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# Inventory of tourism resources of the mountain area of Texcoco, State of Mexico

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective.** To elaborate an inventory of tourism resources identified in the mountain area of Texcoco, which serve as an instrument for planning and organizing the local tourism system.

**Design/Methodology/Approach.** We considered the application of a survey to the auxiliary authorities, as well as to local and external actors that would allow contextualizing the tourism dynamics in the area. The task was supported by field trips applying the ethnographic method. From the collected data, eight localities were selected within the characteristics, a greater number of tourism resources were identified.

**Results.** It was determined that some of the selected localities have sufficient attributes to potentiate some of their resources as a strategy for local development.

**Limitations/Implications.** The restriction to access information in local offices of the municipal government limited the approach to some resources; thus, self-reported data had to be constructed through the perception of some individuals.

**Conclusions.** It is necessary to develop tourism land-planning instruments through mechanisms of management that include training for local actors on various topics for the sustainable use of tourism resources.

**Keywords:** territorial planning, tourism management, local development, sustainability, rural tourism.

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## INTRODUCTION

Tourism is defined by the Secretaría de Turismo (SECTUR, 2021) as an activity that individuals perform during a trip outside their usual environment for less than a year through various leisure activities. According to the North American Industrial Classification System (DATATUR, 2019) such activity contributes approximately 8.7% of the Gross Domestic Product.

The tourism activity is developed through tourism resources, attractions and products. The first concept (tourism resource) is described by Navarro (2020) as the raw material of the Components of the Target Subsystem which he divides into: natural, artificial, cultural, social, economic and political. A tourism attraction is defined according to Núñez (2004) as any activity that arises from a tourism product, incorporating facilities, equipment and services. As for tourism product, the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 2022) indicates that it is a combination of the elements corresponding to tourism resources and attractions, which is marketed through distribution channels setting price and permanence.

Currently, as the practice of tourism intensifies, mechanisms are proposed to regulate its impact, through the use of concepts such as sustainability, which is proposed by Zarta (2018), as the production of goods and services that satisfy human needs and guarantee the quality of life by strengthening the conditions of the environment and the use of natural resources. On the other hand, sustainability, as indicated by the United Nations (UN, 2015), emphasizes singularities of development from a unique and not integral perspective, which can then be linked to other axes that form it.

According to Camara (2014), as tourism evolves, land-planning and management-planning instruments must be developed, such as inventories of tourism resources, which contribute to recording the status and potential of resources. The elaboration of an inventory of tourism resources implies a methodology based on their classification (origin), and hierarchy (level of interest), which Cárdenas (1991) lists from the highest to the lowest, with 5 as the one of greatest interest, and 1 the one of least. Likewise, criteria are included in the registry such as those integrated by Huizar (2021), such as degree of conservation (excellent, good, regular and bad), type of visitor (foreign, national, regional and local), and degree of influx to the resource on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being the highest level and 4 the lowest level.

Therefore, based on an analysis of existing planning instruments such as the Municipal Development Plan of Texcoco (2022-2024), and the “Pueblos Bonitos” program, it is perceived that tourism activity is not addressed as an issue of relevance for the development of the mountain area of the municipality, despite the fact that it houses tourism resources of great value. For this reason, the objective of this study is to elaborate an inventory of tourism resources that motivate to create new management mechanisms for the management- and land-planning of the local tourism system.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study was conducted in the mountain area of the Municipality of Texcoco in the State of Mexico; at an altitude of 2890 m in areas of dwellings, and up to 4125 m, at the top of mountains. It has an estimated population of approximately 54 936 inhabitants, according to data from the INEGI Population and Households Census (2020); and is composed of sixteen localities.

A classification of the sixteen localities that form the mountain area was made, based on altitude recorded in INEGI (2020), in relation to their main territorial characteristics (urban, semi-urban, rural and semi-rural). This classification was adjusted into three groups: low mountain (MB [urban and semi-urban]), medium mountain (MM [semi-

urban and semi-rural]), and high mountain (MA [semi-urban and rural]). Subsequently, a survey was applied to the auxiliary authorities of each locality, structured in four modules: I. Sociodemographic data, II. Identification of tourism resources, III. Economic and social perception, and IV. Sense of identity. The information obtained was used to select eight locations corresponding to the groups “Medium mountain and high mountain” where a greater concentration of tourism resources was observed, some of them verified by sources such as INEGI (2022) and INAFED (2021).

Field visits were made to identify, photograph and evaluate the state of tourism resources using the ethnographic method. The task was supported by different programmed activities (4 sports and 4 cultural), during which 4 interviews were applied to key informants. The collection of information was completed with a visit to the Municipal Tourism Office where information and physical material were provided that served to analyze how tourism management operates at the municipal level.

From the information obtained, the inventory of tourism resources was elaborated based on the “Components of the Target Subsystem” proposed by Navarro (2020). As for the hierarchy, the one defined by Cárdenas (1991) was used.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All identified resources are listed in Table 1, by area, locality and subsystem.

### Natural

The mountain area presents hydrological resources (bodies and streams of water) only in the MA that by means of runoff supply 6 dams distributed in the MM; the water is used for domestic use, rainy storm agriculture (MM), and irrigation (MA), which are favored by the predominance of a phaeozem type soil. The relief profile is presented in a fractured scheme with a topography of hill and mountain type, where the climate is subhumid temperate (MM and MA), and humid semi-cold (MA). These characteristics according to Cartuche (2019) favor an attractive condition as a function of environmental services. Oak and coniferous (MA) forest predominate, and arid scrubland (MM); as well as induced biotic species (MM and MA), wild and creole species were identified, the latter are bred by grazing and backyard pen for self-consumption and marketing. High mountains in the mountain area are considered protected natural areas in the category of state reserve and is part of the 13 000 hectares of forests according to the List of Priority Regions of CONABIO (2017).

### Artificial

“Both adapted spaces and structures, facilities, infrastructure and artifacts are part of this subsystem” (Navarro, 2020: 23). In this sense, some of the resources stand out for their historical and cultural character that influences the local tourism dynamics. The Archaeological Zone “Cerro de Tetzcotzinco” (INAH, 2018) is paramount, located at an altitude of 2580 m (MM), which preserves ruins of the pre-Hispanic era and the Molino de Flores Nezahualcoyotl National Park (MM), as well as the Casco de la Ex Hacienda Tierra Blanca (MA). Also noteworthy are the Hacienda la Taconera and the Ejidal Nezahualcoyotl

Recreation Center (MM). The religious architecture is also notable (MM and MA), and some movable assets such as the organ inside the church of San Jerónimo (MA), and the Baroque altarpiece inside the church of the Purification (MM). Infrastructure and equipment vary in proportions by locality. Adaptations to the natural environment are observed for the offer of gastronomic services (MA).

### **Cultural**

Montiel (2021) indicated that the mechanisms of cultural transmission in the mountain area are transmitted and preserved through knowledge converted into craft trades such as traditional indigenous medicine, traditional therapeutic practices, herbal medicine and processes of healing, liberation, even exorcism through religious rituals (MA). The traditions are linked to the Catholic religion, a characteristic that in the villages, according to Zurita *et al.* (2019), is usually susceptible to religious tourism. However, events of this nature do not represent market opportunities. These events are usually enlivened with wind music, an outstanding peculiarity as a cultural practice and craft from which arises one of the most valued events at the local level (MA), called “Vientos de la Montaña” Festival. Other identified scheduled events are held by thematic years (1), ephemeris (2) and business entrepreneurship (7), out of which nine corresponded to the middle mountain and one to the high mountain.

The belief system is intangible but becomes apparent through myths such as that of the “Ahuaques”, which according to Montiel (2021) are spirits that reside and guard the water bodies. Like the myth of the “Witches” that is part of the local narratives, both on the high and middle mountain. On the other hand, a deep-rooted system of uses and customs (MA) was observed, such as control in the distribution of environmental services, limitations in the purchase and sale of lands, creation of local transport collectives, permanence of agrarian nuclei and relations of reciprocity that, as described by Sánchez (2012), are linked to kinship, religious beliefs and political ideologies.

### **Social**

It was found that in some localities (MM), communication is established between internal and external actors for the use of tourism resources. Autonomous local groups (MA) were identified for political and cultural purposes, as well as external groups with activities linked to sports (mountain biking, hiking, running or jogging and camping), which visit the eight locations through different ascent dynamics (calling, quota, routes, among others). It is worth mentioning the incidence of institutional actors that develop academic and governmental programs inclined to solve the needs of the territory (MA and MM).

### **Economic**

As for the reproduction of economic forms of subsistence, the practice of playing wind music (MA), the extraction of non-timber forest resources and vegetation (MA), and floriculture (MM), which according to Anastacio *et al.* (2015), generate a demand mainly in the metropolitan area of Mexico City. On the other hand, gastronomy (MA and MM),

emerges as a resource through characteristic meals of the region that in the mountain area, according to González *et al.* (2017), are considered traditional due to their geographical origin (location), time record, the method of elaboration, the raw material used, and the customs associated with their elaboration.

In regard to the offer of housing for tourists, two cabin-type properties (MA) were identified, and it could be evidenced that the stay in the mountain area lasts one day and the days with the highest attendance of visitors are Fridays (12.5%), Saturdays (37.5%), and Sundays (43.8%). In the case of a visit due to a scheduled event, the day and month may vary.

### **Political**

The City Council of Texcoco does not have a solid direction that can open the way to a concrete and effective local tourism development. Therefore, it does not respond to the dynamics that emerge in an unregulated way in relation with tourism activity in the mountain area. However, it promotes a document called “Gaceta Imagen Urbana Pueblos Bonitos” through which it invites to strengthen the image of the localities but subjected to compliance of characteristics that not all possess. Within the Municipal Development Plan (2022-2024), a planning model is presented, composed of four pillars and three transversal axes where lines of action based on three of the Sustainable Development Goals established by the UN (2022) are proposed.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

It was determined that the tourism resources with the most potential for use belong to the Natural classifications (MM and MA), likewise the tourism resources of the Natural and Cultural subsystem present a good degree of conservation within the hierarchy 1, 3 and 4, a degree of influx 3 of local and regional visitors. On the other hand, Artificial type resources have a degree of interest in hierarchy 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4, and Cultural (hierarchy 1), both with a degree of good conservation and type of local and regional visitors with an influx level of 3.

Tourism is not the main economic activity, but it is recommended to regulate it through management, planning and territorial planning mechanisms that respond to the needs of the local population and visitors, subject to what is proposed in the Municipal Development Plan (2022-2024), towards the Sustainable Development Goals. It is suggested that within those mechanisms, training shall be provided to local actors on issues as environmental awareness, construction and preservation of the natural and cultural landscapes, tourism awareness, tourism education, local community, rural enterprises, collective organization and financing.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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**Table 1.** Classification of tourism resources.

| Zone            | Town                      | Natural   | Subsystem   |   |  | Cultural   |   | Social | Economic | Political |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|---|--------|----------|-----------|
|                 |                           |   | Mobavle   | Artificial  | Immovable  | Tangible   | Intangible  |        |          |           |
|                 | La Purificación Tepetitla | <p>Physiography: Hills (Cuauhtzacac's hill).<br/>Hydrography: Barranca seca creek (runoff), three water dams.<br/>Climatology: temperate subhumid<br/>Edaphology: Phaeozem soil<br/>Land use: rainy season agriculture</p> <p>Vegetation: scrub (arid zone)<br/>Induced vegetation: cactus, succulents, bougainvillea, fruit trees (apple, peach, capulin, tejocote); non-fruit trees (pirul, cedar).<br/>Fauna: rabbit, squirrel, cacomiztle, field rat, rattlesnake, swallows, sparrows, magpies, hummingbirds, pigeons, frogs, butterflies, dragonflies, bees, fireflies and native species such as: sheep, goat, cow, bull, pig, hen and turkeys.</p> | <p>Religious artwork: inside the local parish</p> <p>Religious architecture: La Purificación de María (church) urban equipment, road, electrical, hydraulic and sanitary infrastructure</p>   | <p>Scheduled events: Tlacoyo's fair, Carnival.<br/>Myths and legends: Ahuaques<br/>Festivities: Candelarias day, All saints, Holy week<br/>Customs and habits: permanence of agrarian nuclei, religious beliefs, idiosyncrasy</p>   | <p>Internal actors: auxiliary authorities<br/>External actors: collective groups, academic and government institutions, local government</p> | <p>Gastronomic products: baccho, tlacoyo, pulque.<br/>seasonal agriculture culture</p>                                 | <p>Local Government and Auxiliary Authorities</p> |        |          |           |
|                 | San Nicolás Tlaminca      | <p>Physiography: Hills (Tetzcozincro hill's)<br/>Hydrography: Palmilla's creek (runoff)<br/>Climatology: temperate subhumid<br/>Edaphology: Phaeozem soil<br/>Land use: rainy season agriculture<br/>Vegetation: scrub (arid zone)<br/>Induced vegetation (cactus, succulents, bougainvillea, fruit trees (apple, peach, capulin, tejocote); non-fruit trees (pirul, cedar)<br/>Fauna: rabbit, squirrel, cacomiztle, field rat, rattlesnake, gekko, mountain chameleon, swallows, sparrows, magpies, hummingbirds, pigeons, frogs, butterflies, dragonflies, bees, fireflies and native species such as: sheep, cows, pigs, chickens and turkeys.</p>     | <p>Tetzcozincro archaeological zone<br/>Hydraulic engineer: Centro recreativo ejidal "Nezahualcoyotl"<br/>Religious architecture: San Nicolás de Bari (church) contemporary architecture: La Taconera's Farm, bridge/aqueduct fragment urban equipment, road, electrical, hydraulic and sanitary infrastructure</p> | <p>Scheduled events: Commemorative day for the birth of Nezahualcoyotl, Hot air balloon festival,<br/>Myths and legends: Ahuaques<br/>Festivities: San Nicola's day, All saints, Holy week<br/>Customs and habits: permanence of agrarian nuclei, religious beliefs, idiosyncrasy</p> | <p>Internal actors: auxiliary authorities<br/>External actors: collective groups, academic and government institutions, local government</p> | <p>Gastronomic products: baccho, tlacoyo, pulque.<br/>seasonal agriculture: Flowers, fruits</p>                        | <p>Local Government and Auxiliary Authorities</p> |        |          |           |
| Middle Mountain | San Miguel Tlaxipapan     | <p>Physiography: Hills (basaltic prisms, Tecluilache's hill [lookout])<br/>Hydrography: Silverio Pérez waterdam (runoff)<br/>Climatology: temperate subhumid<br/>Edaphology: Phaeozem soil<br/>Land use: rainy season agriculture<br/>Vegetation: scrub (arid zone)<br/>Induced vegetation: succulents, bougainvillea, fruit trees (apple, peach, tejocote, plum); non-fruit trees (cedar);<br/>Fauna: squirrel, vole, geko, swallows, magpies, hummingbirds, doves, frogs, butterflies, dragonflies, bees, fireflies and native species such as: sheep, cow, pig, chicken and turkeys.</p>   | <p>Religious architecture: San Miguel Arcángel (church), Señor de la presa (chapel)<br/>Contemporary architecture: Molino de Flores (farm), El Breco (farmhouse)<br/>urban equipment, road, electrical, hydraulic and sanitary infrastructure</p>   | <p>Scheduled events: Apple and flower fair, Representation of the battle of May 5,<br/>Myths and legends: Ahuaques<br/>Festivities: San Miguel's day, All saints, Holy week<br/>Customs and habits: permanence of agrarian nuclei, religious beliefs, idiosyncrasy</p>                | <p>Internal actors: auxiliary authorities<br/>External actors: collective groups, academic and government institutions, local government</p> | <p>Gastronomic products: baccho, tlacoyo, pulque.<br/>seasonal agriculture: Flowers, fruits<br/>Craft: blown glass</p> | <p>Local Government and Auxiliary Authorities</p> |        |          |           |
|                 | San Diego Xochimánca      | <p>Physiography: Hills (Metecatl's hill)<br/>Hydrography: one dam (runoff)<br/>Climatology: temperate subhumid<br/>Edaphology: Phaeozem soil<br/>Land use: rainy season agriculture<br/>Vegetation: scrub (arid zone)<br/>Induced vegetation: succulents, bougainvillea, fruit trees (apple, peach, tejocote); non-fruit trees (cedar);<br/>Fauna: field rat, swallows, magpies, hummingbirds, butterfly doves, bees and native species such as: sheep, cow, pig, hen and turkeys.</p>  | <p>Religious architecture: San Diego de Alcalá (church) urban equipment, road, electrical, hydraulic and sanitary infrastructure</p>  | <p>Scheduled events: Apple and flower fair, Representation of the battle of May 5,<br/>Myths and legends: Ahuaques<br/>Festivities: San Diego's day, All saints, Holy week<br/>Customs and habits: permanence of agrarian nuclei, religious beliefs, idiosyncrasy</p>                 | <p>Internal actors: auxiliary authorities<br/>External actors: collective groups, academic and government institutions, local government</p> | <p>Gastronomic products: baccho, tlacoyo, pulque.<br/>seasonal agriculture: Flowers, fruits</p>                        | <p>Local Government and Auxiliary Authorities</p> |        |          |           |

Table 1. Continues...

| Zone          | Town                   | Subsystem   |  |   |  | Social  | Economic  | Political   |
|---------------|------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|---|---|
|               |                        | Natural   | Artificial   | Cultural  |  |   |   |   |
|               |                        | Mobavle   | Immovable  | Tangible  | Intangible   |   |   |   |
| High Mountain | San Pablo Ixtepec      | <p>Physiography: Hills and sierra (Tlaloc mountain)</p> <p>Hydrography: watercourses (Los hornos river, la cantera river), springs.</p> <p>Climatology: temperate subhumid and humid semi-cold temperate</p> <p>Edaphology: Phaeozem soil</p> <p>Land use: irrigation agriculture</p> <p>Vegetation: forest (oak and conifers)</p> <p>Induced vegetation: succulents, fruit trees (apple, peach, tejocote, pear, plum); non-fruit trees (cedar);</p> <p>Fauna: rabbit, hare, cacomistle, field vole, sparrows, swallows, magpies, hummingbirds, butterfly doves, bees and Creole species such as: sheep, goat, cow, bull, pig, chicken and turkeys</p>                            | <p>Religious architecture: San Pablo (chapel)</p> <p>Material interventions in the natural space: El Cedral (ecotouristic park), two Lookout's (glass and metal structure)</p> <p>urban equipment, road, electrical, hydraulic and sanitary infrastructure</p>     |   | <p>Scheduled events: ghost mountain</p> <p>Myths and legends: Ahuaques</p> <p>Festivities: San Pablo's day, All saints, Holy week</p> <p>Customs and habits: permanence of agrarian nuclei, religious beliefs, idiosyncrasy</p>  | <p>Internal actors: auxiliary authorities</p> <p>External actors: collective groups, academic and government institutions, local government</p> | <p>Gastronomic products: bacaco, tlacoyo, pulque.</p> <p>seasonal agriculture: Flowers, fruits</p> <p>extraction of non-timber resources</p> <p>wild bark and edible mushrooms</p>  | <p>Local Government and Auxiliary Authorities</p> |
|               | San Jerónimo Amanalco  | <p>Musical instruments: musical organ inside the local church</p>   | <p>Religious architecture: San Jerónimo Doctor (church)</p> <p>Contemporary architecture: Tierra Blanca (farm)</p> <p>Material interventions in the natural space: El Parridor</p> <p>urban equipment, road, electrical, hydraulic and sanitary infrastructure</p> | <p>Traditional therapeutic practices: rubbed sanatorium processes; exorcisms; evil retreats</p> | <p>Teaching and practice of music with wind instruments</p> <p>Scheduled events: Winds of the mountain festival, carnival</p> <p>Myths and legends: Ahuaques</p> <p>Festivities: San Jerónimo's day, All saints, Holy week</p> <p>Customs and habits: permanence of agrarian nuclei, religious beliefs, idiosyncrasy, preservation and use of indigenous language, reciprocity relations, control of environmental services</p>    | <p>Internal actors: auxiliary authorities</p> <p>External actors: collective groups, academic and government institutions, local government</p> | <p>Gastronomic products: bacaco, tlacoyo, pulque.</p> <p>seasonal agriculture: Flowers, fruits</p> <p>extraction of non-timber resources</p> <p>wild bark and edible mushrooms</p> <p>aquaculture: rainbow trout</p> <p>music as a profession</p> | <p>Local Government and Auxiliary Authorities</p> |
|               | Santa María Tecuanulco | <p>Physiography: Hills and sierra</p> <p>Hydrography: watercourses and springs (Tecoatila's creek)</p> <p>Climatology: temperate subhumid and humid semi-cold temperate</p> <p>Edaphology: Phaeozem soil</p> <p>Land use: irrigation agriculture</p> <p>vegetation: forest (oak)</p> <p>induced vegetation: succulents, fruit trees (apple, peach, tejocote, pear, plum); non-fruit trees (cedar);</p> <p>Fauna: rabbit, hare, cacomistle, field rat, gecko, mountain chameleon, rattlesnake, sparrows, swallows magpies, hummingbirds, dragonflies, toads, frogs, doves, butterflies, bees and native species such as: sheep, goats, cows, bulls, pigs, chickens and turkeys</p> | <p>Religious architecture: Santa María Magdalena (church)</p> <p>Material interventions in the natural space: Alhweya (ecotouristic park), urban equipment, road, electrical, hydraulic and sanitary infrastructure</p>  |   | <p>Teaching and practice of music with wind instruments</p> <p>Scheduled events: Winds of the mountain festival, carnival</p> <p>Myths and legends: Ahuaques</p> <p>Festivities: Maria Magdalena's day, All saints, Holy week</p> <p>Customs and habits: permanence of agrarian nuclei, religious beliefs, idiosyncrasy, preservation and use of indigenous language, reciprocity relations, control of environmental services</p> | <p>Internal actors: auxiliary authorities</p> <p>External actors: collective groups, academic and government institutions, local government</p> | <p>Gastronomic products: bacaco, tlacoyo, pulque.</p> <p>seasonal agriculture: Flowers, fruits</p> <p>extraction of non-timber resources</p> <p>wild bark and edible mushrooms</p> <p>music as a profession</p>                                   | <p>Local Government and Auxiliary Authorities</p> |

Table 1. Continues...

| Zone          | Town                     | Natural   | Subsystem |  |   |  | Social  | Economic   | Political   |
|---------------|--------------------------|---|-----------|--|---|--|---|--|---|
|               |                          |   | Movable   | Artificial   | Tangible  | Intangible   |   |  |   |
| High Mountain | Santa Catarina del Monte | <p>Physiography: Hills and sierra</p> <p>Hydrography: watercourses and springs (Tecoatitla's creek)</p> <p>Climatology: temperate subhumid and humid semi-cold temperate</p> <p>Edaphology: Phaeozem soil</p> <p>Land use: irrigation agriculture</p> <p>vegetation: forest (oak)</p> <p>induced vegetation: succulents, fruit trees (apple, peach, tejocote, pear, plum); non-fruit trees (cedar);</p> <p>Fauna: rabbit, hare, coon, field rat, gecko, mountain chameleon, rattlesnake, sparrows, swallows magpies, hummingbirds, dragonflies, toads, frogs, doves, butterflies, bees and native species such as: sheep, goats, cows, bulls, pigs, chickens and turkeys.</p> |           | <p>Religious architecture: Santa Catarina Martir (church),</p> <p>urban equipment, road, electrical, hydraulic and sanitary infrastructure</p> | <p>Traditional therapeutic practices: rubbed</p> <p>Traditional healing remedies: herbal medicine</p> | <p>Teaching and practice of music with wind instruments</p> <p>Scheduled events: Winds of the mountain festival, carnival</p> <p>Myths and legends: Ahuaques</p> <p>Festivities: Santa Catarina's day, All saints, Holy week</p> <p>Customs and habits: permanence of agrarian nuclei, religious beliefs, idiosyncrasy, preservation and use of indigenous languages, reciprocity relations, control of environmental services</p> | <p>Internal actors: auxiliary authorities</p> <p>External actors: collective groups, academic and government institutions, local government</p> | <p>Gastronomic products: barbacoa, tlacoyo, pulque.</p> <p>seasonal agriculture: Flowers, fruits</p> <p>culture: extraction of non-timber resources</p> <p>wild bark and edible mushrooms</p> <p>music as a profession</p> | <p>Local Government and Auxiliary Authorities</p> |

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