# Horton Plains National Park (HPNP) Shuttle Proposal

*A socially conscious, viable business to reduce vehicular environmental impact, enhance visitor experience, and invest in the communities surrounding HPNP*

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# National Park, National Treasure

## 1 of only 2

cloud forests in Sri Lanka

## 3 major rivers

the headwaters of the Mahaweli, Kelani, and Walawe are within the HPNP

## 50+

endemic animal species, alongside many rare and threatened species of both flora and fauna

## ~180,000

annual park visitors

# The Problem

## 01 Ecological Harm (The Earth)

### ~400kg emissions in 30 minutes

Stop-start congestion from ~150 vehicles on peak days leads to disproportionately high emissions in an environment where moisture traps particulate matter against vegetation

## 02 Poor Experience (The Visitor)

### 90-minute drive, 0 interpretation

Cramped, bumpy rides in older vehicles or tuk-tuks from Nuwara Eliya. Lost opportunity for ecological / cultural context-setting

## 03 Value Leakage (The Local)

### Economic benefits bypass community

Low structured benefit for gateway villages such as Ambewela and Pattipola. Tourism traffic passes through without circulating economic value to residents

# The Solution

01

**A viable carbon-zero pathway and positive environmental impact from Day One**

Replacing just 30% of individual vehicles with shuttle could reduce emissions by ~25%

**PHASE 1: LAUNCH & OFFSET (Years 1-3)**

Locally serviceable Diesel Toyota Coasters; carbon offset via reforestation

**PHASE 2: EV TRANSITION (Years 3-5)**

Any addition to fleet is EV; more charging stations in SL; more manufacturers with right hand drive electric minibuses

**PHASE 3: CARBON ZERO (Year 5+)**

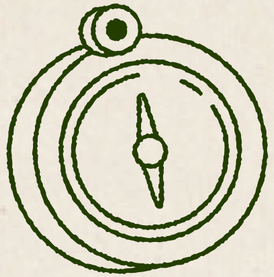
EV fleet with zero tailpipe emissions; solar power for charging vehicles

# The Solution

02

**Turning “dead” travel time to guided tour experience**

A more comfortable, enriching, and responsible way to experience HPNP



### HIGH QUALITY GUIDES

Comfortable vehicle; trained guide sets ecological and cultural context and provides trail briefing (in English); multilingual digital guides via QR code

### CURATED STOPS

5-10 minute photogaphy stops selected dynamically based on optimal light and weather conditions

### ANCILLARY PRODUCTS

High-quality, locally sourced add-ons that solve genuine pain points, (e.g., meal packs, tea from nearby estates)

# The Solution

03

**Locals benefit from visitor traffic to the area; 5% of ticket revenue ring-fenced for Community Fund**

Opportunities for employment and ancillary service provision; involvement in Community Fund

### LOCAL RESOURCING

Recruiting from Pattipola, Ambewela, Nuwara Eliya areas; guides are paid competitively; resourcing for ancillary products also local whenever possible

### FUND FOR COMMUNITY & RESTORATION

2.5% of ticket revenue directed toward social initiatives such as education / healthcare; further 2.5% to fund removal of invasive and detrimental plants introduced during colonial era

# The Journey

**Ticket: $35**

***sold as return onlly***

**Select Photo Stops & Narration through 90-minute Jounrey**

**Nuwara Eliya**

Bus Depot

Pick-ups from select hotels and restaurants; 15% commission on ticket price for referrals

**Ambewela**

Pastoral Highland Landscapes

Tea / Coffee

**Pattipola**

Heritage Railway Station

**Horton Plains**

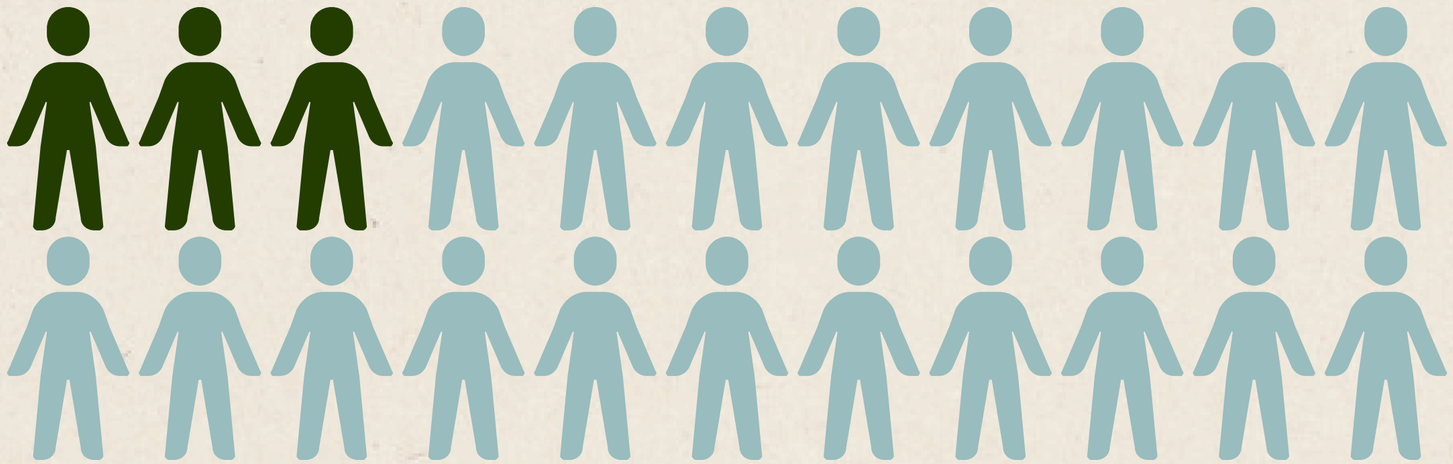
Park Entrance

Visitors arrive briefed; HPNP “experience” already high-value

**4 trips/day peak season**

# Attractive Financial Case

## $205,000 to start. 3 seats of 22 to break even



*This ~10% occupancy breakeven floor creates immense structural resilience. It guarantees the ability to maintain year-round operations, sustain premium guide salaries, and fulfill community fund commitments regardless of seasonal demand fluctuations*

# Profitability

**Profitable across all cases (conservative, base, optimistic). Structural advantage of USD-denominated revenue against LKR-denominated costs**

**YEAR 1 EBITDA**

**~$264,000**

~70% margin

**YEAR 2 EBITDA**

**~$552,000**

~79% margin

**CAPITAL RECOVERY**

**Month 18**

Full Payback

# Tourism infrastructure can be designed to protect the places it depends on

***This paper show how.***
***A shuttle with roadmap to carbon zero. A good guide. A community fund. Sustainable and viable at just ~10% occupancy.***

**DOWNLOAD THE FULL WHITE PAPER**

Comprehensive financial model available upon request.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*Dilanke and Sanda created this as a hobby project, hoping someone would implement this.*