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Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

organizes

Regional Workshop on Developing Sustainable & Responsible Tourist Destinations and Responsible Traveller Campaign

In Association with
Central Nodal Agency for Sustainable Tourism,
Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM)

Partner Organisations
United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)
&
Responsible Tourism Society of India (RTSOI)

North Eastern Region

28th April, 2023
The Lily Hotel,
Guwahati



**Ministry of Tourism
Government of India**

**Regional Workshop
on**

Developing Sustainable and Responsible Tourist Destinations

National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism

1. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has prepared a National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism in consultation with relevant Ministries, State Governments and Industry Stakeholders. The National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism has been notified vide NT/1401/2/2021 dated 29th April 2022. The strategy aims to mainstream sustainability in the Indian tourism sector and ensures more resilient, inclusive, carbon-neutral and resource-efficient tourism while safeguarding natural and cultural resources.
2. The Ministry of Tourism has further designated the Indian Institute of Travel and Tourism Management (IITTM) as the Central Nodal Agency to assist the Ministry in implementing the strategy. The Ministry of Tourism has also set up a National Board on Sustainable Tourism, which comprises representatives from different Ministries and State Tourism Departments apart from Industry Stakeholders.

Tourism – faces Significant Sustainability-related Challenges

3. The National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism recognizes that Tourism has a major impact on the natural and built environments and on the well-being and culture of host populations. The tourism industry has led to pressure on fragile ecosystems and wildlife. It also puts considerable pressure on host communities and competes for the use of scarce resources, notably land and water. It has become a significant contributor to local and global pollution. It also contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions.

Sustainable Tourism – Definition and Guiding Principles

4. The National Strategy has stated that “Sustainable Tourism is tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.”

Sustainable tourism should follow the three basic principles:

Environmental Sustainability

Making optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.

Socio-cultural Sustainability

Respecting the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserving their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contributing to intercultural understanding and tolerance.

Economic Sustainability

Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities and contributing to poverty alleviation.

Sustainable Tourism – All tourism should be more Sustainable

5. The principles of sustainable tourism shall apply to all forms of tourism in all destinations, including mass tourism and various niche tourism segments. Sustainable tourism is not a discrete or special form of tourism. Rather, all forms of tourism should strive to be more sustainable. Making tourism more sustainable is managing the industry's negative impacts and using tourism to benefit local communities economically and socially and raise awareness and support for conserving natural and cultural heritage.

Sustainable Tourism – Potential to contribute to the achievement of 2030 SDGs

6. Tourism has been included as a target in Goals 8, 12 and 14 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources, respectively. Tourism, however, has the potential to contribute, directly or indirectly, to all of the sustainable development goals. The hiatus in the tourism sector brought about by COVID-19 provides a chance to rethink and reset the direction of tourism and the values on which its success is judged. The COVID-19 crisis is a watershed moment to align the efforts of sustaining livelihoods dependent on tourism to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Strategic Pillars of National Strategy

7. The National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism has identified the following strategic pillars for developing sustainable tourism:

- (i). Promoting Environmental Sustainability
- (ii). Protecting Biodiversity
- (iii). Promoting Economic Sustainability
- (iv). Promoting Socio-Cultural Sustainability
- (v). Scheme for Certification of Sustainable Tourism
- (vi). IEC and Capacity Building
- (vii). Governance

Key Stakeholders

8. Promoting and developing sustainable tourism will involve diverse stakeholders whose role will be crucial for the strategy's success. The key stakeholders are:

- (i). Central Ministries
- (ii). State Governments
- (iii). Local Government Institutions
- (iv). Industry
- (v). Non-government organizations
- (vi). Local community

Developing Sustainable and Responsible Tourist Destinations under SD 2.0

9. Ministry of Tourism has revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme into Swadesh Darshan 2.0. The revamped scheme seeks to attain "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" by realizing India's potential as a tourism destination. Swadesh Darshan 2.0 is not an incremental change but a generational shift to evolve Swadesh Darshan Scheme as a holistic mission to develop sustainable and responsible tourism destinations covering tourism and allied infrastructure, tourism services, human capital development, destination management and promotion backed by policy and institutional reforms. Detailed guidelines have been issued vide no. SD/8/15/2020-SD dated 19th April 2022.

Sustainable and responsible tourism – at the core of Swadesh Darshan Scheme

10. Swadesh Darshan Scheme 2.0 will implement sustainable and responsible tourism practices in various projects and initiatives under the Scheme. The Scheme will encourage

the adoption of principles of sustainable tourism, including environmental sustainability, sociocultural sustainability and economic sustainability. Some initiatives will include:

- (i) The States will ensure due consultation with local communities and stakeholders while preparing the projects to develop the destinations.
- (ii) The States will encourage the use of renewable energy, eco-friendly material, e-vehicles etc., in the projects
- (iii) The States will ensure the development of accessible infrastructure and services at the selected destinations under the Scheme.
- (iv) There will be an adequate focus on capacity building among local communities, particularly youth and women, to enable them to take up jobs and opportunities in the tourism sector.
- (v) The States will encourage local entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities in the tourism value chain.
- (vi) The States will also launch a sustainability campaign to encourage tourism enterprises to adopt sustainable and responsible practices.
- (vii) The States will also sensitize tourists to respect the environment and behave responsibly.

Regional Workshop on Developing Sustainable and Responsible Tourist Destinations

11. In order to develop sustainable and responsible tourist destinations and promote sustainable tourism in the Country, the Central Nodal Agency for Sustainable Tourism (IITTM), under the aegis of the Ministry of Tourism in partnership with UNEP and RTSOI is organizing a workshop on the Development of Sustainable and Responsible Tourist Destinations in line with National Strategy for sustainable tourism and guidelines of Swadesh Darshan Scheme 2.0.
12. The workshop will provide an opportunity for the Central Nodal Agency for Sustainable Tourism to share national strategy, guidelines and future roadmap, perspectives from partner organizations, namely UNEP and RTSOI and best practices in implementation from the States and Industry Stakeholders.

13. The workshop will have four sessions to deliberate with Stakeholders on various aspects of sustainable tourism. Leaders from the Government and Industry and leading professionals will share their vision, experience and thoughts in making our tourist destinations sustainable and responsible.

Participants

14. The Workshop will see the participation of leaders from the Ministry of Tourism, UNEP, RTSOI and representatives from the States of the region. It will have the participation of professional experts, industry leaders and Government officials involved in sustainable tourism. Industry Associations from the travel, tourism and hospitality sector will also participate.

Expected Outcomes

15. The Regional Workshop is expected to achieve the following outcomes:
 - (i). Capacity building for sustainable tourism planning and visitor management solutions
 - (ii). Foster regional integration and transboundary tourism development and promotion through increased networking
 - (iii). Creation of awareness about trends and best practices for mainstreaming sustainability in tourism
 - (iv). Support to States in strengthening the institutional framework and creation of an enabling environment for the development and promotion of sustainable tourism
 - (v). Empowerment of industry partners to design and market sustainable tourism products that minimize negative impacts, maximize benefit to local communities and preserve cultural and natural heritage through sustainable tourism practices

Program

16. The details of the program during the One Day Regional Workshop on Developing Sustainable and Responsible Tourist Destinations at Guwahati is as follows:

<p>9:00 am – 9:30 am</p>	<p>Registration, Tea/ Coffee, Networking</p>
<p align="center">Session 1 – Mainstreaming Sustainability in Tourism Sector</p> <p align="center">9:30 am – 10:45 am</p>	
<p>Proposed Agenda</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome Address 2. Introduction National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism through a video 3. Presentation on Swadesh Darshan 2.0 Development of Sustainable and Responsible Tourist Destinations 4. Presentation on mobilising tourist behavioural change: ‘Campaign for Responsible Traveller’ by RTSOI 5. Presentation on Ministry of Tourism’s “Travel for LiFE” 6. Presentation on UNEP initiatives for Sustainable Tourism
<p align="center">Tea Break</p> <p align="center">10:45 – 11 AM</p>	
<p align="center">Session 2- Experience Sharing by State Tourism Departments</p> <p align="center">11 am – 1:00 pm</p>	

Proposed Agenda	<p>States have been taking various initiatives to promote sustainable and responsible tourism. The Session will provide an opportunity for the States to share their experiences, achievements, challenges and future action plans.</p> <p>Arunachal Pradesh</p> <p>Assam</p> <p>Manipur</p> <p>Meghalaya</p> <p>Mizoram</p> <p>Nagaland</p> <p>Sikkim</p> <p>Tripura</p>
<p>Lunch</p> <p>01:00 pm – 02:00 pm</p>	
<p>Session 3 – Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI): Current Status and Way Forward</p> <p>2:00 pm – 3:00 pm</p>	
Proposed Agenda	<p>The Ministry of Tourism has published the Scheme for Certification for Sustainable Tourism as per STCI principles and indicators for destinations, accommodation sector and tour operators as contained in the National Strategy.</p> <p>IITM, CNA-ST has prepared assessment criteria and document checklists for accommodation units, tour operators and destinations, which have been incorporated for piloting on the NIDHI plus platform, a</p>

	<p>digital platform developed by the Ministry of Tourism with the help of the Quality Council of India.</p> <p>CNA-ST will present the current status and way forward on STCI, and the session will be followed by questions and answers.</p>
<p>Session 4 – Industry Experience 3:15 pm – 4:30 pm</p>	
<p>Proposed Agenda</p>	<p>The moderator will set the context for the role of Industry in sustainable tourism and provide an overview of the best practices adopted.</p> <p>Industry leaders will share their success stories, challenges and best practices in the Hospitality Sector, which promote sustainable and responsible tourism, such as reduction in energy requirement, usage of renewable energy, adoption of water conservation and other such initiatives.</p> <p>Industry leaders will also highlight the need for implementing best practices across the Tourism supply chain ensuring sustainability in the delivery of the overall Tourist experience.</p> <p>Sustainability is crucial for adventure and ecotourism. Industry leaders will showcase industry practices which highlight sustainability in Adventure and Ecotourism.</p> <p>Towards the end, the workshop can be concluded by thanking the presence, contribution and participation of all the speakers and the attendees.</p>