

Proceedings of the 1st meeting of National Board for Sustainable Tourism held under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Tourism), Government of India on 16th August 2022 at 11:30 PM

1st meeting of National Board for Sustainable Tourism was held under the Chairmanship of Shri Arvind Singh, IAS, Secretary (Tourism) through hybrid mode on 16th August 2022 at 11.30PM.

Agenda 1.1 Leave of absence

The list of participants, who attended the meeting is given at Annexure-1. Leave of absence was granted to those, who could not attend the meeting. Additional Secretary (Tourism) welcomed the members to the first meeting of the Board.

Agenda 1.2 Introduction to National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism

1. A presentation on National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism was made by IITTM and following salient features of the strategy were covered:
 - (i) Introduction
 - (ii) Vision, Mission and Strategy
 - (iii) Promoting Environmental Sustainability
 - (iv) Protecting Biological Diversity and Natural Heritage
 - (v) Promoting Economic Sustainability
 - (vi) Promoting Socio-cultural Sustainability
 - (vii) Certification Scheme for Sustainable Tourism
 - (viii) IEC and Capacity Building
 - (ix) Governance and Institutional Framework
2. The members noted the salient features of the Strategy and appointment of Institute of Travel and Tourism Management (IITTM) as Central Nodal Agency for Sustainable Tourism (CNA-ST) assisting the Ministry of Tourism in the implementation of the Strategy.

Agenda 1.3 Green Tourism and India's G-20 presidency

1. The members noted the following:
 - (i) Green Tourism – A key Priority of India for G-20 Presidency
 - (ii) India to assume a leadership role towards achieving 2030 sustainable development goals
 - (iii) G-20 – an Opportunity to Showcase Sustainable Practices

- (iv) Planning World Summit on Green Tourism
2. The members were requested to send their suggestions and feedback to the Ministry for showcasing the sustainable tourism initiatives and making impact amongst G-20 countries during India's G-20 Presidency.

Agenda 1.4 Awareness about Sustainable Tourism through IEC Campaign

1. CNA-ST presented an Action Plan for IEC Campaign for Sustainable Tourism for States and Industry stakeholders covering the following aspects:
 - (i) Activities planned for IEC campaign
 - (ii) Preparation of toolkits for tourism subsectors
 - (iii) Strategies for email marketing
 - (iv) Strategies for social media marketing
 - (v) Travel for LiFE Campaign
2. It was noted that IEC campaign is crucial for creating awareness about sustainable tourism. CNA-ST was accordingly asked to launch awareness campaign forthwith.

Agenda 1.5 Capacity Building

1. CNA-ST presented a preliminary presentation on capacity building needs which highlighted following points based on the industry needs:
 - (i) Gaps in Capacity Building
 - (ii) Case studies for Capacity Building
 - (iii) Focus areas for Capacity Building initiatives
 - (iv) Implementation framework for Capacity Building
 - (v) Regional workshops
 - (vi) Grassroot level trainings
2. It was decided that Regional Workshops may be organized in close coordination with RTSOI and UNEP.

Agenda 1.6 State Assessment and Ranking

1. CNA-ST presented a preliminary presentation on ranking criteria for state assessment which suggested following pillars as a reference to develop the assessment criteria:
 - (i) Governance and Institutional Framework

- (ii) Promotion of Economic Sustainability
 - (iii) Promotion of Environmental Sustainability
 - (iv) Protection of Biological Diversity
 - (v) Promotion of Socio-cultural Sustainability
2. Sub pillars and subsequent set of questions under each sub pillar were also presented by CNA-ST.
3. It was decided that the framework may be circulated to all the States and other Stakeholders for their feedback and other preparatory steps may be taken for assessment and ranking.

Agenda 1.7 Destination Planning, Development and Management

1. M/s EY, NPMU made a detailed presentation on Swadesh Darshan 2.0, which has focus on developing sustainable and responsible tourist destinations. The presentation explained following aspects to achieve sustainability in Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme.
 - (i) Toolkits to incorporate Sustainable Practices
 - (ii) Tourism Carrying Capacity assessment model
 - (iii) Visitor Management System
2. It was decided that salient features of mainstreaming sustainability in the revamped scheme may be circulated to all the Stakeholders for their feedback and suggestion to strengthen the scheme.

Agenda 1.8 Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI)

CNA-ST briefed the members on published Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI) and MOT's ongoing effort to develop NIDHI Plus – a digital platform for registration, classification and showcasing accommodation units and other tourism service providers. NIDHI Plus will facilitate classification and implementation of Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI). The pilot launch will be done by September 27, 2022.

Suggestions and Feedback from the Members

1. During the course of meeting following suggestions were made by the members:
 - (i) Visitor Management System should efficiently be used for capturing tourist data.

- (ii) Principles of 'Leave No Trace' can be referred to develop and implement the Sustainable Tourism Certification
- (iii) CII had prepared a study plan for Carrying Capacity for different types of terrains that can become benchmark for state to identify the carrying capacity of their destination
- (iv) The concept of 'Private Conservancy' can be explored for the protection and growth of forest areas. CII can submit the list of best practices of Private Conservancy
- (v) Some areas such as 'Markha Valley of Ladakh' should be declared as World Natural Sites. Industry can submit the list of such locations whose synergy can be assessed with other initiatives such as 'Mega Trails'
- (vi) Best case studies of various other tourism subsectors other than tour operators such as Airlines, Transportation, Communities should be compiled.
- (vii) The focus should be given to control the local unorganised eateries and accommodations. The sustainability aspects of tourism practices of hotels located in urban areas should be assessed.
- (viii) The coordination with Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change should be strengthened. UNEP can guide MOT on what core aspects to focus upon in the implementation of Sustainable Tourism. UNEP's Global Tourism Plastic initiative can get added in the capacity building for hotels. UNEP can assist in identifying the Environmental indicators in any Sustainable Tourism initiative by the MOT
- (ix) Sustainable Tourism initiatives need to focus on developing measurement mechanisms. Focus on developing 'Incredible Adventure Destinations' can be effective. An initiative of launching award competitions only for Sustainability Initiatives can be helpful.
- (x) Research and Development in Sustainable Tourism is still a weak segment. We need to develop more study material, modules, case studies, and reports that will guide the implementation of Sustainable Tourism
- (xi) Orissa Tourism has developed an Ecotourism Roadmap that they can share with MOT. State has taken an initiative to develop 'Sanctuary Management Plan'. The issue in this initiative is the forest department lacks the orientation of tourism and tourism department lacks the jurisdiction or capacity to deal with forest related issues. There has to be synergy between tourism departments and other

initiatives such as Swatchh Bharat of Rural and Urban. The state has taken up an initiative to replace the polluting river boats.

- (xii) Offering incentive to tourism stakeholders develops the sense of ownership which becomes important for successful implementation of Sustainable Tourism initiatives
 - (xiii) State specific modules for Sustainable Tourism Development would be helpful to take sustainability initiatives at state level.
 - (xiv) Waste Management component should be incorporated in any Sustainable Tourism Development initiative. We need to make Public Toilets aspirational that strengthens the tourism infrastructure. Maintenance issue of public toilets need to be resolved. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs would like to get inputs from MOT for the Swatch Sarvekshan.
2. It was decided that the suggestions may be suitably incorporated in various initiatives proposed for sustainable tourism. A separate meeting to be held with CII regarding their plans submitted earlier for carrying capacity. Similarly a meeting with RTSOI and UNEP may be held regarding regional workshops and modalities finalized.

ANNEXURE A

1. List of Participants from Ministries

Ministries	Name	Designation
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change	Mr. Rajasekhar Ratti	Joint Director (WL)
Ministry of Civil Aviation	Ms. Usha Padhee	Joint Secretary (U)
Ministry of Culture	Ms. Sanjukata Mudgil	Joint Secretary
Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	Mr. Sandesh Tilkar	Director
Ministry of DoNER	Mr. Harpreet Singh	Joint Secretary
Ministry of Rural Development	Ms. Smriti Sharan	Joint Secretary
Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Ms. Sangeeta Gupta	Director
Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare	Mr. Ashwani Kumar	Joint Secretary
Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs	Ms. Rupa Mishra	Joint Secretary
Ministry of Road and Transport Highways	Mr. Sudip Chaudhary	Chief Engineer
Ministry of MSME	Mr. BP Srivastava	DDG

2. List of Participants from Heads of Central Government Organizations

Organization	Name	Designation
Indian Institute of Travel and Tourism Management	Prof. Alok Sharma	Director
	Dr. Aditi Chowdhary	Nodal Officer, CNAG
	Ms. Ranu Chouhan	Assistant Professor, IITTM
	Ms. P Priyadarshini	Project Associate, IITTM-Noida

3. List of Participants from States

State	Name	Designation
Ladakh	Mr. K. Mehboob Ali Khan, IRS	Secretary (Tourism/Labour&Employment)
Himachal Pradesh		Secretary
Madhya Pradesh	Mr. Manoj Kumar Singh	Director (Tourism)
Odisha	Mr. Satyanar Jadhav, IAS	Director
Kerala	Mr. P B Nooh IAS	Director
Sikkim	Ms. Vijeta Chettri	Tourism Officer

4. List of Participants from Industry Associations

Industry Associations	Name
FICCI	Mr. Dipak Deva
	Mr. Manish Ahuja
RTSOI	Mr. Mandip Singh Soin
	Mr. Rakesh Mathur
	Dr. Anjuna Dhir
CII National Committee on Tourism	Mr. Sanjay Basu
	Mr. Ajeet Bajaj
	Ms. Isha Verma Miglani
IATO	Mr. Rajnish Kaistha

5. List of Participants from Special Invitee

Organization	Name	Designation
UNEP	Mr. Atul Bagai	Country Head
	Ms. Manisha Choudhary	National Coordinator

6. List of Participants from MOT

Name	Designation
Mr. G Kamla Vardhan Rao, IAS	Director General, MOT
Mr. Rakesh Kumar Verma, IAS	Additional Secretary, MOT
Mr. Om Prakash	Under Secretary (NT), MOT
Ms. Gargi Mittal	Assistant Director, Niche Tourism Division
Ms. Faisal Khan	NPMU
Ms. Manjiri Gaikwad	NPMU