

negotiated within the agri-tourism discourse. *Thirdly*, to examine how the discourse of sustainable development is locally perceived and interpreted within agri-tourism's practice, specifically through the ecological citizenship framework of environmental responsibilities, entitlements and learning of stakeholders. Therefore, to examine how environmental sustainability is subjectively interpreted by stakeholders (agri-tourism farm owners, employees, urban visitors and the wider rural community) within the locally situated everyday practices of agri-tourism. Furthermore to examine how these practices are transforming ecological citizenship within agri-tourism.

The first three sections of this concluding chapter are structured around each of the three research questions. The first section summarizes the main analytical findings from policies and their implications on multifunctionality and the agrarian environment. In the second section, the analytical findings are structured around how the perceptions of "rural" and "urban", or how the hybridized environment complicates the perception of "rurality" and influences stakeholder's attitudes towards environmental sustainability within agri-tourism. The third section summarizes how sustainable development is interpreted within the realm of individual stakeholders through the enactment of ecological citizenship. Specifically how citizenship translates into individual environmental responsibility and entitlements, which is shaped through informal interactional learning. The fourth section outlines the wider implications of the findings from this research, both theoretically and on policies. Finally, the fifth section outlines implications of this study beyond the case of agri-tourism and suggests further avenues of research.

7.1. Environmental governance and the agrarian ecology

In Maharashtra ***agricultural decline and livelihood stress*** is brought about by a harsh policy environment that favours intensive agricultural production and rapid urbanization. In this context, multifunctionality and agri-tourism are gaining popularity. Although Maharashtra's agri-environmental context is similar to much of the Indian sub continent, there are specific variations in climate, soils, geology and rainfall, which farmers here have to contend with. The state has an arid climate similar to most of the country; however 55% of its population, higher than the national average, still relies upon farming as its primary source of employment. Unpredictable rainfall, combined with uneven access to irrigation in the state, makes agriculture increasingly unproductive and risky for farmers. Of all the cultivated land in Maharashtra, only approximately 15% is irrigated, the rest is rain-fed. Lack of irrigation and unpredictable rainfall constrains farmers from fully realizing the benefits associated with high yield varieties (HYV). Traditionally farmers have grown coarse cereals, such as *jowar*, which naturally produce low yields – consequently crop yields in Maharashtra are much lower than the national average. Where irrigation is available, a minority of rich farmers have shifted into sugarcane farming, which is highly unsustainable because of the high levels of irrigation required by the crop (Lalvani, 2008). In peri-urban areas with good transport links to urban markets, high value crops such as flowers and fruits have become increasingly popular.

Maharashtra is the third most urbanized state in India, with approximately 44-45% of its population living within urban areas. The state's ambitious targets for economic growth are focusing on rapid urban and industrial growth. For

farmers, this implies reduced access to land and other resources such as water, energy and infrastructure, which are geared up to serve industrial and urban growth (Bandyopadhyay and Roy, 2012, Trebbin and Hassler, 2012). The pressure has grown on land, resources, labour, and infrastructure, especially within the peri-urban zone, given its close proximity to the urban core where economic activity was focused (Eapen, 2001). The demand over land is surging, even more so in the peri-urban areas around the city, and along transport corridors connecting to the city (Levien, 2011, Narain, 2009). These factors contribute to the general decline facing the agricultural sector.

Agricultural multifunctionality in the form of agri-tourism is employed therefore, (1) as a coping mechanism in response to decline and livelihood stress (Wilson, 2008, Wilson and Rigg, 2003); (2) as a land-use strategy for maximizing profit from the land; and/or (3) as a way for farmers to retain their land and not sell it.

There are two main implications of **"progress" and "sustainable intensification"** on agri-tourism brought about by policies advocating neo-liberal economic growth through greater industrialization and privatization. First, India's overarching shift towards free-market growth and the reduction of subsidies is inducing decline in the overall agricultural sector generally. This is leading to livelihood distress for farmers, who are facing two options: to leave agriculture altogether, or alternatively, to become economically viable by either intensifying production and (or) diversify farming through activities such as agri-tourism. Secondly, with the goal of revitalizing the economy, policies are encouraging private entrepreneurship by increasing the access of the private sector to relatively simplified procedures and regulations. State subsidized loans are made available to agricultural NGOs, companies and cooperatives. MART/ATDC, a state sponsored agri-tourism cooperative, has become

responsible for advocating agri-tourism in Maharashtra. The effects of these policies on the growth of agri-tourism in Maharashtra (discussed in Chapter 3) can be summarised as follows.

Policy analysis demonstrates that, even though the narratives of "sustainable development" are increasingly aligned with the global understandings of sustainability, as set out by the Brundtland Commission (WCED, 1987), this does not obstruct the main objective of high economic growth. Developmental policies set out within India's Five Year Plan and also Maharashtra's State Plan, identify economic sustainability at both the national and state level as the main objective (GoI, 2013c, GoI, 2007). A great deal of emphasis in these documents is placed on increasing growth rates of agricultural production. To achieve this, resources are directed towards "modernizing" the agricultural sector by enhancing scientific and technical knowledge for increasing production. Agricultural extensions are encouraged to make the transition for farmers towards modern technologies easier. Increase in revenue from both farming and non farming activities is encouraged. Activities such as packaging, processing and rural industry have gained dominance, and farming production has intensified. The problems associated with agricultural intensification (i.e., increased energy use, requirement of irrigation and loss of biodiversity) are largely ignored (refer to chapters 1, 3 and 4). The policy environment primarily aims to tackle poverty and livelihoods, through a short-sighted emphasis on capital oriented free market ideals and resource intensive production.

There are greater expectation from farmers to become more entrepreneurial and achieve higher productivity through "sustainable

intensification"⁹⁴ – this is universally interpreted by farmers and the rural community as "modernizing", and subsequently, agri-tourism is associated (rather simplistically) with the idea that farmers involved with it are achieving higher levels of progressiveness (refer to Chapters 5 and 6). Those undertaking agri-tourism are thought of as entrepreneurial farmers who have higher skills, knowledge and are considered more "modern". Similarly, within agri-tourism, the impacts of tourists in terms of increasing use of resources and pollution are ignored in favour of economic benefits. Just as intensifying agricultural production requires specialist knowledge, agri-tourism also relies on the training of employees – both are hence embedded within the politics of knowledge networks. Those farmers who are richer and better connected politically have better access to knowledge (which was discussed in chapter 6). Another important parallel is that both intensification and agri-tourism are viewed as ways of increasing revenue, but high levels of capital investment are needed. This makes farmers reliant upon credit and gives a selective advantage to those with already higher levels of power and access to political influence.

The second important policy influence on agri-tourism relates to the higher levels of power and control awarded to the private sector, cooperatives and local actors. The provision of finance to non-governmental organizations, cooperatives, private enterprises and companies is an important reason for the increasing popularity of agri-tourism as a rural development discourse in Maharashtra. The funding received by MART/ATDC through NABARD specifically promotes agri-tourism to farmers in Maharashtra through the means of introductory courses, training, process of awarding licenses, and through media publicity. The organizational structure of MART requires agri-tourism

⁹⁴ Sustainable intensification is often used to imply technically advanced and efficient agriculture. Refer to Spielman et al (2013) and Garnett and Godfray (2012).

operators to gain licensing through the satisfaction of certain criterion set out in the guidelines produced by the organization (refer to chapter 4). Although these are not always considered as essential by the farmers running agri-tourism sites, the license process is considered beneficial for marketing purposes. The licensing and publicity procedures followed by MART result in the standardization and simplification of the agri-tourism discourse in Maharashtra, as evidenced by the way this is represented within literature (refer to chapters 5 and 6).

7.2. Rural-urban linkages, urbanization and the peri-urban landscape

The setting for agri-tourism cannot be described as truly "rural" or "urban" – rather, it is set within a dynamic state of transition. This transition is not restricted to changes within the physical characteristics such as land-use, infrastructure, construction and services; importantly, it also permeates into the attitudes, values and perceptions towards the environment within this area. Learning, education, skills, knowledge and beliefs are all influenced from the transition of the landscape and attitudes of people from rural to urban within everyday life. For example, higher numbers of people have access to cars, televisions, the internet and mobile telephone connectivity – as a result of this, their attitudes towards education and consumption are transforming rapidly. This environmental transition from the rural to urban is not distributed evenly, but it is highly irregular in pattern. Some places are being developed far more rapidly, but because of a multitude of reasons such as the availability of land, labour, natural resources and infrastructure, others are left behind. This is causing deep feelings of insecurity, which manifest within some communities in

perceptions of how they see themselves as "lacking in progress" and being "underdeveloped". This research argues that these perceptions play a very important role in influencing individual decisions around environmentally virtuous behaviour, which has a much wider environmental impact on sustainable development.

The location of agri-tourism in the peri-urban fringe gives rise to unique tensions and challenges for stakeholders. The rapidly urbanizing environment is hosting an activity which relies upon portraying the landscape as a rural idyll to attract urban visitors. The surrounding landscape which set the backdrop for agri-tourism is: (1) under pressure from industry, infrastructure and construction; (2) characterized by an agriculture that is increasingly modernized, and hence reliant upon mono-cropping, high chemical and fossil fuels; (3) suffers from the acute lack of resources – water, land and labour, which are increasingly diverted into construction, infrastructure and industrial development; and (4) undergoing profound changes in visual and ecological character. Attracting urban visitors to a landscape faced with these profound transformations is seriously challenging for agri-tourist farmers. Portraying this ordinary environment as an "extraordinary" landscape (Urry, 2011) requires special representational measures and practices. In addition to affecting how nature is represented, these measures over-compensate the visitors with "good value" in the form of extra comforts and facilities, which have serious impacts on the consumption of natural resources and on social justice. For example, precious water is diverted for the exclusive use of tourists, employees are expected to work long hours, noise and pollution from generators supplying electricity to tourists becomes a nuisance, amongst several other impacts, as previously discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

The process of constructing the hybrid-transitory landscape as a "rural idyll" also has implications on how nature is represented in the discourse of agri-tourism, which has becoming increasingly standardized across the state for reasons of publicity and enterprise (refer to chapter 6). Within brochures, websites, news-articles, publicity materials and signage, the environment that is portrayed has departed significantly from the "reality" of the industrial/partly-built transitory landscape where agri-tourism is being carried out. The reality is a hybridized working landscape. In part the landscape is industrial and in part agricultural, partly green and partly built-up – this is not represented in agri-tourism's narratives and imagery. Rather, what is constructed as a rural idyll is a fixed and non-flexible notion of rurality, based upon satisfying the mass middle class urban consumer. It can be argued that this "artificial rurality" lacks flexibility, and is only of short term benefit for agri-tourism. Indeed, the possibility of fitting the rural landscape in this particular construction of rurality is not sustainable in the long term.

A related dimension of agri-tourism is the tendency for it to be used as the means of preserving the historic environment, including architecture, culture and heritage (Kizos et al., 2011, McGehee, 2007, Barbieri, 2010, Bernardo et al., 2004, Kizos and Iosifides, 2007, Das and Rainey, 2010). This "preservationist" dimension in Maharashtra has been inherited from industrialized countries, where agri-tourism is not only used to preserve the cultural heritage, but also the biodiversity of the natural and agricultural environment (Kizos et al., 2011, Barbieri and Valdivia, 2010, McGehee, 2007, Barbieri, 2010). The conservationist objectives in agri-tourism try to create value from retaining elements of the rural as "authentic" to satisfy the desire of visitors seeking "nostalgia" and "tradition" from the agri-tourist experience. Elements

such as traditional crops, food, way of cooking, vegetarianism, design, decorations are enacted and conserved in order to create a desirable experience that satisfies a nostalgic need within urban visitors (many of whom are rural-urban migrants who desire to return to the rural environment where they have grown up). In the process, the "extraordinary" landscape is created, departing from the realities of the working and changing landscape.

A culture of entrepreneurship, partly induced by favourable policies, but partly encouraged by the insecurities of being "developmentally behind", also contributes to the departure from "reality" within the landscape. The entrepreneurial culture in agri-tourism aims at the preservation of the landscape as an idyll, and at the same time at maximizing the profitability of the agri-tourism business. It does so by increasing its attractiveness to urban visitors by maximizing the facilities and comforts which are provided to them – the intention is to gain an edge over other competing businesses. In doing so agri-tourism owners are responding to the increasingly materialistic consumer led culture that has pervaded the middle classes (Mawdsley, 2004). Agri-tourism providers endeavour to offer visitors the functionality and comforts of the urban environment. Prioritizing market needs within agri-tourism's practice often means lack of consideration for the environmental limitations of the landscape. Examples of this include supplying accommodation which is of a quality similar to "urban standards"; ensuring that a regular supply of electricity is made available through the use of diesel generators; providing a reliable water supply through energy intensive diesel/electric tube wells; ensuring a wide variety of food; by offering air conditioning; facilitating security measures which make visitors feel secure; and making available countless other amenities and comforts, visitors were made to feel they were getting "value for money". The

desire to retain the business of urban visitors induces a sense of insecurity within the owners, who feel obliged to provide these facilities, and to control the experience of the visitors as closely as possible. The result is a highly "sanitized" experience, unrelated to the "reality" of everyday life.

7.3. The interpretation of sustainable development through ecological citizenship in agri-tourism

The neo-liberal free market economy is increasing the size and affluence of the middle-class, both in urban and rural areas. Industrial and urban growth are bringing about greater opportunities for individuals, but also increasing their capacities for consuming resources. This means that individuals have a far higher capacity of causing environmental harm, but also potentially of making responsible environmental decisions. In this context, it has been argued that the battlegrounds for environmental sustainability have shifted from the public realm into the domains of the private life of individuals through responsible environmental decision-making (Dobson, 2003). To understand how individuals are interpreting the ideals of sustainable development, the analysis focused on how agri-tourism changes the responsibilities and entitlements of individuals towards each other and the environment – in other words, how the values of ecological citizenship of stakeholders is being transformed within agri-tourism.

In southern contexts such as Maharashtra, this study argues that social inequity creates an asymmetrical citizenship: since the poor are subject to disproportionately higher environmental impacts from development, by implication, they should have fewer obligations. The narratives from agri-tourism in this research revealed that the terrains of inequality impact the relationships of stakeholders in complex ways. For example, the ability of rural farmers to

modernize and acquire skills to carry out agri-tourism is related to their power and affluence. Urban visitors are also in positions of power; the tourist's gaze influences patterns of representation and consumption, which have the potential of changing the rural landscape. Agri-tourism owners' desire to satisfy the tourists, invariably affects the treatment the employees receive, which thereby undermines their access to formal training and skills. Also the failure of the agri-tourism owners to involve neighbouring farmers in decision-making is disempowering for the wider (poorer) community. Within this context of unequal power relationships, therefore, some individuals have greater capacity to transform/pollute/create opportunities.

The unequal terrains of power also impede the objective of social learning through interactions between urban visitors and the rural community. The potential of increasing environmental awareness and responsibility through agri-tourism are considered its strongest advantages by several authors (Barbieri, 2010, Barbieri and Valdivia, 2010, Kizos et al., 2011, Wilson, 2008, Nilsson, 2002). It is thought that, by bringing urban visitors closer to the environment to experience the consequence of their actions, agri-tourism can make them more environmentally responsible (Appleby quoted in Blackmore, 2009). In the rapidly urbanizing context of the global south, where people's access to formal education is limited, interactional learning seems to be an especially relevant opportunity for enhancing environmental responsibility. The findings reveal that there is a high degree of separation between urban people and environmental knowledge associated with everyday life in the rural. Further, there are several impediments to interactional learning within agri-tourism itself: (1) the visitors lack motivation, also the owners discourage interaction in order to retain control over the agri-tourism experience; (2) the employees, who have the greatest

potential of fulfilling interaction, often lack training; and (3), the activities that are provided within the agri-tourism farm, often misrepresent and distract the visitors from learning about everyday life beyond the farm. Motivated by the desire to achieve entrepreneurship, farm owners try to fit the agri-tourism experience within binary representations.

The desire to create an "extraordinary" landscape, through simplistic portrayals of the environment, either as "traditional" or "modern", hinder learning in agri-tourism. Consequently certain varieties, products, foods and herbal medicines are portrayed as "traditional". As previously discussed, in the representations of elements such as native varieties, foods, festivals and culture, higher priority is given to attributes which appear attractive to consumers; as opposed to highlighting their associations with bio-diversity, farming production or environmental processes. Similarly, rural-cultural practices (such as *bhajans* and festivals) are portrayed as "authentic" cultural representations, thereby homogenizing Marathi culture across most agri-tourism sites. On the other hand, agri-tourism is also represented as a shift towards "modernization" within farming – elements associated in this way are portrayed as "progressive". These binary portrayals of agri-tourism elements, although appear in conflict, are united through their representational dishonesty and departure from "reality". Learning is reduced to pre-determined outcomes, as opposed to being a part of an authentic and spontaneous experience. Its contribution to citizenship is therefore limited.

Farm employees are at the forefront of interactions between urban visitors and the rural community. They are hence the stakeholders with the highest potential of facilitating interactional learning between urban visitors and the rural community. Their capacity for interactional learning, however, relies upon the

agri-tourism owners – who are often unwilling to provide further training due to the expenditure involved and their unwillingness/inability to compromise on profit. Even though, formal training is often out of reach of employees, the high levels of contact with urban visitors contributes towards their learning experience, albeit in circumstances where benefits were not guaranteed. Skills and knowledge that are highly valued include web site advertising, publicity and internet marketing – skills which generally remain out of the reach of rural employees. Overall, what emerges is that the culture of entrepreneurship, encouraged by a desire for rural areas to appear "economically progressive", results in normalizing profitability over the welfare and education of employees. Their capacity to facilitate interactional learning is compromised by the desire for profitability in agri-tourism, thereby hampering learning and ecological citizenship.

7.4. Wider Implications

This section summarises the wider implications of the findings of this study. Firstly, it reflects on the theoretical implications on boundaries, place, identity and citizenship of agri-tourism. The findings from this research complicate how the "boundary" between the rural and urban is defined, and argue this is fundamentally important in how environmental perceptions shape decision making and citizenship. Then the second part of this section reflects how the main outcomes of this research may inform policies and presents a few broad guidelines for agri-tourism's practice in Maharashtra.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS ON BOUNDARIES, PLACE IDENTITY AND CITIZENSHIP

It has become common for literature on regional studies and rural-urban linkages (amongst others) to challenge the notion of rigid boundaries defining the rural and urban. Increasingly authors have moved towards considering the relationship between rural and urban as a continuum (Torreggiani et al., 2012, Isserman, 2005, Halfacree, 2001, Bhagat, 2005, Tacoli, 2006). While most of these studies see the space beyond the city no longer as "rural", but rather as a hybridized entity which displays characteristics that are a complex mix between rural and urban, this research argues that the notion of the boundary needs to be complicated further. The findings show that if we consider the boundary through the lens of attributes which are not only physical, but include also people's attitudes and perceptions, it is no longer correct to assume that the "boundary is dissolving" in every respect. In other words, the distinction between rural and urban is not ambiguous in every sense. In the case of agri-tourism, the boundaries serve a very important purpose: they enable value to be added to the landscape by presenting it as uniquely distinct, which aids in its production as a commodity for urban consumption.

Most commonly, the rural and urban are understood as such through their tangible physical or social environmental attributes: the greenery within the landscape, forest cover, land-use, level of construction, presence of infrastructure, population density, and bio-diversity, are physical attributes that, due to urbanization, are becoming increasingly blurred between the rural and urban. Also attributes such as education, skills and employment opportunities display a similar shift towards ambiguity across the rural-urban divide.

Increasingly rural areas show more urban characteristics, with higher levels of education, skills and even job opportunities. Often, when, authors speak of hybridized rurality, it is implied they are referring to a space where these quantifiable attributes are no longer (easily) distinguishable.

On the other hand, the boundaries of perception, which are not quantifiable but qualitatively analysed within this research, remain in place far more starkly than the tangible physical and social attributes. For example, how people associate perceptions of "being developed" or "lacking-development", as "hygienic" or "un-hygienic", or as being "safe" or "unsafe" are far more starkly visible across the rural and urban divides. This study argues that this has a profound impact on how environmental decisions affecting the lives of the rural poor are justified by those in charge of making them. This is apparent in the lack of consultation with the rural community over granting permission for agri-tourism businesses (refer to chapter 6), the lack of information made available to the villagers, and also in the way in which natural resources are diverted away from farming into tourism activities. These injustices to the rural community are partly aided by neo-liberal de-regulation, combined with state subsidy to ATDC, and the political connections of farm owners. In agri-tourism, the underlying reasons why some stakeholders are acting in less environmentally responsible ways, is because of the normalisation of entrepreneurship within a context where the rural is distinctly perceived as different from the urban – as "underdeveloped".

Boundary distinctiveness between rural and urban is highly relevant and desirable in the construction of the rural as an "idyll". Retaining the character of what is "rural", real or imagined, plays a very important role in offering "nature" to urban people who are seeking a get-away from the stressful life in the city.

Nature is packaged within the discourse of agri-tourism at several levels as a "commodity" to be consumed by the urban tourist. From the way "rurality" is constructed in the agri-tourism discourse (as portrayed by the media, in agri-tourism websites, newspaper articles, or within publicity brochures), it became clear that a very specific construction of agri-tourism is being manufactured to satisfy consumer demand. In individual agri-tourism farms owner/employee narratives around traditional food/culture/festivals are all constructions of "rurality" which relate to rural distinctiveness. Moreover, even through the covert mechanisms of architectural and landscape design – of providing tall fences and guard dogs, reinforce the perceptions around how the rural is seen as unsafe and alien. Agri-tourism provides a space where the "perceptions" of rurality (associated with attitudes on development, tradition, learning, security and such attributes) intersect with the hybridity of "physical" rurality (defined by visual, constructed, ecological or land-use characteristics). These produce a context where, in some cases, it is desirable to define "rural" and "urban" clearly, in other cases it is not.

While several different processes retaining rural-urban distinctiveness emerged during the course of this study, there are important underpinning points of commonality between all of these. Boundary distinctiveness is politically motivated, and in order to be achieved, this requires high levels of social control from agri-tourism stakeholders. The most common reasons for trying to retain rural distinctiveness is the motivations of success and profitability relating to the business objectives within agri-tourism. Examples show how "nature" is being packaged, made accessible in many different forms, and consumed by the visitors. Inherently, the supply and demand of goods and services involves interactions between stakeholders, which are characterized by

their negotiations over the terrains of environmental justice and responsibility. Retaining boundary distinctiveness is not only central to the consumption of goods and services and it affected people's rights and access to environmental resources as well as justice. It is therefore fundamentally connected to the citizenship of individuals.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This section reflects how the main outcomes of this research may inform policies and presents broad guidelines for agri-tourism's practice in Maharashtra. This study uses a post-structuralist epistemology which is based on a highly context specific analysis – hence providing specific policy recommendations was not its intention⁹⁵. By providing broad policy recommendations, the idea is not for rigid overarching rules to emerge; rather, the objective is to establish a broad framework on the basis of good environmental practice which may guide agri-tourism across Maharashtra through certain minimum standards. This may also possibly benefit other development options set within peri-urban regions with issues similar to agri-tourism.

There is a lack of policy direction and legislative control over agri-tourism in Maharashtra generally. This regulation vacuum applies to most forms of development which are of temporary or short term nature and are commonly linked with rapidly urbanizing regions in some parts of the global south. Activities such as quarrying, brick-making, small restaurants and highway eateries, shops and tourism-resorts, all provide semi-legal/informal services to the demands from rapid urbanization, and are common within peri-urban

⁹⁵ This research aimed to focus on understanding the richness and variations of local contexts in their interpretation of environmental discourses (refer to Chapter 2).

Maharashtra (Hawksley, 2014). Similarly, in many ways agri-tourism can also be seen as a short term diversification option. In many cases, agri-tourism is serving the need of farmers to supplement their incomes, to help them to (temporarily) retain their land before it is developed or sold more lucratively as the dynamic phenomenon of urbanization takes hold.

Unregulated activities can, however, bring about significantly problems for local communities – environmental harm, compromise social welfare and create poor working conditions for labourers/workers. The state is unable to implement planning controls over the quality of the built environment to ensure that the development is appropriate and benefits the wider community. Often workers in illegal brick kilns (which are a common peri-urban feature in Maharashtra) are subject to poor welfare and working environment (Hawksley, 2014, Sengupta, 2007). In this context, this study broadly recommends that these activities, including agri-tourism, even though may appear as temporary, need to be adequately researched for their environmental impacts. Subsequently, their impacts must be acknowledged within policies through the establishment of guidelines to regulate their increasing presence in the condition of peri-urban hybridity.

From this study it becomes clear that agri-tourism is essentially connected with sustainable development through its relationship with consumption and the increasing capacity of the middle classes to consume "nature". The representation of "rurality" within advertising, media, publicity brochures and websites is crucial for consumption and by implication also for environmental responsibility. Therefore, since it is fundamentally connected with consumption, it is desirable to regulate the representation of the countryside. Contrary to the tenets of the free market shift away from regulations, this study recommends

that greater controls are needed from the state to ensure that the rural is not being misrepresented in populist discourses around agri-tourism. On the whole, to "misrepresent" the rural is not in the wider interest of the agri-tourism industry as this induces undue expectations from the owners and dissatisfaction amongst the tourists. Greater regulations over advertising will ensure better transparency and prepare urban visitors better for the agri-tourism experience.

Moreover, also it emerges that there are a range of farm types in agri-tourism existing in Maharashtra. For example, not all agri-tourism sites have extensive farming activity on the land owned by the farm. Especially agri-tourism farms within or close to the established tourism zones tend not to have extensive farming activities, since the visitors often simply use the agri-tourism farm for its accommodation to visit the surrounding touristic sites. Even so, it is inappropriate to claim that agri-tourism should exclude these farms as they simply satisfy a different type of agri-tourism function. Instead, there should be greater transparency in the services that these types of farms are able to offer visitors. This will ensure that visitors are able to make informed choices over the form of agri-tourism they want to experience, and consequently this will reduce irresponsible behaviour due to the mismatch of expectations and facilities on offer. Just as informative and standardized labelling for food (and other modern day products) are increasingly the norm, similarly for agri-tourism, a system that describes the activities, food, and other facilities that farms specifically offer, will benefit the agri-tourism industry as a whole.

It is clear from this research that agri-tourism is fundamentally based upon the consumption of rural goods and services. There are a number of aspects through which the dimension of agri-tourism's consumption will also benefit from further research and subsequently policy recommendations. Firstly, numerous

stakeholders believed that the scale of agri-tourism is so insignificant that it is unlikely to result in substantial environmental harm. It is difficult for rural stakeholders to imagine that agri-tourism could be scaled-up sufficiently to become the norm in farms within the peri-urban or rural landscape. It is important, therefore, to recommend further research into the environmental impacts of agri-tourism if it is significantly scaled up. Secondly, it became clear from the fieldwork how agri-tourism is often used as a vehicle for promoting a range of environmentally responsible activities and practices. For example, agri-tourism can be associated with organically grown food. There are examples of indigenous crop varieties being promoted through agri-tourism. Also, agri-tourism can be used to promote traditional handicrafts, medicines and other goods. It is however unclear how promoting certain practices and activities will impact the lives of rural communities and the environment, for which specific research should be undertaken on a case by case basis. Based on the findings of this research, detailed policy guidance or recommendations will benefit agri-tourism's practice.

The greatest opportunity for agri-tourism to increase environmental awareness and responsibility, this study argues, is through increasing the interactions between various social groups to make informal learning possible. It may appear counterintuitive, in the first instance, to offer policy recommendations on an aspect of "informality" within learning through interactions; it is possible however to make changes to the wider structures which affect these interactions. For example, this study argues that the most important criterion of enhancing the quality and nature of interactions between agri-tourism visitors and the rural stakeholders is the level of training and skills of employees to encourage interactions (as discussed in Chapter 6). It is

therefore recommended that regulations need to be introduced to ensure that agri-tourism employees receive a certain minimum standard of training to ensure this role is adequately satisfied. To ensure this is followed through, the state must allocate adequate subsidies, funding, monitoring and regulations to guarantee agri-tourism owners are incentivised sufficiently to provide staff training. The role of NGOs and cooperatives in making sure these policy recommendations are carried out is invaluable, and must therefore be supported through policies.

7.5. Conclusion: the way forward

Agri-tourism is not an isolated phenomenon. Rather, it is embedded within multi-level policies and governance, wider cultures of entrepreneurship and environmental responsibility. Its treatment as a microcosm within the neo-liberal context of deregulation and market based socio-economic processes makes it possible to explore how the findings from this research may have wider implications – not only within the Mumbai-Pune peri-urban areas, but also for similar contexts in the emerging global south. Moreover, the consideration of agri-tourism through the lenses of social learning and environmental responsibility provide indications as to areas where further research will be beneficial for understanding how sustainable development is locally interpreted.

The location of agri-tourism within a hybrid transitory space between the rural and urban is responsible for feelings of personal insecurity. This study demonstrates how the lack of jurisdiction, control and accountability, brought about by the problems of rapid urbanization induce problems of injustice and inequity for the communities located in these spaces. Notwithstanding these problems, the peri-urban location offers advantages for the production of goods

and services for urban consumption, making these areas popular for several other services. There are several tourist based activities (such as amusement theme parks, wine-tasting, craft fairs and villages, adventure tourism, camping, golf courses, health clubs, water sports) and also retail/commercial activities such as retail park and commercial parks that are being encouraged by policies to occupy these peri-urban locations alongside agri-tourism (GoM, 2006b, Nunes, 2013).

Just as agri-tourism relies upon the desire to portray the surroundings as an idyllic landscape through a process of simplification and standardization, these activities have parallels in the way that they are publicized within media, brochures, new and publicity materials (refer to chapter 6). Along with agri-tourism, these activities are part of a much wider phenomenon of rural marketing and consumption within emerging markets, which relates to increasing urban middle class affluence. The implications of these activities on the environment and citizenship, through the diversion of natural resources and land, and through the compromises of employee welfare and learning, can have problematic consequences for communities. The changes of middle class affluence, increased capacities of consumption and the consequent landscape transformations can be rapid. The analysis from agri-tourism reveals, however, that transformations of social attitudes towards the environment are much slower and harder to shift, and there are several constraints which hinder social learning, such as the desire to control the interactions of visitors and rural communities.

Social learning in agri-tourism, it is argued, occurs when the requirements of contact between urban visitors and rural communities, or the ability of rural employees to access urban training, can be effectively met. The lesson learnt is

that, when rural activities are separated from the context, there is a subsequent loss in value, impact and meaning of the agri-tourism experience. Farming turns simply into an "object of interest", as opposed to providing meaningful learning about the wider rural lifestyle. Similarly, the potential for other rural activities in providing learning can vary subject to local conditions. For example, in the context of less "commercially oriented" activities such as eco-tourism, wine-tasting and rural craft-fairs, there are ample opportunities for rural activities to take on board the findings of this research by being more socially inclusive and interactive with rural communities. Given the widespread impact of these activities on the landscape within the urban peripheries of cities, this is an area which will benefit from further detailed research.

The implications of interactive learning apply far beyond tourism, to all forms of development where decisions taken by policymakers and planners affect local communities. The opportunities for interactive learning are especially relevant in the peri-urban fringe, due to the rapidity of development here. In these locations, there is even higher potential for culturally diverse social groups to come into contact with increased opportunities for interaction. Even though physically the boundaries between the rural and urban appear less rigid, from the findings of this study, it became apparent that there are large gaps in trust between the rural and urban, and rich and poor divides within communities. If decision makers with powers to make life changing decisions over the lands of "others" are brought in closer contact with the community they are impacting, this will enable them to have a more realistic and grounded understanding of the local characteristics. Similarly, if rural communities are given adequate information about how decisions over their land are taken, this learning will make the decisions more palatable to them. Bringing people closer

to the context of the environment has profound consequences on environmental responsibility – by making people see each other's point of view, learning can be potentially enhanced. In the context of the emerging south, however, the most challenging aspects arise from the deep social divisions between various social classes. Bridging the social stratifications of perception and trust require systemic changes which are far wider – and must be backed up within the mechanisms of governance and policy. While ecological citizenship has traditionally been seen as being enacted within the realm of individual decisions, this cannot be achieved unless wider structures and state support mechanisms are already in place.

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Appendix 1: List of interviews

Shivaji Farm					
	Date	Name (pseudo nym)	Description	Location and circumstances	Langu age
1	22/12/2011	Vikas	Agri-tourism farm co-owner (grandfather)	Semi-covered verandah of farm house. Partly observed by others.	Hindi
2	22/12/2011	Rahul	Co-owner	Walking interview while being shown farm.	Hindi
3	23/12/2011	Hari	Employee	In author's room. Accompanied by his wife and two children.	Hindi
4	24/12/2011	Ashok	Co-owner	In farm's garden	Hindi
5	26/12/2011	Rajat	Adivasi school lab assistant	In school office	Hindi
6	26/12/2011	Kamal	Adivasi school principle	In school office. Accompanied by Rajat lab assistant.	Hindi
7	26/12/2011	Acharya	Neighboring farm owner	In the living room of his house. Accompanied by his father and one other person.	Hindi
8	26/12/2011	Gyan	Sarpanch of village	In Panchayat office, accompanied by four or five other members.	Hindi
9	27/12/2011	Deepak	Engineering College Principle	In his private office.	Hindi
10	27/12/2011	Smriti Irani	Director of Engineering college	In her open plan office.	Hindi
11	27/12/2011	Jinesh	Engineering college vice principle	In his private office.	Hindi
12	27/12/2011	Jaggu	Village shopkeeper	In his shop with pauses while he served customers as they came. I was standing outside the counter during the interview.	Hindi

13	28/12/2011	Rakesh	Agri-tourism farm co-owner	In the semi-covered garden look-out space overlooking the river.	Hindi
14	28/12/2011	Supriya	School teacher Karav	In the classroom overlooked approximately by 20 pupils.	Hindi
15	29/12/2011	Pathak	Builder merchant in village	In his office sitting across a desk.	Hindi
16	29/12/2011	Gopal	Irrigation employees	In the irrigation department office. Accompanied by two other employees.	Hindi
17	29/12/2011	Panna	Employees (gardeners)	In the lookout area overlooking the river. The two gardeners were interviewed while they were painting. They were quite relaxed as it was almost the end of the working day.	Hindi
18	30/12/2011	Ramu	Laborer	In the balcony of my room. The interview was carried out during their lunch break.	Hindi
19	30/12/2011	Akshay	Neighboring farmer	In the fields of his farm. The interview was carried out in the presence of the co-owner who introduced me to the participant and also gave me a motor-bicycle lift approximately 10km away.	Hindi
20	31/12/2011	Pawan	Nearby pumping station employee.	Outside the water pumping station that is managed by two government employees.	Hindi
21	1/01/2012	Sultan	Panchayat Sabhapati	In the living room of his home. He was accompanied by his son partly during the interview.	Hindi
Sahyadri Farm					
	Date	Name (pseudo nym)	Description	Location and circumstances	Language
22	04/01/2012	Jaideep	Agri-tourism farm manager	In the main office along with one other employee for part of the interview.	Hindi

23	04/01/2012	Rattan	Agri-tourism employee – young teenage boy	In the main garden after dinner. Accompanied by the manager during part of the interview.	Hindi
24	05/01/2012	Shankar	Neighboring strawberry farmer/relative of owners	In his hut by the edge of his strawberry field. We sat on the floor and it was really hot as there was no fan.	Hindi
25	05/01/2012	Pradeep	School teacher assistant	In the semi-covered verandah of the school. The school's only two pupils played outside during the interview.	Hindi
26	06/01/2012	Jaggi	Agri-tourism employee	In the semi-covered central dining area after breakfast. He was very distracted and was often interrupted by other employees.	Hindi
27	06/01/2012	Dada	Agri-tourism employee – old gardener	In the semi-covered central dining area after breakfast. He was really old and hard of hearing; it was quite hard to make myself understood.	Hindi
28	06/01/2012	Ganga	School teacher	In the semi-covered verandah of the school. We were accompanied by the teaching assistant.	Hindi
29	07/01/2012	Shakti	Sarpanch of Mezgaon	In the shop he owned and managed. Accompanied by his neighbor who drove me to meet him.	Hindi
30	07/01/2012	Dr. Ram	Co-owner of Sahyadri agri-tourism farm	In the main office of the agri-tourism farm after he invited me to eat lunch with him.	Hindi
31	07/01/2012	Shyam	Co-owner of Sahyadri agri-tourism farm	In the main office of the agri-tourism farm.	Hindi
32	08/01/2012	Jaipal and Madhu	Husband and wife owners of a small new agri-tourism farm about 8km away.	In the back garden of their farm/home. I was offered tea and observed by one or two other employees. Madhu partly sat through the interview. Jaipal gave me a tour of the village afterwards.	Hindi
33	09/01/2012	Sameer	Shopkeeper in neighboring	Outside his shop. Since it was relatively early in the morning, we were not interrupted by any	Hindi

			village	customers.	
34	09/01/2012	Nakul	School teacher in neighboring village	In the school office. No students were present, but the interviewee was in a hurry as there was a school function later in the day.	Hindi
35	09/01/2012	Nihar	Boatman near farm	On the bank of the river while sitting on the rocks waiting for passengers who he ferried across the river.	Hindi
36	09/01/2012	Pratap and Kaka	School teachers in neighboring village	In the class room in front of approximately 30 pupils. After the interview teachers ask me to give a speech to the class. They took me for a short tour outside afterwards.	Hindi
37	10/01/2012	Radha	Sahyadri farm co-owner's wife	In the main office in the presence of her husband. She spoke mostly in Marathi (and some broken Hindi), therefore the husband was enthusiastic in providing translations during the interview.	Hindi / Marathi
38	10/01/2012	Shambhu	Employee (previous owner) of bungalow next doors	In the bungalow's garden. Partly through the interview the participant walked around watering the plants and I followed him with the dictaphone.	Hindi
39	10/01/2012	Kaku	A resident farmer in nearby village	In the open area outside his house. Also he gave me a tour of the village and I continued to record our conversation.	Hindi
40	10/01/2012	Milkha	Farmer in neighboring village. Relative of the manager.	Started in the verandah of his house. Later we walked to his farm about 1km away and continued the interview while he showed me his land.	Hindi
Prakriti farm					
	Date	Name (pseudo nym)	Description	Location and circumstances	
41	16/01/2012	Hakeem	Agri-tourism employee	In the verandah outside the farm's office during the afternoon break. Accompanied by another employee partly during the interview.	Hindi

42	17/01/2012	Narendra	Co-owner of Prakriti farm	In the farm's office in private.	Hindi
43	17/01/2012	Ananth Kumar	Principle of school in Bhiwani village	In the school courtyard outside in full sunlight during the afternoon. Accompanied by one or two other teachers.	Hindi
44	18/01/2012	Uttam	Shopkeeper near farm	In the shop. I stood outside the counter while participant answered questions, occasionally interrupted by customers.	Hindi
45	18/01/2012	Sitaram	Shopkeeper near farm	In the shop sitting on a bench outside. Not interrupted by any customer. Overlooked by one or two bystanders.	Hindi
46	19/01/2012	Dhulegao n Sarpanch	Sarpanch of neighboring village	In the Panchayat office. I had to wait for a long time in the office for the opportunity to interview him. We were interrupted once by another person.	Hindi
47	19/01/2012	Hiralal	Employee at Prakriti farm	Outside the farm's office during the afternoon break. Accompanied for part of the interview by one other employee.	Hindi
48	20/01/2012	Rajnath	Sarpanch of neighboring village	In the Panchayat hall. The interview was conducted after a public village meeting. It was very noisy and we were accompanied by several bystanders as we sat on plastic chairs in the hall.	Hindi
49	20/01/2012	Kahna	Agricultural extension worker	As above.	Hindi
50	20/01/2012	Shrimati	School teacher lady	In the class in front of about 20 pupils.	Hindi
51	20/01/2012	Vivek	Employee – press boy	In front of main office in Prakriti farm.	Hindi
52	21/01/2012	Mahesh	Neighboring farmer	In the garden dining area of Prakriti farm. Participant was accompanied by one other person.	Hindi
53	21/01/2012	Vipul	Neighboring dairy farmer	In dairy farm. Participant first gave me a tour of the farm and then answered my questions in the presence of two other people. We stood in a shed around the dairy equipment during the interview.	Hindi

54	22/01/2012	Ranjan	Sarpanch of nearby village	In the open courtyard of the Sarpanch's house in the village. Accompanied by one or two others.	Hindi
55	22/01/2012	Siddharth	Shopkeeper in neighboring village	In the home of the shopkeeper. The living room we sat in was directly above the shop and customers kept coming through the interview. We were accompanied by a Prakriti farm employee who gave me a lift on his bike.	Hindi
56	22/01/2012	Aditya	Co-owner of Prakriti farm	In the office of the agri-tourism site. It was quite late in the evening and I had lost focus after having walked about 18km that day.	Hindi
57	23/01/2012	Anmol	Teacher in neighboring village	In the class room but no pupils were present. Accompanied by one other teacher.	Hindi
58	23/01/2012	Sumeet	Guard at Bara dam	In the courtyard outside his hut. We sat on the parapet near the dam administrative building.	Hindi
59	23/01/2012	Chotu	Temporary contract sugarcane laborers	In the courtyard of the labour camp close to Prakriti farm. We sat on the floor at around sunset with four or five onlookers. Their wives continued with their household chores while the men gathered around me. The workers looked very tense throughout.	Hindi
60	24/01/2012	Sanjiv	Co-owner's son	In the semi-covered dining area of Prakriti farm. The interview was conducted in two parts as we were interrupted.	English
61	24/01/2012	Paniwala	Agricultural supplies entrepreneur	In the garden dining area of Prakriti farm. The participant had agreed to come to the farm to give me an interview. He was accompanied by one other person.	Hindi
62	24/01/2012	Chandra shekhar	Agri-tourism employee	In front of the main office of Prakriti farm during the afternoon break. The interview was interrupted once by one of the visitors who needed something.	Hindi
63	25/01/2012	Daruwala	Farmer near Bara dam	In the courtyard outside the farmer's home – a space also used to keep cattle. At the end of the interview he walked me to the inside/outside of his house to give	Hindi

				me a tour.	
64	25/01/2012	Sangeeta	School teacher of neighboring village	In the courtyard outside the class rooms while sitting on a bench. One other teacher accompanied the participant during the interview.	Hindi
65	26/01/2012	Kapil	Farmer in nearby Bhivani village	Outside the Panchayat building in the nearby village while I sat with the participant on an embankment under a tree. The interview was conducted while a public celebration of the Republic Day (26 th January) was taking place in the village and therefore a crowd gathered around us. Later the participant invited me to his home for a cup of tea.	Hindi
66	26/01/2012	Mani	Farmer in nearby Bhivani village	I met Mani during the Republic Day public celebration. Instead of giving me an interview there he invited me to his farm close by. He gave me an interview accompanied by one of his sons. Also he gave me a tour of his farm. He was very interested in starting off his own agri-tourism business.	Hindi
67	26/01/2012	Anandpreem	Manager of neighboring resort/hotel	Outside the main office in the neighboring resort/hotel.	Hindi
68	26/01/2012	Premnath	Mill owner in nearby village (also brother of owners)	In the verandah outside the participant's mill/shop. We had to cut the interview short as the participant had to serve a customer.	Hindi
69	27/01/2012	Keshawan	Farmer near Bara dam	Along the roadside. I met him on the way to another interview appointment in the nearby school. He was accompanied by two or three other men who were speaking to the participant in Marathi.	Hindi
70	28/01/2012	Rajesh Sharma	School teacher in nearby village	In the open plan school office. We sat on a bench and were relatively undisturbed by others.	Hindi

Pune NGOs etc.					
71	27/02/2012	Vishal Abdullah	Assistant at ATDC	In the ATDC office. I had visited the office with the intention to interview the head of ATDC. Since he was unavailable I interviewed the participant who was the secretary. We were disturbed once or twice by phone calls and by callers to the office.	Hindi
72	28/02/2012	Dhanraj Pillay	Retired professor of agriculture	In his home through a prearranged appointment. The participant had taught and worked with the Maharashtra government on agricultural policy, and had now retired.	English
73	29/02/2012	Mohan Singh	Head of ATDC	In the ATDC office through a prearranged appointment. The interview was carried out in his cubicle which was also partly occupied by the secretary.	English
74	29/02/2012	Pattu	Head of environmental NGO	In the NGO's office by prearranged appointment.	English
75	02/03/2012	Nitin Kumar	Manager of Baramati agri-tourism farm	In the agri-tourism farm approximately 60 km from Pune through a prearranged appointment. The participant and I sat in a semi-covered canopy in the afternoon. At the end of the interview the participant gave me a tour of the 110 acre farm on his motor bicycle and escorted me to the exit.	English
76	06/03/2012	Suraj	Senior member at environmental NGO	In the office of the NGO inside the participant's private cubicle. The interview was prearranged through an appointment.	English
77	06/03/2012	Bagga	Employee of environmental NGO	In the open plan office on the participant's desk. Since he was keen to talk to me the interview was impromptu. We were not overlooked by anyone else even though it was an open plan office.	English
78	06/03/2012	Rocky	Employee of environmental NGO (dealing with	In a busy open plan office on the desk of the participant. The interview had been arranged through an appointment. We were	English

			sustainable agri-technologies)	overlooked by several people as the office was quite busy.	
79	07/03/2012	Khilnani	Senior member of agricultural NGO	In the participant's office cubicle after a prearranged appointment.	English
80	08/03/2012	Virendra	Senior member of environmental education NGO	In the participant's office through a pre-arranged appointment. Since it was a festival holiday, no one else was present in the office during the interview.	English
81	08/03/2012	Arjun Sharma	Founder of organic food NGO	In the participant's home/office through a prearranged appointment. We sat outside in the garden and had to move as it was quite noisy.	English
82	08/03/201	Kishore	Senior member of environmental NGO	In the participant's private office cubicle.	English