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अमृत महोत्सव



# Sustainable Tourism India Issue 6

Central Nodal Agency  
for Sustainable Tourism  
(CNA-ST)



पर्यटन मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
TOURISM

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2023

# Highlights of the Month

## FIRST TOURISM WORKING GROUP MEETING UNDER G20 INDIA'S PRESIDENCY

The first Tourism Working Group Meeting under G20's Presidency was held in Rann of Kutch from February 7th -10th, 2023. The meeting comprised of an inaugural session, 2 side events, and discussion on the five key themes i.e. Green Tourism, Digitalization, Skills, Tourism MSMEs, and Destination Management. Before the working group meeting, a side event on 'Rural Tourism for Community Empowerment and Poverty Alleviation' was organised where the panelists discussed best practises, success stories, and issues of rural tourism in order to employ tourism as a tool for upliftment of the rural population.



Photo Courtesy: cmogujarat.gov.in

## CHIKOO FESTIVAL 2023



India Tourism Mumbai joined and supported the CHIKOO Festival 2023, held at Bordi, Maharashtra on 18th and 19th February, 2023. The festival organised by REWF (Rural Entrepreneurship Welfare Foundation) has provided a platform for budding local entrepreneurs, artists and agro-based industry to showcase their local produce, culture, art and skills. The festival attracted tourists who took part in the Chikoo safari in the fruit Orchards and danced with tribal Warlis on their traditional Tarpa tune.

## 1ST GLOBAL RESPONSIBLE TOURISM SUMMIT

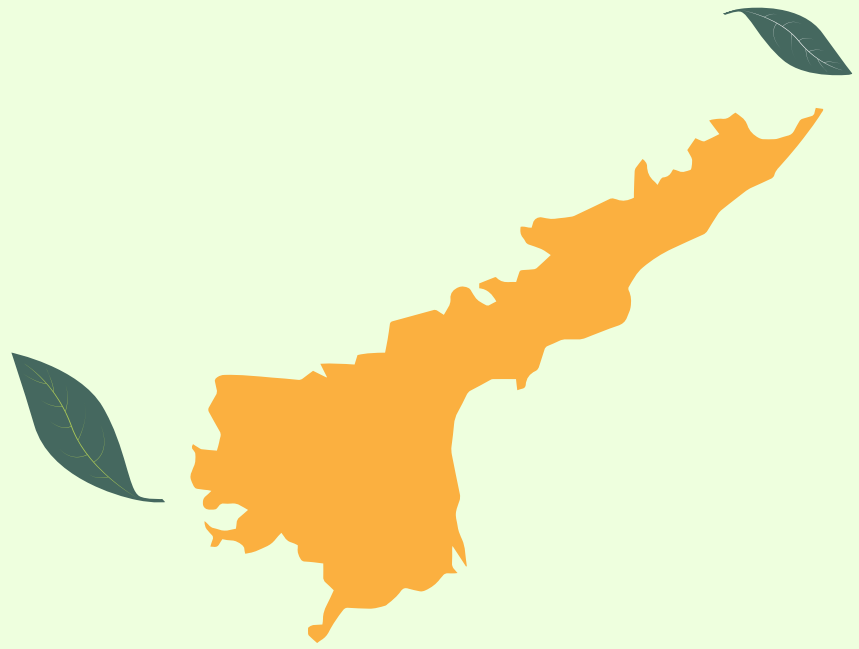
Responsible Tourism Mission, Government of Kerala hosted the 'First Global Responsible Tourism Summit' from 25th to 28th February 2023. The four day summit in Kumarakom, hosted sessions on Kerala's models, contribution and Global Responsible/Sustainable Tourism Practices led by 40+ eminent experts in the field. By the end of the event, the RT Mission launched the Revised RT Declaration 2023 with further emphasis on responsibility in three areas: social, economic and environmental.



## MINISTRY OF TOURISM'S THIRD REGIONAL WORKSHOP IN HYDERABAD



Ministry of Tourism organised the third Regional Workshop on Developing Sustainable & Responsible Tourist Destination as a capacity building initiative for the states/UTs of the South Region. The representatives of state and industry actively participated in the four sessions dedicated to mainstreaming sustainability and provided feedback for effective implementation of sustainable tourism. The stakeholders were sensitised about Ministry's Initiatives such as launch of the National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism, Travel for LiFE Pledge and STCI certification.



# THE FEATURE STATE

## Andhra Pradesh



# State's Initiatives of Sustainable Tourism

## Andhra Pradesh Tourism Policy 2021-2025

The Tourism Policy of Andhra focuses on the following key areas:

- Facilitation of Cleanliness and Waste Management
- Creation of Plastic Free zones
- Adopting Destination Planning and Management
- Promotion of Accessible Tourism
- Provide Safety and Security to Tourists



## Rushikonda Beach Gets Blue Flag Certification

Rushikonda Beach in Visakhapatnam has been recognized with the Blue Flag Certification. The beach fulfils the 33 criteria set by Denmark's Foundation for Environment Education (FEE). This certification signifies that the beach is heading towards inclusion of sustainability in all its activities and protection of the pristine coastal region. With its 974 km long coastline, development of sustainable beaches shall serve as a priority area for the state to boost its overall tourism.

The beach has also been equipped to be accessible to physically challenged population creating a milestone for the state's tourism development.



## Project Sanskriti

Project Sanskriti is an initiative of Andhra Pradesh Tourism to promote and empower communities in the state through the medium of tourism. Under this initiative, Tourists shall have chances to engage with the locals and gain a detailed understanding of their culture, cuisine, and way of life.

In addition to sustainable tourism-related development for the communities, Project Sanskriti aspires to support and revitalise the regional art scene. 12 villages including Madhavmala, Srikalahasti, and Venkatagiri are selected as a part of the first step of the implementation of a community-run tourism model.



PHOTO COURTESY :- Andhra Pradesh Tourism



# Harbingers of Change

## A Brief Overview of some of India's Best Changemakers

# CHANGEMAKER 01

## TONS TRAIL

**Tons Trails** is a social enterprise that works to advance sustainable tourism in the Himalayan Region. The business supports the local mountain communities' economic development while also contributing in the preservation of the region's distinctive natural and cultural legacy.

In 2013, the enterprise started out small, placing the tiny Himalayan village of Kalap on Google maps for tourism by telling the destination's history and teaching the locals how to run a homestay and guide visitors. The success of Kalap saw requests from other Tons Valley communities to collaborate. Currently the enterprise is trying to empower 37 villages economically through tourism.

The enterprise is driven to move cautiously and organically, growing into a significant partner for the local community's overall growth. The core culture of the initiative strongly values giving back to the neighbourhood.



Tons Trails uplift the positive links created by tourism in order to maintain traditional livelihoods, provide necessary services (such as schools and hospitals) and raise environmental awareness.

To experience the region's breathtaking scenery as well as its distinct culture and customs, tourists can take advantage of Tons Trails carefully curated selection of hiking, trekking, and diving excursions. These vary from itineraries created around the local festivities of each town to tours where visitors can live in local village dwellings, sample their food, and learn about the local folklore.

The SDG promoted by Tons Trail are:



PHOTO COURTESY : TONS TRAIL

# CHANGEMAKER 02

## CURTAIN CALL ADVENTURES

**Curtain Call Adventures** founded by Julie Kagti provides small-group tours in the North-eastern regions of India. Using their intimate knowledge and local network, Julie and her team at Curtain Call created excursions focused on specialised hobbies like tribal textiles, local cuisine, or performing arts. Curtain Call was developed to let visitors experience the area as a native. This can involve watching a craftsman use a back strap weaving to make a beautiful piece of textile or taking part in a traditional Manipuri meal on a phumdi, or floating island, in Loktak Lake with birds and purple hyacinths.

The initiative offers immersive travel that entails being completely surrounded by the novelty of a place and actively interacting with its history, culture, people, and environment. The fundamental principle of genuinely "immersive travel" is supported by low impact, responsible tourism.



Curtain Call offers a vast network of naturalists, guides, and transporters who can help one learn about obscure local customs and practises. In all its services, Curtain call ensures sustainability. For instance, the company uses tissues made from recycled paper and reusable water bottles on tours. They hire local communities to give visitors an authentic Native experience, and work closely with artisans in the Northeast through textile tours to create the souvenirs that are offered to visitors. The company creates unique dining experiences for visitors in collaboration with the neighbourhood groups and area chefs. And homestays in the area are the main form of lodging.

The SDGs uplifted by Curtain Call Adventures are:



PHOTO COURTESY : CURTAIN CALL ADVENTURES

# CHANGEMAKER 03

## TOUR DE SUNDARBANS

**Tour de Sundarbans** is a travel company that provides low-impact tours in the Sundarban area. What started as a personal passionate trip of exploring the magic of the Sundarban area soon turned out into a profession for the founders and thereby the company was established to share the joy and passion. The company with its unique excursions has hosted thousands of visitors with the goal of introducing them to the Sundarbans in their natural state, with just enough curation to make them feel at home.

The company actively raised money through for the victims of the BULBUL and AMPHAN cyclones in 2018 and 2019 and planted and created a small patch of mangrove forest to halt soil erosion. This not only benefited the natives but also improved relations between tourists and residents.



For their outstanding contribution, Tour de Sundarbans received the esteemed THA award. The company has been rated as the best trip operator in Sundarban by Tripadvisor with over 1200 reviews. The Eco village has been featured in the last three editions of Lonely Planet and a dedicated episode of the travel show "Travel Xp" channel.

The SDGs promoted by Curtain Call Adventures are:



PHOTO COURTESY : TOUR DE SUNDERBANS



# Leading the Change

A chit-chat with the  
Responsible Travel  
Writer of  
the month





# SHIVYA NATH

109K followers

## 1. Why did you make the decision to begin writing The Shooting Star?

While travelling solo in India, many negative perceptions arose about what it's like to travel alone as a woman in remote parts of India. But this 95% of the experiences while travelling from Uttarakhand to Odisha - were overwhelmingly positive. So to encourage women to step out of their comfort zones and experience India (and the world) on their own terms, The Shooting Star (an award-winning blog) was made which focuses on slow, meaningful and sustainable travel.

## 2. Could you offer any advice to tourists on how to ecotravel anywhere?

A good starting point is to consciously think of every travel choice we make, and how that impacts a destination and the local community.

- Plan a trip in the offseason to avoid overcrowd.
- Add meaning to a trip by enrolling in a course, volunteering, or supporting a community tourism which involves homestays, village walks, cooking lessons, birding outings, astronomy and other ways of building deeper connections with locals.
- Make your stay in a family-run homestay, a small guesthouse, a boutique hotel or an eco lodge. Look for the 'travel sustainable' tag on a website like booking.com.

## 3. What are your personal values and beliefs in terms of sustainability?

Sustainability is a way to live - and travel - that allows everyone and everything around us to flourish (including ourselves). It encompasses everyday choices at home, and on the road, that positively impact local and global ecosystems, uplift economically depressed and marginalized communities, help preserve traditional culture and heritage, and in the process, allow us to widen our worldview - and even undergo an inner transformation.

## 5. How did your journey as a responsible traveler begin?

Being influenced by a volunteer travel stint in the Trans-Himalayas of India while volunteering with a community-based tourism enterprise learnt how tourism could contribute to sustainable development, create alternative livelihoods for local people, and keep alive cultural traditions

## 6. How do you make people more aware about climate conscious travel?

We've partnered our consultancy Climate Conscious Travel with an award-winning Netherlands-based boutique digital agency, to build the world's first "Sustainable Cities" platform. We've been working with destinations and businesses to centre community-centric climate action in tourism offerings, including carbon footprint reduction, climate awareness through travel, and sustainability storytelling.



Read more:  
[The Shooting Star](#)

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Photo Courtesy: Yandex