environment, biodiversity and its conservation and socio-cultural structures of
the community. Since ecotourism includes programmes that minimize the
negative aspects of mass tourism on the environment and enhances the
cultural integrity of the indigenous people, community based ecotourism will
be the best form of tourism in Barkal as well as in CHT. In addition to
evaluating environment and cultural factors ecotourism promotes recycling,
energy efficiency, water conservation and creation of economic opportunities for
the local community. It will not only help indigenous community of Marmapara
(Barkal, Rangamati) to break the shekels of poverty, but also conserve
ecological balance and socio-cultural integrity.

Barkal is one of the remotest upazilas of Rangamati Hill District. It is 59
kilometers away from the district headquarters. The Marmapara is at the
middle of Barkal upazila and situated at foot of the hill Girichara. It is
inhabited by the Marmas who live in a community there. Economically they are
marginalized. They have little land for cultivation. Most of them are day
laborers and some of them live on jhum cultivation. They collect firewood from
the nearby forest and sometimes, for their survival, they hunt wild birds and
animals. Although the Marma community is economically poor, they have a
very rich culture. The scenic beauty of the area, its flora and fauna and the
rich culture of its inhabitants easily attract the tourists from home and abroad.

To extract positive benefits from tourism, it should be a natural renewable
product and a tool for alleviating poverty of the destination area. Community
based ecotourism, in this connection, can help the Marma community of Barkal economically, environmentally and socially and, by this way, can bring sustainable development to the community.