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संख्या 16/4/2022- प्रशासन

दिनांक: 09.05.2022

सेवा में ,

निदेशक / प्रभारी निदेशक

परिषद के सभी संस्थान/केन्द्र

विषय :- National Strategies for (i) Sustainable Tourism, (ii) Eco Tourism and (iii) Adventure
Tourism

महोदय / महोदया,

अधोहस्ताक्षरी को उपर्युक्त विषय पर पर्यटन मंत्रालय (आला पर्यटन प्रभाग), पहली मंजिल, परिवहन भवन, 1, संसद मार्ग, नई दिल्ली, से प्राप्त कार्यालय ज्ञापन संख्या NT-1401/2/2021, दिनांक 29.04.2022 को सूचना एवं आवश्यक कारवाई हेतु अग्रेषित करने का निदेश हुआ है।

भवदीय,

(जगदीश राजेश)

सहायक महानिदेशक (प्रशा.)

अनुलग्नक : यथोक्त

प्रतिलिपि:-

1. महानिदेशक /वरि. उपमहानिदेशक (प्रशा.)/ अति महानिदेशक/ वरि. वित्त सलाहकार के निजी सचिव
2. परिषद के सभी प्रभाग प्रमुख
3. उपमहानिदेशक (प्रशा.) /सहा. महानिदेशक (प्रशा.)/ सहा. महानिदेशक (वित्त.)
4. डॉ.एल.के शर्मा ,वैज्ञानिक –ई: वैबसाइट पर अपलोड करने के लिए ईमेल आईडी

    (**sharma.lk@icmr.gov.in**) पर मेल कर दिया गया है।

भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान अनुसंधान परिषद
स्वास्थ्य अनुसंधान विभाग, स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार
कल्याण मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार

Indian Council of Medical Research
Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health
and Family Welfare, Government of India

No.16/4/2022-Admn

Dated: 09/05/2022

To

The Directors/Directors-in-Charge of
all ICMR Institutes/Centers

Subject:-   National Strategies for (i) Sustainable Tourism, (ii) Eco Tourism and (iii) Adventure
Tourism.

Sir/Madam,

I am directed to refer a copy of OM letter No. NT-1401/2/2021, dated 29.04.2022
received from Ministry of Tourism, (Niche Tourism Division), 1st Floor, Transport Bhawan, 1,
Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001,on the subject mentioned above for information and necessary
action.

Yours faithfully

(Jagdish Rajesh)
Assistant Director General (Admn)

Encl : As above
Copy to:

 (1) PS to DG/Addl.DG/Sr. DDG(A)/ Sr. FA
 (2) All Divisional Heads
 (3) DDG (A)/ ADG(A)/ ADG(F)
 (4) Dr. L.K. Sharma, Scientist "E"- soft copy of the same has been mailed at your email
  ID(Sharma.Ik@icmr.gov.in) for website upload.

Fwd: National Strategies for (i) Sustainable Tourism, (ii) Eco Tourism and (iii) Adventure Tourism

1 message

SAFAL CHETRI CHETRI <chetri.s@icmr.gov.in>   Thu, May 5, 2022 at 4:33 PM
To: admn2355 <admn2355@gmail.com>

From: "MOHITA SAXENA" <mohita.saxena@gov.in>
To: "Daulat Ram Meena" <daulat.meena@gov.in>, "Aruna Sen" <aruna.sen@gov.in>, "Vinod Kumar" <vinod.kumar27@nic.in>, "SAFAL CHETRI CHETRI" <chetri.s@icmr.gov.in>, "rajnikant srivastava" <rajnikant.srivastava@gmail.com>, "R Lakshminarayanan" <lakshminarayanan.r@icmr.gov.in>
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 11:04:05 AM
Subject: Fwd: National Strategies for (i) Sustainable Tourism, (ii) Eco Tourism and (iii) Adventure Tourism

Madam/Sir,
       Please see attachment on the above noted subject for information and necessary action.

Regards

Mohita Saxena
Assistant Director
DHR, MoHFW

From: "Dinesh Kumar" <dinesh.kumar64@nic.in>
To: "MOHITA SAXENA" <mohita.saxena@gov.in>
Sent: Wednesday, May 4, 2022 2:38:29 PM
Subject: Fwd: National Strategies for (i) Sustainable Tourism, (ii) Eco Tourism and (iii) Adventure Tourism

---

From: "S N JASRA" <sn.jasra38@nic.in>
To: "Dinesh Kumar" <dinesh.kumar64@nic.in>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 5:22:28 PM
Subject: Fwd: National Strategies for (i) Sustainable Tourism, (ii) Eco Tourism and (iii) Adventure Tourism

Pl circulate.

DS(Coord.)

Ms. Madhu
[signature]
JS

From: "geetan" <geetan@nic.in>
To: "S N JASRA" <sn.jasra38@nic.in>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 5:19:22 PM
Subject: Fwd: National Strategies for (i) Sustainable Tourism, (ii) Eco Tourism and (iii) Adventure Tourism

① No. 185 Admn
6/5/2022

From: "Prof. Balram Bhargava" <balram.bhargava@gov.in>
To: balrambhargava@yahoo.com, "geetan" <geetan@nic.in>, "Anu Nagar" <anu.nagar1@gov.in>, "Sr DDG Admin" <srddga.hq@icmr.gov.in>
Cc: "Secretary DHR" <dg@icmr.org.in>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 5:06:14 PM
Subject: Fwd: National Strategies for (i) Sustainable Tourism, (ii) Eco Tourism and (iii) Adventure Tourism

From: "Om Prakash" <prakash.om50@nic.in>
To: "Manoj Ahuja" <secy-agri@gov.in>, "Trilochan Mohapatra" <dg.icar@nic.in>, "RAJESH KOTECHA" <secy-ayush@nic.in>, "Office of Secretary (C&PC)" <sec.cpc@nic.in>, "Secretary DoF" <fertsec@nic.in>, "Ms S. Aparna" <secy-pharma@nic.in>, "secy moca" <secy.moca@nic.in>, "Anil Kumar Jain" <secy.moc@nic.in>, "Commerce Secretary Office" <csoffice@nic.in>, "Secy DPIIT" <secy-ipp@nic.in>, "ROHIT KUMAR SINGH" <secy-ca@nic.in>, "Mr Sudhanshu Pandey" <secy-food@nic.in>, secretary-posts@indiapost.gov.in, "K Rajaraman" <secy-dot@nic.in>, "Secretary MCA" <secy.mca@nic.in>, "Govind Mohan" <secy-culture@nic.in>, "DEFENCE SECRETARY" <defsecy@nic.in>, "Raj Kumar" <sdpns@nic.in>, "Shri B. Anand" <secyesw@nic.in>, "Mr Lok Ranjan" <secydoner@nic.in>, "Dr M Ravichandran" <secretary@moes.gov.in>, "Shri K. Rajaraman" <secretary@meity.gov.in>, "Ms Leena Nandan" <secy-moef@nic.in>, "Vinay Kwatra" <psfs@mea.gov.in>, "Shri Ajay Seth" <secy-dea@nic.in>, "T.V. Somanathan" <secyexp@nic.in>, "Sanjay Malhotra" <secy-fs@nic.in>, "Shri Tarun Bajaj Secretary DOR" <rsecy@nic.in>, "Secretary DIPAM" <secydivest@nic.in>, "Mr Atul Chaturvedi" <secyahd@nic.in>, "Jatindranath Swain" <secy-fisheries@nic.in>, "Secretary MoFPI" <secy.mofpi@nic.in>, "Mr Rajesh Bhushan" <secyhfw@nic.in>, "Prof. Balram Bhargava" <balram.bhargava@gov.in>, "Arun Goel" <shioff@nic.in>, "Shri Ali R. Rizvi" <secy-dpe@nic.in>, "Ajay Kumar Bhalla" <hshso@nic.in>, "Manoj Joshi" <secyurban@nic.in>, "K. Sanjay Murthy" <secy.dhe@nic.in>, "Ms Anita Karwal" <secy.sel@nic.in>, "Apurva Chandra" <secy.inb@nic.in>, "Shri Pankaj Kumar" <secy-mowr@nic.in>, "Ms. Vini Mahajan" <secydws@nic.in>, "O/o Secy Labour Employment" <secy-labour@nic.in>, "Pankaj Kumar" <secy-jus@gov.in>, "Dr. Reeta Vasishta" <secylaw-dla@nic.in>, "Secretary LD" <secyoffice-ld@gov.in>, "Bidyut Behari Swain" <secretary-msme@nic.in>, "Alok Tandon" <secy-mines@nic.in>, "Secretary(Minority Affairs)" <secy-mma@nic.in>, "Mr. Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi" <secy-mnre@nic.in>, "Mr Sunil Kumar" <secy-mopr@nic.in>, "Gyanesh Kumar" <secympa@nic.in>, "Shri V. Srinivas" <secy-arpg@nic.in>, "Office of Secretary, Personnel" <secy_mop@nic.in>, "Secy PNG" <sec.png@nic.in>, "Shri Alok Kumar" <secy-power@nic.in>, "SecretaryRlyBoard RailwayBoard" <secyrb@rb.railnet.gov.in>, "Mr Nagendra Nath Sinha" <secyrd@nic.in>, "SECRETARY DST" <dstsec@nic.in>, "Dr Rajesh S Gokhale" <secy@dbt.nic.in>, "Dr Shekhar C Mande" <secy-dsir@nic.in>, "Office of Secretary Ports Shipping and Waterways" <secyship@nic.in>, "Rajesh Aggarwal" <secy-msde@nic.in>, "Mr R Subrahmanyam" <secywel@nic.in>, "Ms. Anjali Bhawra" <secretaryda-msje@nic.in>, "Dr(Mr) G P Samanta" <secretary@mospi.gov.in>, "Sanjay Singh" <secy-steel@nic.in>, "Secretary Textiles" <secy-textiles@nic.in>, "Lakshmi Naryain" <secy-tribal@nic.in>, "Mr Indevar Pandey" <secy.wcd@nic.in>, "Secretary Youth Affairs" <secy-ya@nic.in>, "SUJATA CHATURVEDI" <secy-sports@nic.in>
Cc: "Rakesh Kumar Verma" <js.tourism@gov.in>, "Sanjay Singh" <sanjay.singh1@nic.in>, "GARGI MITTAL" <gargi.mittal@gov.in>, "Niche Tourism" <niche-tour@gov.in>, "sagardutta ey" <sagardutta.ey@gmail.com>, "Sagar Dutta" <sagar.sdpmu@govcontractor.in>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 4:59:29 PM
Subject: National Strategies for (i) Sustainable Tourism, (ii) Eco Tourism and (iii) Adventure Tourism

Sir/Madam,

Please find attached Office Memoranda dated 29.04.2022 along with above mentioned Strategies documents formulated by Ministry of Tourism.

Regards

Om Prakash
Under Secretary (Niche Tourism)
Ministry of Tourism
Transport Bhawan, New Delhi-110001
Tel. 011-23714117

Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

OM circulating Strategy for Sustainable Tourism.pdf
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National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism 29 April 2022.pdf
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National Strategy for Eco Tourism 29 April 2022.pdf
577K

OM circulating Strategy for Sustainable Tourism.pdf
202K

National Strategy for Adventure Tourism 29 April 2022.pdf
574K

No. NT-1401/2/2021
Government of India
Ministry of Tourism
(Niche Tourism Division)

1st Floor, Transport Bhawan,
1, Parliament Street,
New Delhi-110001.

Dated: 29th April 2022

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: **National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism**

The Ministry of Tourism has formulated a **National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism.** A copy of the Strategy is enclosed for ready reference and further action, as appropriate.

2.   This issues with the approval of Competent Authority.

(Sanjay Singh)
Deputy Director General

To

Secretaries of all Ministries/Departments, Government of India

Copy for information and necessary action along with a copy of the Strategy document to:-

Principal   Secretaries/Secretaries/Commissioner   (Tourism),   all   State
Governments/ UT Administrations

Copy for information and necessary action along with a copy of the Strategy document to:-

UNEP (India) / FICCI / CII / RTSOI / FAITH / IATO / ADTOI / TAAI / ATAOI

Copy for information to:-

1.   PS to HM(T) / PS to MoS (SYN) / PS to MoS (AB)
2.   PS to Secretary (T)
3.   PS to DG (T) / PS to AS (T) /
4.   PS to ADG (T) / PS to EA (T) / PS to ADG (MR)
5.   All Regional Directors, Ministry of Tourism

(Sanjay Singh)
Deputy Director General
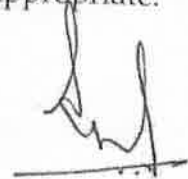
OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: National Strategy for Eco Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism has formulated a **National Strategy for Eco Tourism.** A copy of the Strategy is enclosed for ready reference and further action, as appropriate.

2. This issues with the approval of Competent Authority.

(Sanjay Singh)
Deputy Director General

To

Secretaries of all Ministries/Departments, Government of India

Copy for information and necessary action along with a copy of the Strategy document to:-

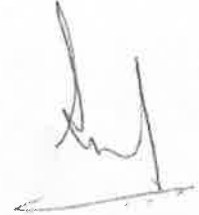Principal Secretaries/Secretaries/Commissioner (Tourism), all State Governments/ UT Administrations

Copy for information and necessary action along with a copy of the Strategy document to:-

UNEP (India) / FICCI / CII / RTSOI / FAITH / IATO / ADTOI / TAAI / ATAOI

Copy for information to:-

1.	PS to HM(T) / PS to MoS (SYN) / PS to MoS (AB)
2.	PS to Secretary (T)
3.	PS to DG (T) / PS to AS (T) /
4.	PS to ADG (T) / PS to EA (T) / PS to ADG (MR)
5.	All Regional Directors, Ministry of Tourism

(Sanjay Singh)
Deputy Director General

National Strategy

for

Sustainable Tourism

सत्यमेव जयते

29th April, 2022

Ministry of Tourism
Government of India

National Strategy
for
Sustainable Tourism

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1. Tourism – A key driver for economic growth and job creation

Tourism has emerged as a key driver of economic growth. It is one of the fastest growing economic sectors and has significant impact on trade, job creation, investment, infrastructure development and social inclusion. Tourism is a major source of employment. It is a labour-intensive sector and has significant multiplier effect on employment in related sectors.

1.2. Tourism – faces significant sustainability-related challenges.

Tourism has major impacts on the natural and built environments and on the wellbeing and culture of host populations. Tourism industry has led to pressure on fragile ecosystems and wildlife. It also puts considerable pressure on host communities and compete 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 green-house gases emissions.

1.3. Sustainable Tourism – Definition

Sustainable Tourism is the 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.

1.4. Sustainable Tourism – the Guiding principles

Sustainable tourism should follow the three basic principles:

(i). **Environmental Sustainability**

Make 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.

(ii). **Socio-cultural Sustainability**

Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.

(iii). **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.

1.5. Sustainable Tourism – All tourism should be more sustainable

The principles of sustainable tourism shall be applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of 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 not only about managing the negative impacts of the industry but using tourism as a vehicle to benefit local communities, economically and socially, and to raise awareness and support for conservation of natural and cultural heritage.

1.6. Sustainable Tourism – Potential to contribute to achievement of 2030 SDGs

Tourism has been included as targets 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.

1.7. National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism

National Strategy for sustainable tourism aims to mainstream sustainability in Indian tourism sector and ensure a more resilient, inclusive, carbon neutral and resource efficient tourism while safeguarding natural and cultural resources.

Chapter 2 – Vision, Mission and Strategy

2.1. **Vision**

To position India as a preferred global destination for sustainable and responsible tourism.

2.2. **Mission**

To increase the economic, social and environmental benefits to build a low carbon, inclusive and resilient tourism sector in Inda.

2.3. **Strategic Pillars**

Following strategic pillars have been identified for development of 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

2.4. **Stakeholders**

2.4.1. **Key Stakeholders**

Promotion and development of sustainable tourism will involve a diverse set of stakeholders, whose role will be crucial for the success of the Strategy. The key stakeholders are:

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

2.4.2. **Central Ministries**

Various Central Ministries are involved in the promotion of sustainable tourism. Various Central and State Schemes must be converged and synergy created for major

impact. Programs and initiatives of the following Ministries need to be studied in detail for promotion of sustainable tourism.

(i). **Ministry of Tourism**

Ministry of Tourism is responsible for promotion of Tourism in the Country. The Ministry implements various schemes for creation of infrastructure, marketing and promotion and skill development initiatives for tourism. Ministry of Tourism as Nodal Ministry for Tourism will coordinate various initiatives for sustainable tourism.

(ii). **Ministry of Rural Development**

The Ministry of Rural Development is working towards sustainable and inclusive growth of rural India through a multipronged strategy for eradication of poverty by increasing livelihoods opportunities, providing social safety net and developing infrastructure for growth. The Ministry of Rural Development is an important stakeholder in the development of rural areas in the Country and contribute towards the objective through various schemes being implemented by the Ministry.

(iii). **Ministry of Environment and Forests**

The Ministry is responsible for implementation of policies and programmes relating to conservation of the country's natural resources including its lakes and rivers, its biodiversity, forests and wildlife. Ministry of Environment is responsible for framing laws and regulations for environment and forests and has a key role in development of sustainable tourism. The Ministry can provide valuable guidance and direction for utilizing natural resources for sustainable and responsible tourism.

(iv). **Ministry of Culture**

Ministry of Culture is responsible to preserve, promote and disseminate all forms of art and culture in the Country and has a large number of Institutions and organization involved in the field of art and culture. The Ministry can contribute in the promotion of culture and heritage in a sustainable and responsible manner.

(v). **Ministry of Development of North East Region**

The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region is responsible for the matters relating to the planning, execution and monitoring of development schemes and projects in the North Eastern Region. Its vision is to accelerate

the pace of socio-economic development of the Region so that it may enjoy growth parity with the rest of the country. Ministry can help development of sustainable tourism in north east region.

(vi). **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship**

Ministry of Skills can help with various skill development initiatives for sustainable and responsible tourism including promotion of entrepreneurship.

(vii). **Ministry of Textiles**

Ministry of Textiles is responsible for promotion of handicrafts and handlooms. Tourism can help in promotion of handicraft and handlooms to the visitors and generate resources for their growth. Tourism can help promote crafts and provide opportunities for livelihood. The efforts of the Ministry can create synergy with sustainable tourism.

(viii). **Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare**

Department of Agriculture is responsible for agriculture, cooperation and farmers welfare. The Department implements various schemes, which impact the farming activities and communities in rural areas. The Department may provide support for Farmstays, agri tourism and other related activities, which have synergies with sustainable and responsible tourism.

(ix). **Ministry of Education**

Ministry of Education can provide support for incorporating sustainability in the education system at all levels. It can encourage Universities and Research Centres to carry out research on sustainable tourism and its practices in India.

(x). **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**

Ministry of Tribal Affairs can provide support to indigenous people to benefit from tourism as their alternative livelihood.

(xi). **Ministry of Commerce**

Ministry of Commerce can provide various incentives for encouraging sustainable practices in tourism sector.

(xii). **Ministry of Civil Aviation**

Ministry of Civil Aviation can provide policies for green fuels and other measures for more sustainable air transport for tourists.

(xiii). **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways**

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways can provide support for more sustainable surface transport and last mile connectivity

(xiv). **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy**

Ministry of New and Renewable Energy can provide support for greater use of renewable energy in tourism sector.

(xv). **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs can provide support by improving the urban areas, which is crucial for growth of tourism.

(xvi). **Ministry of MSME**

Ministry of MSME can provide support for promoting and developing tourism MSMEs

2.4.3. State Governments

State Governments have a key role for development of tourism in their respective states. Many states have taken important measures for development of sustainable and responsible tourism. State Governments will have the primary role in creating momentum for sustainable tourism.

2.4.4. Local Government Institutions

Local Government Institutions have a strong influence on local communities and their support is vital to the success of sustainable tourism. City Governments, Village Panchayats and other institutions have to be consulted and involved in the development of tourism and need to be education and made aware of sustainable tourism.

2.4.5. Industry

Industry players such as tour operators, accommodation providers, activity organisers and other sectors of Industry are important stakeholders in the promotion of sustainable tourism. Industry associations can help us create awareness, adopt sustainable practices by its members and promote sustainable tourism.

2.4.6. Non-Government Organizations

Non-Government Organizations involved in the areas of sustainable and responsible tourism, integrated rural development, livelihood promotion in rural areas, community development in rural areas can play a great role in forging community linkages.

2.4.7.   **Local Community**

Local community is a key stakeholder and has to be taken on board. The Community has to be made aware of the benefits of sustainable tourism, their apprehensions, if any have to be allayed and they have to be encouraged to participate and be part of the value chain. In order to ensure inclusive and responsible tourism, most of the supplies and services must be sourced from local providers. Their capacity building will have to be done to ensure they become part of the supply chain.

Chapter 3 – Promoting Environmental Sustainability

3.1. Environmental Sustainability

The Ministry of tourism adopts environmental sustainability as one of the key principles of sustainable tourism as laid down by UNWTO. It will entail 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.

3.2. Resource Efficiency

Ministry of Tourism recognizes that tourism is a significant user of resources in many areas and efficient use of resources is important both for the wellbeing of the local environment and host community and in maintaining global resources. There is need to ensure an equitable balance between the needs of local communities and the tourism industry. Resource efficiency in tourism can be achieved largely by changing the consumption patterns of tourists and tourism enterprises. Enterprises need to establish environmental management systems to minimize impacts and drive a process of continual improvement.

3.3. Energy and GHG Emissions – Implications for Climate Change

3.3.1. Tourism a significant contributor to GHG emissions

Ministry of Tourism recognizes that tourism is a significant contributor of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The growth of energy consumption in travel, transport, accommodation and tourism related activities and the dependency on fossil fuels, increase vulnerability and uncertainty for future business growth and translate into important implications for GHG emissions and climate change. Tourism-related energy use and associated emissions of GHGs can be organized into three subsectors: transport to and from the destination, accommodation and activities.

3.3.2. Reduction in GHG emissions will demand considerable change

To achieve absolute emission reductions in tourism demand considerable change in the tourism system, with a reduction in overall energy use, and a switch to renewable energy sources. The transformation toward a low-carbon tourism economy will demand innovative research, major investments in technology, strong and integrative policies and new partnerships between governments and the tourism industry, as well as public education and enhanced consumer awareness.

3.3.3. Measures to reduce GHG emissions

Ministry of tourism will work with tourism stakeholders to capitalize on the vast opportunities to influence both sources of supply and consumption leading to emission reductions and economic gains:

(i)   Promoting the use of designs and materials for tourism facilities that maximize insulation and the use of natural heat, light and ventilation.
(ii)   Providing renewable energy sources in tourist destinations.
(iii) Encouraging individual tourism enterprises to generate their own energy supply, or to supplement it, from renewable sources.
(iv)   Encouraging use of energy efficient plant and equipment for lighting, water heating, cooking, etc.
(v)   Promoting resource efficient transport options
(vi)   Persuading visitors to be responsible in their use of energy.

3.4.   Minimizing water consumption by the tourism sector

Fresh water is a vital resource and consumption of water by the tourism sector is high. Ministry of Tourism will work with the States and Industry to minimize water consumption:

(i)   Restricting water hungry facilities such as swimming pools, golf courses etc.
(ii)   Reusing and recycling water where possible, (e.g. use of greywater to irrigate parks and gardens).
(iii) Improving infrastructure and maintenance (e.g. reducing leakages).
(iv)   Encouraging installation of water efficient technology such as low-flow showers and toilets.
(v)   Persuading visitors to be responsible in their use of water.

3.5.   Ensuring the efficient use of land and raw materials in tourism development

With growing population, land is in short supply at many destinations. It is therefore important to select sites for tourism development carefully, taking account of alternative uses and the needs of the local community. Although use of local materials can add to quality and distinctiveness, the design and construction of tourism facilities should avoid profligate use of naturally occurring materials such as timber, stone, sand and gravel, and should take account of the capacity of local supply and competing demands.

3.6.   Reduce, reuse, recycle approach

Tourism enterprises will be encouraged to be efficient in all their use of materials and their use of resources and generation of waste:

(i)   Purchasing of supplies from sustainable sources. This can be facilitated by better information on local availability of such sources and ecolabelling schemes for relevant consumer products.

(ii)   Minimizing use of unnecessary packaging, for example through economic incentives to return containers such as bottles.

(iii)   Encouraging creativity in the reuse of products both within an enterprise or making them available for use in the local community.

(iv)   The creation of markets to recycle tourism supplies (paper, glass and plastic in particular).

3.7.   Minimize Pollution

3.7.1.   Tourism is a significant source of pollution

Tourism enterprises will be required to adhere to the norms and standards to minimize the pollution of air, water and land and the generation of waste by tourism enterprises and visitors. Waste and pollution control will be achieved largely by changing the consumption patterns of tourists and tourism enterprises and stricter enforcement of regulations regarding pollution norms. This should be a key component of individual environmental management systems within enterprises.

3.7.2.   Promoting the use of more sustainable transport

Transport is one of the most significant sources of environmental pollution resulting from tourism, mainly through air travel and the use of individual private cars. Ministry of Transport will work in favour of low-impact forms of transport. This applies both to journeys to and from the destination, and within it. Promotion of walking and cycling will be facilitated by provision of appropriate infrastructure, including trails and public transport services, more integrated timetabling, and creative marketing. Tourists will be encouraged to offset the impact of their air travel by contributing to carbon sequestration projects.

3.7.3.   Reducing the use of environmentally damaging chemicals

There will be strict enforcement of standards for the disposal of hazardous waste. Wherever possible, the use of environmentally damaging chemicals should be eliminated through careful policies.

3.7.4.   Avoiding the discharge of sewage to marine and river environments

Water is an essential resource for both biological and human communities. It is essential for the tourism industry to place a high priority on reducing, managing and treating wastewater and controlling sewage disposal. Wherever possible, connection

should be made to mains sewage disposal systems that are designed to treat and discharge to the highest standards.

3.7.5. **Minimizing waste and where necessary disposing of it with care**

The tourism industry is a major generator of waste and disposal of non-degradable waste is an important issue. Land can be contaminated through the tipping of waste on landfill sites and landfilled biodegradable wastes can also release methane into the atmosphere. Such wastes can cause visual intrusion, habitat damage, and can threaten wildlife. Tourism enterprises will be educated on reducing waste at source and recycling wherever possible. Tourism enterprises will follow the relevant regulations and other guidelines in this regard. Construction should take place with minimum disturbance to the environment.

Chapter 4 – Protecting Biological Diversity and Natural Heritage

4.1.   **Protection of Biological Diversity**

Protection of biological diversity is an important part of environmental sustainability. There is need to support the conservation of natural areas, habitats and wildlife, and minimize damage to them. This is an area where the positive and negative impacts of tourism can be felt most strongly. All ecosystems, whether mountains, deserts, rainforests, wetlands or inland waters, have their own special sensitivities which need to be considered when planning for tourism activities.

4.2.   **Sustainable Tourism – can provide resources for conservation**

While tourism may be a cause of loss of bio-diversity, income from tourism has proved to be a critically important component of funding for conservation in many national parks, reserves and other protected areas. Sustainable and responsible tourism can provide both resources for conservation and also ensure that it doesn't harm bio-diversity.

4.3.   **Physical integrity and attractiveness**

4.3.1.   **Protection of biodiversity is closely related to physical integrity**

Ministry of Tourism recognizes that the physical structure of places and their aesthetic quality and appearance is critical to long-term health of the tourism industry as the physical attractiveness of destination is a key element of their appeal to visitors. Land and coastal erosion are particular areas of concern where physical degradation is concerned.

4.3.2.   **Development to be in harmony with local environment and landscape**

Ministry of Tourism will work with the States to ensure that new tourism development is appropriate to local environmental conditions. Encourage reuse and regeneration of existing buildings and previously used sites rather than new building on greenfield sites. The design of new buildings should be in harmony with the landscape, and where appropriate reflect traditional designs with optimum amount of open space and the retention of tree cover.

4.3.3.   **Minimizing the physical impact of tourist activity**

Ministry of Tourism will work towards formulation of policies to minimize the adverse impact of tourist activities. It will encourage visitor management measures to reduce pressures and deflect activities to more robust sites. This can prevent erosion resulting from over-use of sites and damage to marine structures such as

coral reefs, from diving or boating activities. It will encourage educational activity to change behaviour such as not to through litter, cause willful damage such as graffiti and develop codes of conduct for tourists.

4.3.4. Maintaining high quality rural and urban landscapes as a tourism resource

Ministry of Tourism will encourage the States and the Destinations to maintain the integrity and attractiveness of tourist destinations, including towns and rural areas, by influencing development and maintenance in general. It will further aim at controlling intrusive new development, such as unsightly buildings, activities that will damage landscapes, such as mineral extraction or destruction of forests. It will take initiatives for maintaining the fabric and facades of properties, especially historic buildings, maintaining traditional rural landscapes and features, avoiding the proliferation of advertisements and signing and maintaining the quality of public open spaces.

4.4. National Parks and Protected Areas

Ministry of Tourism will work with national parks and other protected areas to strengthen the protection from the negative impacts of tourism, and to focus on sustainable tourism that increases visitor awareness and support for conservation. Tourism provides a source of income and an opportunity for a sustainable livelihood for park-based communities. Following efforts will be made in this direction:

(i). Preparing national guidelines on sustainable tourism in protected areas.
(ii). Establishing structures for joint working on tourism with relevant stakeholders, including preparing sustainable tourism strategies that integrate with park management plans and link to regional and national strategies.
(iii). Guaranteeing the availability and use of financial resources for park management.
(iv). Optimizing the level and use of park admissions to support a range of objectives, including biodiversity conservation.
(v). Developing partnership agreements and concession-based relationships with local communities and private sector operators that offer clear benefits to conservation and habitat management, as well as to communities and users.
(vi). Creating networks of protected areas, and their branding for sustainable tourism.

4.5. Promoting development and management of ecotourism

Ecotourism, by definition, is a form of tourism that entails responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local

people. It should therefore be encouraged in the interests of conservation. Governments will:

(i). Bring together tourism and conservation stakeholder for the development and careful management of ecotourism at a national and local level.

(ii). Ensure that products or new projects that are promoted as 'ecotourism' comply with the above definition. This may require application of relevant tools such as certification.

(iii). Encourage well planned and executed ecotourism projects in natural areas, including visitor facilities and interpretation, through technical support, marketing and other appropriate measures.

4.6. Using tourism to encourage landholders to practice sustainable land management

Rural landholders can earn additional income from tourism, either directly or indirectly. This may involve providing accommodation or other services on the land, income from the sale of produce into the tourism supply chain, or income from engagement in tourism off the land (e.g. acting as guides). Tourism can stimulate more sustainable land management by providing a new income source (as an alternative to unsustainable practices such as logging or slash and burn agriculture) and can encourage landholders to conserve wildlife or produce organic food, as these are valued by visitors. There is need to provide support, advice and other incentives to encourage landholders to manage their land more sustainably.

4.7. Encourage private parks and nature reserves

Ministry of Tourism will work with other Stakeholders to encourage private parks and nature reserves with following guidelines:

(i). Ensuring that private parks do not siphon away resources, including tourism income, to the detriment of conservation in public parks.

(ii). Ensuring that private parks maintain high conservation and tourism standards.

(iii). Integrating the management of private and public parks into a single biodiversity plan.

4.8. Minimizing damage to natural heritage from tourism

Ministry of Tourism will focus on raising the awareness through education and interpretation and visitor management—controlling visitor numbers and behaviour such as physical damage, wildlife disturbance, littering etc. Following actions will help in minimizing damage:

(i). Good quality guiding, where possible involving local people.

(ii). Interpretative events.

(iii). Visitor centres, where appropriate, containing creative interpretative facilities.

(iv). Relevant information pre-arrival.

(v). Educational activity amongst local people and potential domestic markets.

(vi). Better knowledge amongst tourism enterprises that they can pass on to their staff and guests.

4.9. **Raising support for conservation from visitors and enterprises**

Many tourism enterprises recognize the importance of ongoing conservation activity to the visitor experience; others should be encouraged to do so. Enterprises will be encouraged to support biodiversity, through maintaining habitats on their own properties and supporting local conservation initiatives, in cash or kind. Financial support for conservation activity can also be raised from tourists and is providing an increasingly important source of income. Tourists can also become engaged in practical ways, for example through participating in conservation holidays.

Chapter 5 - Promoting Economic Sustainability

5.1.   **Economic Sustainability**

Ministry of Tourism recognizes economic sustainability as a key principle for sustainable tourism as laid down by UNWTO. In order to achieve economic sustainability, there is need to 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.

5.2.   **Competitiveness of destinations and enterprises and visitor satisfaction**

5.2.1.   **Competitiveness and visitor satisfaction – essential for sustainability**

Ministry of Tourism recognizes that the viability and competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises is important to ensure sustainable tourism. It will ensure that they are able to continue to prosper and deliver benefits in the long term. It further recognizes that visitor experience is key to long-term viability of a destination or enterprise. Satisfied visitors return to the destinations and also recommend others to visit. This means delivering an experience that meets or exceeds expectations.

5.2.2.   **Identifying source markets**

Ministry of Tourism will carry out market research on an ongoing basis to guide tourism development in the country. It will identify markets that will continue to deliver business in long term, needs of potential consumers, develop ability to adapt to trends and changes in source market conditions, travel patterns and tastes.

5.2.3.   **Delivering visitor satisfaction**

Ministry of Tourism will strengthen the quality and accreditation systems for every component of the visitor experience, including mechanisms for checking, identifying and improving it. It will provide for regular feedback from the visitors. It will pay attention to value for money and the overall competitiveness of the destination.

5.2.4.   **Ease of doing business and overall business climate**

Ministry of Tourism will work towards creating ease of doing business for tourism enterprises and provide stable business climate. It will continuously work on streamlining regulatory requirements, ease the compliance burden and rationalization of the taxation. The Ministry will particularly support MSMEs in

market access and market development including support for digital technologies for market access. Skill needs of the enterprises will also be effectively met.

5.2.5. Delivering business support

Ministry of Tourism will provide necessary support on training, marketing and other enterprise requirements particularly to MSMEs. The schemes will be tailored to needs and avoid a culture of dependency on financial assistance. Funding schemes will be designed to help businesses and projects towards self-sufficiency.

5.3. Maintaining and projecting an attractive destination

5.3.1. Government has a key role in maintaining an attractive destination

The Ministry of Tourism recognizes that the viability of individual enterprises is also considerably affected by how the destination as a whole is perceived by visitors. The government has a key role in maintaining an attractive destination. Three critical aspects of this are a positive and consistent image, safety and security and overall environment quality.

5.3.2. A positive and consistent image of the destination

Ministry of Tourism will work towards **a positive and consistent image** of India as tourist destination. It will undertake effective destination branding, promotion of the brand and ensure that the nature and quality of experience match the brand image. Media management is an important part of this.

5.3.3. Safety and security at the destination

Ministry of Tourism will coordinate with the States towards safety and security related issues and enhance the perception of India as a safe and secure destination. The Ministry will pay requisite attention to matters such as levels of policing, health care available to visitors, quality of information available and support services for visitors in need of assistance. Travel advice relating to safety, issued by governments in source countries, can have a considerable impact on the performance of the tourism economy in recipient countries.

5.3.4. Overall environmental quality

Ministry will work towards improving overall environmental quality of tourist destinations in India. The attractiveness of the natural and cultural environment in a destination and the general level of amenity and maintenance are of fundamental importance to the viability of tourism enterprises.

5.4. Local Prosperity

5.4.1. Maximising contribution of tourism to local economy

The Ministry recognizes that an important principle of sustainable development is to maximize the contribution of tourism to the economic prosperity of the host destination, including the proportion of visitor spending that is retained locally. Local prosperity means ensuring that tourism is well integrated within the economy and is developed alongside other sectors. It is also important to avoid over-dependency on tourism, while ensuring that it can provide a consistent and reliable source of income. The Ministry will undertake the following measures to promote local prosperity.

5.4.2. Reducing leakages

Ministry will frame policies for capacity building and financial support programs for MSMEs to support locally owned businesses to retain a higher proportion of profits within the community. Strengthening access to digital technologies will provide a range of opportunities for direct contact and booking for MSMEs.

Encourage employment of local labour, which will increase local prosperity. Ministry will provide necessary training and education to make local people employable.

5.4.3. Strengthening links between businesses

Strengthening links between businesses means addressing the local supply chain. Ministry will work towards strengthening local service providers and products to develop local supply chains. Ministry will encourage clusters and networking of businesses thereby achieving more for themselves and for local community.

Ministry will encourage people being involved in multiple occupations including tourism. This will make them less dependent on tourism, which may be seasonal. This will be in line with the holistic principles of sustainable development.

5.4.4. Influencing levels of visitor spending

Local prosperity can be strengthened by demand-side policies, which seek to attract higher spending markets. Some market segments are more likely than others to spend money within destinations visited. Increase length of stay as well as the availability of spending opportunities and visitors' awareness of them. This can be achieved by promoting longer stay markets and encouraging existing visitors to stay longer, at the time or on return visits. It may involve seeking an optimum level of attractions, events and other activities and outlets to retain visitor interest.

The provision of effective local information services can increase visitors' awareness of places to visit and things to do, thereby raising the level of spending. Promote the

purchasing of local products. This means strengthening the whole retailing process as well as the quality, price, distribution and display of local products such as food, drink and handicrafts.

5.5. Employment Quality

5.5.1. Promote Year-round, full-time jobs

Ministry will work towards quality of employment by increasing employment opportunities and the proportion of year-round, full-time jobs. Ministry will work with Industry to extend the season through measures such as: targeting markets most likely to travel in the offseason; discounted seasonal offers; organizing events at less busy times of the year; encouraging attractions to stay open longer etc.

5.5.2. Setting realistic Labour standards

It is important to set labour standards that can be realistically attained by both domestic and international operators, providing a level playing field between them and ensuring maximum compliance by everyone.

5.5.3. Skill training and career advancement

Encouraging enterprises to provide skills training programmes and career advancement. Ministry of Tourism will encourage tourism enterprises to provide training to their employees and the Ministry will provide requisite support. Ministry of Tourism will also strengthen human resource development and training programmes, in local destinations or for groups of enterprises. The Ministry will also encourage enterprises to offer formal employment contracts to their employees and focus on long term development of tourism enterprises.

5.5.4. Minimum age, safety and health standards

The Ministry of Tourism will also work towards ensuring the minimum age for admission to employment or work in order to secure the effective abolition of child labour. Enterprises will also have to provide adequate safety and health standards and programmes for employees.

5.6. Social Equity

5.6.1. Socio-economic opportunities to disadvantaged people

Ministry of Tourism will promote tourism policies to benefit disadvantaged people by delivering economic and social benefits to them. Tourism is well placed to reach disadvantaged people, mainly because it is a labour-intensive service industry with relatively low entry barriers and an activity that takes place in situ within

communities. In addition to bringing income, the interaction it entails between people can bolster dignity and self-esteem.

5.6.2. Education and training to disadvantaged people

Providing education and training that is relevant and accessible to disadvantaged people will make them employable and open up opportunities. Tourism enterprises will be encouraged to pay particular attention to the nature of their sources, and to work with poor communities (e.g. marginal farming communities) on developing reliable supply streams for the tourism industry.

5.6.3. Supporting development of enterprises by disadvantaged people

Disadvantaged people often gain access to visitors and seek to earn income from them through activities such as street trading, personal guiding services or providing simple accommodation, etc. This can be strengthened through capacity building, attention to quality, licensing, better information for tourists, and supporting the development of enterprises by disadvantaged people.

5.7. Visitor Fulfilment

5.7.1. A safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience to all without discrimination

Sustainable tourism will require to provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, without discrimination by gender, race, disability or in other ways. Social dimension and equity principles make visitor satisfaction and fulfilment to be viewed as an aim in its own right, rather than simply as a means to economic benefit. It is also about the responsibilities that destinations have towards the wellbeing of their guests. Improving access for all means ensuring that tourism facilities and infrastructure are accessible and usable by people with special needs.

5.7.2. Maintaining a duty of care to visitors

Duty of care to visitors means being concerned for their safety and security in the destination and in enterprises. Issues include fire prevention, health and hygiene, awareness raising, prevention and preparedness for disasters (natural and industrial) adaptation to the effects of natural hazards and protection from crime and terrorism. There should also be clear procedures for registering and handling visitors' complaints and for solving problems that they encounter such as loss of possessions or the need for emergency medical attention.

5.8. Monitoring and addressing visitor satisfaction and the quality of experience

Regular survey of visitors to destinations and encouraging enterprises to obtain feedback from their guests. Although tourists' motivations for travel vary, particular attention should be paid to encouraging and enabling them to learn about and appreciate the cultures and environments they visit. This is an important part of meeting the aim of visitor fulfilment; it also assists in meeting other aims relating to social and environmental impact within the host destination.

Chapter 6 – Promoting Socio-Cultural Sustainability

6.1. **Sustainable Tourism – promotes respect for local cultural**

6.1.1. Sustainable tourism aims to respect and enhance the historic heritage, authentic culture, traditions and distinctiveness of host communities. Respect for, and understanding of, cultural diversity between nations and peoples is a key principle of sustainable development. Tourism can be a considerable force for the conservation of historic and cultural heritage and can stimulate arts, crafts and other creative activities within communities.

6.1.2. By providing a source of income based around local culture, tourism can encourage communities to value their cultural heritage more highly. However, it is important to guard against the falsification and degradation of culture and heritage in the way they are promoted to tourists.

6.2. **Ensuring effective management and conservation of heritage sites**

Significant historic and cultural sites are a major component of visitor appeal. Although such sites are often dependent on visitor income for their management and conservation, many are also suffering from visitor pressure that threatens to damage their fabric and devalue the quality of the visitor experience. Following measures will be taken in this regard:

(i). **Conserving historic and cultural heritage features**

Conserving historic and cultural heritage features will be important for sustainability. Promoting the inclusion of sites on the World Heritage Convention list is appropriate in certain situations.

(ii). **Effective visitor management**

Effective visitor management will include a range of techniques such as spreading and deflecting demand, physical site management etc. to reduce any adverse impact on the destination.

(iii). **Avoiding or managing intrusive collateral activities**

Effective management of various informal markets, street sellers and vendors whether local or from outside the destination needs to be ensured.

(iv). **Securing more money from visitors for conservation**

Destinations can enhance income by promoting greater use, management of admission income, provision of well managed retail outlets, encouraging voluntary donations, etc.

(v). **Seeking ways to benefit local communities living close to heritage sites**

This will help towards conservation as well as improving local livelihoods.

6.3. Working with communities on promotion of culture and traditions

Cultural richness can be strengthened and interpreted in a variety of creative ways. Greater respect and understanding for local cultures can be achieved through improved information for guests and hosts and interaction between them. However, in all these activities, sensitivity is required and commodification or devaluing of local culture must be avoided. The focus would be on the following:

(i). Developing interpretative programmes and events based on the heritage and distinctiveness of the area.

(ii). Conceiving creative, sensitive and viable visitor attractions where local culture and traditions can be showcased.

(iii). Incorporating aspects of local cultural heritage and distinctiveness into various elements of visitor experience, such as furnishing in tourism establishments, local cuisine in restaurants, traditional designs in architecture, and art and sculpture in public spaces.

(iv). Capacity building with local communities regarding visitor interpretation and issues of quality and authenticity.

(v). Capacity building with the private sector to help them and their guests to bridge potential culture gaps.

(vi). Informing tourists about local traditions and local culture before and during the trip.

(vii). Informing local communities about the culture of their potential visitors.

(viii). Guarding against the sale and purchase of items of cultural value as souvenirs.

6.4. Local Control

Fully engage the local community in the development of tourism policies and plans. This should involve local government institutions and there should be a process of wider consultation and participation for the community and other stakeholders.

Strengthen the capacity of local governance bodies and improve their knowledge of tourism and its sustainability. Raise public awareness of the ways in which tourism can affect communities. Respect and recognise traditional tribal empowerment, backing this up with legal empowerment. Respect for indigenous people's beliefs and traditions and consulting with them on how to portray their culture to tourists.

6.5. Community Wellbeing

6.5.1. Strengthen quality of life in local communities

Sustainable tourism requires to maintain and strengthen the quality of life in local communities, including social structures and access to resources, amenities and life support systems, avoiding any form of social or environmental degradation or exploitation.

6.5.2. Enhance positive impact of tourism on communities

Tourism can impact the social wellbeing of communities in many ways, both positively and negatively. Tourism can provide jobs, bring the additional investment and spending brought by tourism can support a wide variety of amenities that add to the quality of local people's lives. These include essential services such as water and energy, roads and transport services, health services, shops, garages, leisure and entertainment facilities, and outdoor amenities.

6.5.3. Reduce negative impact of tourism on communities

Conversely, the presence of visitors can put pressure on facilities and services, adding to the cost of their provision and maintenance, reducing the enjoyment of them by local people and making access to them difficult or even impossible. Tourism developments and activity also sometimes interfere with other sources of livelihood and disrupt access to them.

6.5.4. Getting the balance right in the volume, timing and location of visits

The difference between a negative and a positive community reaction to tourism depends to a significant extent on the volume of visitors in an area at any one time and how this relates to the size of the local population. It may also be affected by the degree of concentration or geographical spread. The concept of the social carrying capacity of a destination is relevant here, and policies should maintain an optimum number of visitors. This can be done by keeping abreast of community reactions and using appropriate indicators such as volume of visits, traffic counts, number of complaints from local people, level of litter, etc.

6.5.5. Reducing congestion

Congestion, especially at peak times, caused by the volume of visitors and/or their vehicles, can be a primary threat to community wellbeing. It is important to have effective visitor management policies and actions. There is need for managing demand and reducing seasonality by marketing and pricing techniques to promote off-season visits, or by promoting alternative locations to spread visits within and outside of the destination. Improving traffic management through physical changes, signage, information, and promotion of alternative transport options.

6.5.6. Careful planning and management of tourism enterprises and infrastructure

Planning the scale, design and siting of new tourism development, to take account of the overall amenity of the destination and the location of residential areas and other activities within the community. Planning the development of infrastructure, including transport, water and energy supplies, which should be designed to meet the combined needs of visitors and the community. Maximizing the availability of open space and other amenity areas, including beaches, that are accessible for use by residents and visitors.

6.5.7. Promoting mutual use of facilities and services by residents and tourists

Where possible, facilities and amenities developed for tourists should also be made available to members of the local community. In some locations, visitor spending can make the difference in ensuring viability of community services and facilities, such as local shops and village halls. Use of such services by tourists should be encouraged through information, events, etc.

6.5.8. Influencing the behaviour of tourists towards local communities

In order to avoid problems faced by communities as a result of tourism due to behaviour of individual tourists or particular groups, there is need to provide information to the tourists on the nature of host community, their values and any particular sensitivities that should be respected. There is need to regulate certain aspects of visitor behaviour, such as noise and littering and maintaining an appropriate level of policing. Physical control measures to facilitate good behaviour, such as provision of litter bins and information boards in several languages, if necessary are also required.

Chapter 7 – Certification Scheme for Sustainable Tourism

7.1.   **Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI)**

In order to mainstream sustainability in tourism sector, it is important to measure the adoption of principles of sustainable tourism in various destinations, products and industry whether accommodation providers or tour operators. Ministry of Tourism has adopted Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India based on global practices adopted to the needs of the country.

7.2.   **Finalization of Scheme for Certification as per STCI**

The Ministry will finalize the Scheme for Certification for sustainable tourism as per STCI principles and indicators for destinations, accommodation sector and tour operators in consultation with Industry. The Ministry will work with Industry and reputed non-government organizations in seeking their technical expertise for promotion of sustainable tourism.

The Ministry will also initiate action to create Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India and Indicators for other tourism service providers, which have not been covered so far.

7.3.   **Digitalization and branding of Certification Schemes**

The entire process of STCI certification shall be end to end digital. The Certification will have an attractive branding and it will be aggressively promoted by the Ministry of Tourism through all its channels including incredible India website and mobile application.

7.4.   **State Support for Implementation of the Scheme**

The Ministry of Tourism will work with the State Governments to build capacity of the industry to prepare them for certification. The State governments will be encouraged to prioritize destinations for certification of sustainability.

7.5.   **Ranking of the States on Sustainable Tourism**

The Ministry of Tourism will conduct ranking of the States, with the key objective to foster competitiveness and encourage States to work proactively towards developing sustainable tourism. It will be implemented as a capacity development exercise to encourage mutual learning among all states and to provide support in policy formulation and implementation. The States may be suitably classified into leaders, aspiring leaders and emerging States. The ranking exercise will be carried out with professional support and through independent experts from various

Institutions both Government and Private. The Ministry of tourism will provide necessary training to the officials and other stakeholders and handhold the States for their participation in the exercise.

Chapter 8 – IEC and Capacity Building

8.1.   **Information, Education and Communication**

8.1.1.   **The need for IEC**

Sustainable and responsible tourism is an evolving area and there is great need for a well-planned Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign to create awareness, understanding and acceptance of sustainable tourism amongst all stakeholders. The campaign will have to be spearheaded by the Central Government and State Governments will full support of the industry and other Stakeholders including local government functionaries, forest and wildlife officials, local communities and non-government organizations working in the field.

8.1.2.   **Development of IEC material**

Ministry of Tourism with the assistance from technical experts will devise overall IEC material, which can be customised and expanded by the State Governments keeping in view their specific needs and requirements. The material will be both digital and print and will be made available on websites, social media and other channels.

8.1.3.   **State support for sensitization and training**

In addition to IEC material being made available through various channels, the Ministry will work with the States to organize sensitization and training workshops for various stakeholders including Government and Private Sector officials, NGOs and local communities/ institutions. Apart from various aspects of sustainable and responsible tourism, it will also cover the need for enhancing the visitor experience and value chain enhancement for competitive advantage. This tourism focus should be an essential component of each destination.

8.2.   **Capacity Building**

The Ministry of Tourism will support the State Governments in building the capacity of the industry and government agencies for sustainable tourism. Ministry of Tourism will support State Governments in undertaking various skill development and entrepreneurship development activities as identified for meeting the needs of the local community. The State Government will also facilitate them in placement and starting their own venture.

8.3.   **National and State Resource Centres**

The Ministry of Tourism will set up a National Resource Centre as a source of capacity and expertise at the National level for sustainable tourism, adventure tourism and

ecotourism. Similarly, the Ministry will also encourage the State Governments to set up State Resource Centres. These resource centres along with other identified institutions will help in developing adequate material, preparing a pool of master trainers, training of trainers and other capacity building initiatives.

8.4.   **Education, Research & Training on Sustainable Tourism**

Education and Skill training will cover various aspects of sustainable Tourism such as awareness of over tourism impacts, environmental impact and concept of carrying capacity, community participation, indigenous solutions and tourism offerings, entrepreneurship and community development initiatives at local level (Vocal for Local).

8.5.   **Dedicated Promotional Campaign**

There is a need to have a dedicated promotional campaign for positioning India as a sustainable and responsible tourism destination. India has to focus on utilising its natural heritage. These campaigns should be planned in partnership with Industry Stakeholders. Every State has its own unique offerings and therefore the States have to plan their own campaign to popularise the State as sustainable tourism destination.

8.6.   **Campaign for Responsible Travellers**

While supply side interventions are required, there is also a need to work on demand side by making the traveller aware of sustainable and responsible tourism. Responsible behaviour by travellers and demand for more sustainable tourism will greatly influence the industry to adopt sustainability in their businesses. The Ministry in partnership with the States, Industry and Destinations will launch a campaign for responsible traveller.

Chapter 9 – Governance and Institutional Framework

9.1. **Action Plan**

Ministry of Tourism will prepare a detailed National Action Plan in consultation with relevant Ministries, State Governments and Industry Stakeholders for implementation of the Strategy. The Action plan will be reviewed and monitored in accordance with the laid down governance mechanism for the same. State Governments will prepare State specific policy and action plan for development of sustainable tourism. The Ministry will help with model policies and action plans for guidance of the States.

9.2. **Governance**

In order to ensure that the Strategy is effectively implemented, there is need to review the progress and resolve the issues. Following institutional structure will be followed for the same.

(i). **Vision Group under Union Minister for Tourism**

A Vision Group on Sustainable Tourism under the Union Minister for Tourism will be set up. The Vision Group will include all the Stakeholder Ministries, States, Industry, NGO and Experts. It will provide overall vision and guidance for the development of Sustainable Tourism in the Country.

(ii). **IMCCT**

Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee under Cabinet Secretary, already in place, will review and resolve inter-Ministerial issues, which may arise and provide guidance for greater convergence of Central Schemes.

(iii). **National Board on Sustainable Tourism under Secretary (Tourism)**

National Board on Sustainable Tourism under Secretary (Tourism) will be set up. The National Board will include the representatives of the Key Ministries, leading States in sustainable tourism and representatives from Industry, NGO and Experts.

The Board will guide the operationalisation and implementation of various strategic initiatives to strengthen the ecosystem for development of sustainable tourism in the Country:

(i)   Certification Schemes
(ii)   Safety guidelines
(iii)   Capacity building
(iv)   Marketing and promotion
(v)   Private Sector Participation

(vi)   Specific strategies

(vii)   Any other measures for sustainable tourism

(iv).   **State Steering Committee under Chief Secretary**

The States will set up a State Steering Committee under Chief Secretary. The Committee will have representation from all the relevant Departments at the State level, representatives of Industry, NGOs and Experts.

The Committee will coordinate, review and resolve issues regarding implementation of strategy and other State specific issues for development and promotion of sustainable tourism.

(v).   **District level Committee**

The States will set up a district level Committee under District Collector to coordinate and review progress and provide impetus to development of sustainable and responsible tourism at the district level.

9.3.   **National Nodal Agency**

Ministry of Tourism will designate National Nodal Agency to support the Ministry of Tourism in coordinating and evolving strategy and actionable plans and schemes for promotion and development of Sustainable Tourism in the Country. The Nodal agency will in particular assist the Ministry in undertaking the following functions:

(i).   Preparation of detailed Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy.

(ii).   Identifying national and global best practice and prepare tool kits for their replication by the States

(iii).   Benchmarking State policies and standards and prepare model policies and standards

(iv).   Capacity Building measures including setting up of Resource Centres and Centres of Excellence

(v).   Facilitating adoption of digital technologies for sustainable tourism

(vi).   Formulation of dedicated scheme to support development of sustainable tourism in the Country

(vii).   Any other support, which can facilitate the Ministry of Tourism in development of sustainable tourism in the Country.

The Nodal agency will set up appropriate structures and professional staffing for supporting the Ministry of Tourism in the implementation of the strategy. The Ministry will provide necessary budgetary support to the Nodal Agency through various schemes for promotion and development of tourism.

9.4. **State Nodal Agency**

Each State/ UT may also designate a State Nodal Agency which can assist the State Department of Tourism in the promotion and development of Sustainable tourism. The State Nodal Agency will assist the State Tourism Department in the implementation:

(i).   Collaboration with national nodal agency

(ii).   Replicating national and global best practices

(iii). Framing State policies for sustainable tourism

(iv).   Facilitating adoption of digital technologies for sustainable tourism

(v).   Formulation of State schemes for development of sustainable tourism

The Ministry of Tourism will work with the States and designated State Nodal Agency to provide necessary financial and technical support under various schemes of the Ministry.

Annexure

Annexure 1 – Potential of Tourism to achieve Sustainable Development Goals

1. **SDG 1: No Poverty**

   As one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors in the world, tourism is well-positioned to foster economic growth and development at all levels and provide income through job creation. Sustainable tourism development, and its impact at community level, can be linked with national poverty reduction goals, those related to promoting entrepreneurship and small businesses, and empowering less favoured groups, particularly youth and women.

2. **SDG 2: Zero Hunger**

   Tourism can spur agricultural productivity by promoting the production, use and sale of local produce in tourist destinations and its full integration in the tourism value chain. In addition, agro-tourism, a growing tourism segment, can complement traditional agricultural activities. The resulting rise of income in local communities can lead to a more resilient agriculture while enhancing the value of the tourism experience.

3. **SDG 3: Good health and well being**

   Tourism's contribution to economic growth and development can also have a knock-on effect on health and well-being. Foreign earnings and tax income from tourism can be reinvested in health care and services, which should aim to improve maternal health, reduce child mortality and prevent diseases, among others.

4. **SDG 4: Quality education**

   A well-trained and skilful workforce is crucial for tourism to prosper. The sector can provide incentives to invest in education and vocational training and assist labour mobility through cross-border agreements on qualifications, standards and certifications. In particular youth, women, senior citizens, indigenous peoples and those with special needs should benefit through educational means, where tourism has the potential to promote inclusiveness, the values of a culture of tolerance, peace and non-violence, and all aspects of global exchange and citizenship.

5. **SDG 5: Gender Equality**

   Tourism can empower women in multiple ways, particularly through the provision of jobs and through income-generating opportunities in small and larger-scale tourism and hospitality related enterprises. As one of the sectors with the highest share of women employed and entrepreneurs, tourism can be a tool for women to unlock their potential, helping them to become fully engaged and lead in every aspect of society.

6.   **SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**

Tourism can play a critical role in achieving water access and security, as well as hygiene and sanitation for all. The efficient use of water in the tourism sector, coupled with appropriate safety measures, wastewater management, pollution control and technology efficiency can be key to safeguarding our most precious resource.

7.   **SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy**

As a sector that requires substantial energy input, tourism can accelerate the shift toward renewable energy and increase its share in the global energy mix. Consequently, by promoting sound and long-term investments in sustainable energy sources, tourism can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate climate change and contribute to innovative and new energy solutions in urban, regional and remote areas.

8.   **SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**

Tourism is one of the driving forces of global economic growth and currently provides for 1 in 11 jobs worldwide. By giving access to decent work opportunities in the tourism sector, society –particularly youth and women – can benefit from increased skills and professional development. The sector's contribution to job creation is recognized in Target 8.9 "By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products".

9.   **SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**

Tourism development relies on good public and privately supplied infrastructure and an innovative environment. The sector can also incentivize national governments to upgrade their infrastructure and retrofit their industries, making them more sustainable, resource-efficient and clean, as a means to attract tourists and other sources of foreign investment. This should also facilitate further sustainable industrialization, necessary for economic growth, development and innovation.

10.   **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities**

Tourism can be a powerful tool for community development and reducing inequalities if it engages local populations and all key stakeholders in its development. Tourism can contribute to urban renewal and rural development and reduce regional imbalances by giving communities the opportunity to prosper in their place of origin. Tourism is also an effective means for developing countries to take part in the global economy. In 2014, Least Developed Countries (LDCs) received US$ 16.4 billion in exports from international tourism, up from US$ 2.6 billion in 2000, making the sector

an important pillar of their economies (7% of total exports) and helping some to graduate from the LDC status.

11.   SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

A city that is not good for its citizens is not good for tourists. Sustainable tourism has the potential to advance urban infrastructure and universal accessibility, promote regeneration of areas in decay and preserve cultural and natural heritage, assets on which tourism depends. Greater investment in green infrastructure (more efficient transport facilities, reduced air pollution, conservation of heritage sites and open spaces, etc.) should result in smarter and greener cities from which not only residents, but also tourists, can benefit.

12.   SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

A tourism sector that adopts sustainable consumption and production (SCP) practices can play a significant role in accelerating the global shift towards sustainability. To do so, as set in Target 12.b of Goal 12, it is imperative to "Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products". The Sustainable Tourism Programme (STP) of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP) aims at developing such SCP practices, including resource efficient initiatives that result in enhanced economic, social and environmental outcomes.

13.   SDG 13: Climate Action

Tourism contributes to and is affected by climate change. It is, therefore, in the sector's own interest to play a leading role in the global response to climate change. By lowering energy consumption and shifting to renewable energy sources, especially in the transport and accommodation sector, tourism can help tackle one of the most pressing challenges of our time.

14.   SDG 14: Life Below Water

Coastal and maritime tourism, tourism's biggest segments, particularly for Small Island Developing States' (SIDS), rely on healthy marine ecosystems. Tourism development must be a part of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in order to help conserve and preserve fragile marine ecosystems and serve as a vehicle to promote a blue economy, in line with Target 14.7: "by 2030 increase the economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism".

15.   SDG 15: Life on Land

Majestic landscapes, pristine forests, rich biodiversity, and natural heritage sites are often main reasons why tourists visit a destination. Sustainable tourism can play a major role, not only in conserving and preserving biodiversity, but also in respecting terrestrial ecosystems, owing to its efforts towards the reduction of waste and consumption, the conservation of native flora and fauna, and its awareness-raising activities.

16. **SDG 16: Peace and Justice**

As tourism revolves around billions of encounters between people of diverse cultural backgrounds, the sector can foster multicultural and inter-faith tolerance and understanding, laying the foundation for more peaceful societies. Sustainable tourism, which benefits and engages local communities, can also provide a source of livelihood, strengthen cultural identities and spur entrepreneurial activities, thereby helping to prevent violence and conflict to take root and consolidate peace in post-conflict societies.

17. **SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals**

Due to its cross-sectorial nature tourism has the ability to strengthen private/ public partnerships and engage multiple stakeholders – international, national, regional and local – to work together to achieve the SDGs and other common goals. Indeed, public/public cooperation and public/private partnerships are a necessary and core foundation for tourism development, as is an increased awareness in the role of tourism in the delivery on the post-2015 Development Agenda.

Annexure 2 – Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India for Destinations (Illustrative)

1. Sustainable Management

1.1. Management structure and framework

1.1.1. Destination management responsibility

In order to promote sustainable tourism at any destination, existence of a destination management organization is essential, which could be responsible for a coordinated approach to sustainable tourism. The DMO should ensure involvement of the private sector, public sector and civil society. The DMO should be given the responsibility for the management of socio- economic, cultural and environmental issues. It should be provided requisite funding, staff and capability for sustainable tourism.

1.1.2. Destination management strategy and action plan

There should be a multi-year destination management strategy and action plan based on sustainability principles. The strategy includes an identification and assessment of tourism assets and considers socio-economic, cultural and environmental issues and risks.

1.1.3. Monitoring and reporting

The destination should put in a place a system to monitor and respond to socio-economic, cultural and environmental issues and impacts arising from tourism. There should be regular monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the actions and outcomes.

1.2. Stakeholder engagement

1.2.1. Enterprise engagement and sustainability standards

Tourism-related enterprises should be regularly informed about sustainability issues and encouraged in making their operations more sustainable. Adoption of sustainability standards should be encouraged and a list of sustainability certified enterprises should be published.

1.2.2. Resident engagement and feedback

Public participation in sustainable destination planning and management should be enabled and promoted. Satisfaction of local residents with tourism sustainability should be monitored. There should also be a system for enhancing local understanding of sustainable tourism opportunities.

1.2.3. Visitor engagement and feedback

Visitor satisfaction with the quality and sustainability of the destination experience should be monitored and reported. Visitors are informed about sustainability issues in the destination and the part that they can play in addressing them.

1.2.4. Promotion and information

Promotion and visitor information material about the destination should be accurate with regard to sustainability claims.

1.3. Managing pressure and change

1.3.1. Managing visitor volumes and activities

There should be a system of visitor management and manage the volume and activities of visitors and to reduce or increase them as necessary at certain times and in certain locations, working to balance the needs of the local economy, community, cultural heritage and environment.

1.3.2. Planning regulations and development control

There is need to have planning guidelines, regulations and/or policies which control the location and nature of development, require environmental, economic, and socio-cultural impact assessment and integrate sustainable land use, design, construction, and demolition. These are widely communicated and enforced.

1.3.3. Climate change adaptation

The risks and opportunities associated with climate change should be identified and climate change adaptation strategies are pursued for the siting, design, development and management of tourism facilities.

1.3.4. Risk and crisis management

A crisis management and emergency response plan that is appropriate to the destination must be prepared. Key elements are communicated to residents, visitors, and enterprises.

2. Socio Economic Stability

2.1. Delivering local economic benefits

2.1.1. Measuring the economic contribution of tourism

The direct and indirect economic contribution of tourism to the destination's economy is monitored and publicly reported. Appropriate measures may include levels of visitor volume, visitor expenditure, employment and investment and evidence on the distribution of economic benefits.

2.1.2. Decent work and career opportunities

Career opportunities and training in tourism should be encouraged. The destination's tourism enterprises commit to providing equality of opportunity for local employment, training and advancement, a safe and secure working environment, and a living wage for all.

2.1.3. Supporting local entrepreneurs and fair trade

Retention of tourism spending in the local economy should be encouraged through supporting local enterprises, supply chains and sustainable investment. Development and purchase of local sustainable products based on fair trade principles should be encouraged. These may include food and beverages, crafts, performance arts, agricultural products, etc.

2.2. Social wellbeing and impacts

2.2.1. Support for community

A system to enable and encourage enterprises, visitors, and the public to contribute to community and sustainability initiatives in a responsible manner.

2.2.2. Preventing exploitation and discrimination

There should be established code of conduct to prevent and report on human trafficking, modern slavery and commercial, sexual, or any other form of exploitation, discrimination and harassment of or against anyone, particularly children, adolescents or women.

2.2.3. Safety and security

A system to monitor, prevent, publicly report, and respond to crime, safety, and health hazards that addresses the needs of both visitors and residents.

2.2.4. Access for all

Where practical, sites, facilities and services, including those of natural and cultural importance, are accessible to all, including persons with disabilities and others who have specific access requirements or other special needs. Information is made available on the accessibility of sites, facilities and services.

3. Cultural Sustainability

3.1. Protecting cultural heritage

3.1.1. Protection of cultural assets

A policy and system to be put in place to evaluate, rehabilitate, and conserve cultural assets, including built heritage and cultural landscapes.

3.1.2. Cultural artefacts

Compliance with the laws governing the proper sale, trade, display, or gifting of historical and archaeological artefacts. The laws are enforced and publicly communicated, including to tourism enterprises and visitors.

3.1.3. Intangible heritage

There should be encouragement to intangible cultural heritage, including local traditions, arts, music, language, gastronomy and other aspects of local identity and distinctiveness. The presentation, replication and interpretation of living culture and traditions is sensitive and respectful, seeks to involve and benefit local communities, and provides visitors with an authentic and genuine experience.

3.1.4. Traditional access

Local community should have access to natural and cultural sites.

3.1.5. Intellectual property

Protection and preservation of intellectual property rights of communities and individuals should be encouraged.

3.2. Visiting cultural sites

3.2.1. Visitor management at cultural sites

A system for the management of visitors should be developed within and around cultural sites, which takes account of their characteristics, capacity and sensitivity and seeks to optimize visitor flow and minimize adverse impacts. Guidelines for visitor behaviour at sensitive sites and cultural events should be made available to visitors, tour operators and guides before and at the time of the visit.

3.2.2. Site interpretation

Accurate interpretative material is provided which informs visitors of the significance of the cultural and natural aspects of the sites they visit. The information is culturally

appropriate, developed with host community collaboration, and clearly communicated in languages pertinent to visitors and residents.

4.   Environment Sustainability

4.1.   Conservation of natural heritage

4.1.1.   Protection of sensitive environments

There should be a system to monitor, measure and respond to the impacts of tourism on the natural environment, conserve ecosystems, habitats and species, and prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species.

4.1.2.   Visitor management at natural sites

There should be a system for the management of visitors within and around natural sites, which takes account of their characteristics, capacity and sensitivity and seeks to optimize visitor flow and minimize adverse impacts. Guidelines for visitor behaviour at sensitive sites should be made available to visitors, tour operators and guides before and at the time of the visit.

4.1.3.   Wildlife interaction

Compliance with applicable laws and standards for wildlife interactions should be ensured. Interactions with free roaming wildlife, taking into account cumulative impacts, are non-invasive and responsibly managed to avoid adverse impacts on the animals concerned and, on the viability, and behaviour of populations in the wild.

4.1.4.   Species exploitation and animal welfare

Compliance with applicable laws and standards that seek to ensure animal welfare and conservation of species (animals, plants and all living organisms).

4.2.   Resource management

4.2.1.   Energy conservation

There should be a target to reduce energy consumption, improve efficiency in its use, as well as increase the use of renewable energy. A system to encourage enterprises to measure, monitor, reduce, and publicly report their contribution to these targets.

4.2.2.   Water stewardship

Encourage enterprises to measure, monitor, publicly report and manage water usage. Water risk in the destination is assessed and documented. In cases of high-

water risk, water stewardship goals are identified and actively pursued with enterprises, to ensure that tourism use does not conflict with the needs of local communities and ecosystems.

4.2.3. Water quality

Water quality should be monitored for drinking, recreational and ecological purposes using quality standards. The monitoring results are publicly available, and there is a system to respond in a timely manner to water quality issues.

4.3. Management of waste and emissions

4.3.1. Wastewater

There should be clear and enforced guidelines in place for the siting, maintenance and testing of discharge from septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems.

4.3.2. Solid waste

The destination measures and reports on its generation of waste and sets targets for its reduction. It ensures solid waste is properly treated and diverted from landfill, with provision of a multiple-stream collection and recycling system which effectively separates waste by type. The destination encourages enterprises to avoid, reduce, reuse, and recycle solid waste, including food waste. Action is taken to eliminate or reduce single-use items, especially plastics. Any residual solid waste that is not reused or recycled is disposed of safely and sustainably.

4.3.3. GHG emissions and climate change mitigation

The destination has targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and implements and reports on mitigation policies and actions. Enterprises are encouraged to measure, monitor, reduce or minimise, publicly report and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions from all aspects of their operation (including from suppliers and service providers). Offsetting of any remaining emissions is encouraged.

4.3.4. Low-impact transportation

The destination has targets to reduce transport emissions from travel to and within the destination. An increase in the use of sustainable, low-emissions vehicles and public transport and active travel (e.g., walking and cycling) is sought in order to reduce the contribution of tourism to air pollution, congestion and climate change.

4.3.5. Light and noise pollution

The destination has guidelines and regulations to minimize light and noise pollution. The destination encourages enterprises to follow these guidelines and regulations.

Annexure 3 – Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India for Industry (Illustrative)

1. Demonstrate Effective Sustainable Management

1.1. The organisation has implemented a long-term sustainability management system that is suitable to its reality and scale, and that considers environmental, sociocultural, quality, health and safety issues.

1.2. The organisation is in compliance with all relevant national legislation and regulations

1.3. All personnel receive periodic training in the management of environmental, socio-cultural, quality health and safety practices.

1.4. Customer satisfaction is measured and corrective action taken, where appropriate.

1.5. Promotional materials are accurate and complete and do not promise more than can be delivered by the organisation.

2. Design and construction of buildings and infrastructure

2.1. Comply with land usage and protected or heritage area requirements

2.2. Respect the natural, cultural, social, built and heritage surroundings in siting, design, impact assessment, land rights and acquisition in, so far as new construction, including additions and extensions to property, is concerned.

2.3. Use locally appropriate principles of sustainable construction, including local styles, skills and materials for new construction and additions or extensions to property.

2.4. Provide access and facilities for persons with special needs in accordance with principles of universal design.

2.5. Information about and interpretation of the natural surroundings, customs, local culture and cultural heritage is provided to visitors, as well as explanations of appropriate behaviour while visiting natural areas, living cultures and cultural heritage sites.

3. Maximise social and economic benefits to the local community and minimise negative impacts

3.1. The organisation actively supports initiatives for social and community participation and development, including, among others, infrastructure, education, health, and sanitation

3.2. Local residents are employed, including in management positions, wherever feasible. Training is offered, as necessary.

3.3. Local and fair trade services and goods, particularly from MSMEs, are purchased by the organisation, where available.

3.4. The organisation encourages the means for local small entrepreneurs to develop and sell sustainable products that are based on the area's nature, history, and culture (including food and drink, crafts, performance arts, agricultural products).

3.5. A code of behaviour for activities in indigenous and local communities has been developed, with the consent of, and in collaboration with the community and/or neighbourhood

3.6. The organisation has implemented a policy against commercial exploitation, particularly of children and adolescents, including sexual exploitation.

3.7. The organisation should provide equal opportunities in recruitment and career growth to all segments of society, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, ethnicity and gender, while completely shunning child labour.

3.8. All employees, including contractual labour, are treated in accordance with national legislation and are paid a fair wage, with the minimum being in accordance with the law

3.9. The activities of the organisation do not jeopardise the provision of basic services such as water, energy or sanitation to neighbouring communities.

4. Maximise benefits to cultural and historical heritage and minimise negative impacts

4.1. The organisation follows established guidelines or a code of behaviour at culturally, ecologically or historically sensitive sites, in order to minimise visitor impact and maximise satisfaction

4.2. Historical and archaeological artifacts are not sold, traded or displayed, except as permitted by law.

4.3. The organisation contributes to the protection of local, historical, archaeological, culturally and spiritually important properties and sites, as well as natural phenomena, and does not impede access to them by local residents.

4.4. The intellectual property rights of local communities will be respected whenever the organisation uses elements of local art and tradition, architecture, or cultural heritage in its operations, design, decoration, food or shops.

5.   Maximise benefits to the environment and minimise negative impacts

5.1.   Conserving Resources

5.1.1.   Purchasing policy favours environmentally responsible and eco-friendly products for building materials, capital goods, food and consumables.

5.1.2.   The purchase of disposable and consumer goods is measured, and the organisation actively seeks ways to reduce their use.

5.1.3.   Energy consumption should be measures, sources indicated, and measures to decrease overall consumption should be adopted, while encouraging the use of renewable energy.

5.1.4.   Water consumption should be measured, sources indicated and measures to decrease overall consumption, should be adopted. The organisation practices rainwater harvesting wherever water tables have been receding.

5.2.   Reducing Pollution

5.2.1.   The organisation implements a step-by-step plan to identify, and then quantify, sources of greenhouse gas emissions under its control, and activate measures to offset climate change in a time-bound manner.

5.2.2.   Wastewater, including gray water, is treated effectively and reused, where possible.

5.2.3.   A solid waste management plan is implemented, with quantitative goals to minimise waste that is non-biodegradable, not reused or recycled.

5.2.4.   The use of harmful substances including pesticides, harmful chemicals, swimming pool disinfectants and cleaning material is minimised; substituted, when available, by innocuous products, and all chemical use is properly managed.

5.2.5.   The organisation implements practices to reduce pollution from noise, light, runoff, erosion, ozone-depleting compounds and air and soil contaminants.

**5.3.   Conserving biodiversity, ecosystems and landscapes**

5.3.1.   The organisation does not participate in, accept, allow or encourage the use of, or display or trade in endangered species of flora and fauna, except trophy displays, as permitted under the law.

5.3.2.   No wildlife is held in captivity.

5.3.3. The organisation uses endemic native species for landscaping and restoration and takes measures to avoid the introduction of invasive alien species.

5.3.4. The organisation supports biodiversity conservation, including supporting natural protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value.

5.3.5. Interactions with wildlife must not produce adverse effects on the viability of populations in the wild. Any disturbance of natural ecosystems is minimised, and, if it occurs inadvertently, steps are taken for immediate rehabilitation and/or compensatory contribution to conservation management.

National Strategy
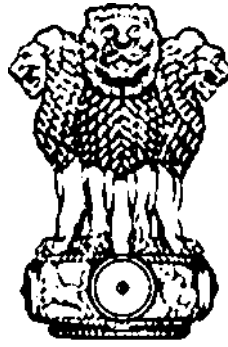
for

Ecotourism

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29th April, 2022

Ministry of Tourism
Government of India

National Strategy and Roadmap
for
Ecotourism

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1. India's unrivalled natural attractions

The natural attractions in India are almost unrivalled in the world, ranging from pristine forests, snow-clad Himalayas, montane grasslands, golden and silver deserts, rivers, lakes, wetlands, mangroves, beaches, volcanoes and corals, housing tremendous biodiversity. Besides, we have the mega-fauna consisting of iconic species such as tigers, lions, elephants, rhinos, leopards, wild buffaloes, Indian bison (gaur), etc. and more than 1200 species of birds.

1.2. India's rich natural and eco-tourism resources

India has significant geographical advantage owing to its rich natural & eco-tourism resources:

- 70 per cent of the Himalayas
- 7,000 kms of coastline
- Among the one of the three countries in the world with both hot and cold deserts
- Ranks 10th in total area under forest cover
- Ranks 6th in terms of number of recognized UNESCO Natural Heritage sites

1.3. Ecotourism – a tool for conservation of natural heritage

1.3.1. Eco tourism is now globally recognised as a powerful tool for conservation of forests, biodiversity/ wildlife and scenic landscapes. It does so by creating sustainable alternative livelihoods for forest dependent communities and by generating conservation awareness among masses and decision makers.

1.3.2. In order to strengthen community control and management of the forests, it is important to generate a sustainable flow of non-extractive financial benefits of forests for the communities, to ensure that the communities take interest in the conservation of forests and wildlife. Ecotourism is perhaps the only means of achieving this end.

1.3.3. Apart from its conservation and economic value, public interest in nature-based recreation, i.e. ecotourism is fast increasing, and it is the duty of the government to provide this service to the public as far as compatible with conservation imperatives. Ecotourism is one of the fastest growing segments of the travel and tourism industry which is one of the highest producers of global wealth and employment.

1.4. National Strategy on Sustainable Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism has also drafted national strategy on Sustainable tourism which focuses promoting environmental sustainability, protecting biodiversity, promoting economic sustainability and promoting socio-cultural sustainability. The strategy aims to mainstream sustainability into tourism sector. Ecotourism and Adventure tourism are the important segments to promote sustainable tourism.

1.5. **Ecotourism guidelines by MoFECC**

In order to regulate and encourage planned development of areas in and around protected areas, the Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate Change has recently notified "Ecotourism guidelines in and around protected areas 2021". These guidelines are based on the key recommendations of the Tiger Task Force (2005), provisions contained in Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, Schedule Tribes and Other Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006.

1.6. **National Strategy on Rural Tourism**

The Ministry of Tourism has recently notified national strategy on rural tourism. Keeping in view that ecotourism and adventure tourism are largely away from the cities, the strategy for rural tourism is also relevant for promotion of ecotourism and adventure tourism in the country.

1.7. **National Strategy and Roadmp for Ecotourism**

1.7.1. Despite natural wealth and potential, India ranks quite low in global ecotourism development. 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. Post pandemic, there will be a trend away from mass tourism and greater focus on ecotourism, adventure tourism, wild life and nature.

1.7.2. In order to provide impetus to the development of ecotourism and adventure tourism in the Country, National Strategy for ecotourism has been prepared. The National Strategy for ecotourism takes into account Ecotourism guidelines of MoEFCC, National Strategy for rural tourism and sustainable tourism.

Chapter 2 – Vision, Mission and Strategy

2.1. **Ecotourism Definition**

Ecotourism is responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.

2.2. **Vision**

To position India as a preferred destination for ecotourism globally.

2.3. **Mission**

To develop an enabling ecosystem for growth of Eco Tourism in the Country and create synergies amongst the Central and State Governments, Local communities, conservation NGOs and the private sector for the development of ecotourism in the country.

2.4. **Strategic Pillars**

Following strategic pillars have been identified for development of ecotourism:

(i).   State Assessment and Ranking
(ii). State Strategy for Eco Tourism
(iii). IEC, Capacity Building and Certification
(iv). Marketing and Promotion
(v).   Destination and Product Development
(vi). Public Private and Community Partnerships
(vii). Governance and Institutional Framework

2.5. **Stakeholders**

2.5.1. **Key Stakeholders**

Promotion and development of ecotourism tourism will involve a diverse set of stakeholders, whose role will be crucial for the success of the Strategy. The key stakeholders are:

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

The role and responsibilities of the stakeholders are given below.

2.5.2. **Central Ministries**

Various Central Ministries are involved in the development of eco-tourism. Various Central and State Schemes must be converged and synergy created for major impact. Programs and initiatives of the following Ministries need to be studied in detail for promotion and development of eco-tourism:

(i). **Ministry of Tourism**

Ministry of Tourism is responsible for promotion of Tourism in the Country. The Ministry implements various schemes for creation of infrastructure, marketing and promotion and skill development initiatives for tourism. Various schemes of the Ministry can be leveraged for promotion and development of eco-tourism.

(ii). **Ministry of Rural Development**

The Ministry of Rural Development is working towards sustainable and inclusive growth of rural India through a multipronged strategy for eradication of poverty by increasing livelihoods opportunities, providing social safety net and developing infrastructure for growth. The Ministry of Rural Development is an important stakeholder in the development of rural areas in the Country and contribute towards the objective through various schemes being implemented by the Ministry.

(iii). **Ministry of Environment and Forests**

The Ministry is responsible for implementation of policies and programmes relating to conservation of the country's natural resources including its lakes and rivers, its biodiversity, forests and wildlife. Ministry of Environment is responsible for framing laws and regulations for environment and forests and has a key role in development of sustainable tourism. The Ministry has framed Ecotourism guidelines, which will help the growth of ecotourism in the country. There is need to create more synergy in the efforts of the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Environment for promoting eco and adventure tourism.

(iv). **Ministry of Culture**

Ministry of Culture is responsible to preserve, promote and disseminate all forms of art and culture in the Country and has a large number of Institutions and organization involved in the field of art and culture. The Ministry can

contribute in the promotion of culture and heritage in a sustainable and responsible manner.

(v). **Ministry of Development of North East Region**

The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region is responsible for the matters relating to the planning, execution and monitoring of development schemes and projects in the North Eastern Region. Its vision is to accelerate the pace of socio-economic development of the Region so that it may enjoy growth parity with the rest of the country. Ministry can help development of eco-tourism in north east region.

(vi). **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship**

Ministry of Skills can help with various skill development initiatives for sustainable and responsible tourism including promotion of entrepreneurship.

(vii). **Ministry of Textiles**

Ministry of Textiles is responsible for promotion of handicrafts and handlooms and these activities are concentrated in rural areas. Many tourists may be interested to know about handicrafts and the Ministry can provide support and synergy in developing responsible tourism.

(viii). **Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare**

Department of Agriculture is responsible for agriculture, cooperation and farmers welfare. The Department implements various schemes, which impact the farming activities and communities in rural areas. The Department may provide support for Farmstays, agri tourism and other related activities, which have synergies with sustainable and responsible tourism.

2.5.3. State Governments

State Governments have a key role for development of tourism in their respective states. Many states have taken important measures for development of sustainable and responsible tourism. Many states have also framed eco-tourism policies and prioritized development of ecotourism and adventure tourism. State Governments will have the primary role in creating momentum for sustainable tourism.

2.5.4. Panchayati Raj Institutions

Panchayati Raj Institutions have a strong influence on local communities and their support is vital to the success of ecotourism and rural tourism. Village Panchayats

and other institutions have to be consulted and involved in the preparation of plans for developing ecotourism in their villages.

2.5.5. Industry

Industry players, who specialize in adventure and ecotourism and tour operators apart from accommodation providers such as hotel, B&B, Farm Stay owners and tourist guides are important stakeholders. There is a need to involve industry players, who may be willing to be part of developing sustainable tourism destinations. They may have existing business or may set up new business. A business plan for the destination vetted by Industry is important for the sustainability.

2.5.6. Non-Government Organizations

Non-Government Organizations involved in the areas of sustainable and responsible tourism, integrated rural development, livelihood promotion in rural areas, community development in rural areas can play a great role in forging community linkages.

2.5.7. Local Community

Local community is a key stakeholder and has to be taken on board. The Community has to be made aware of the benefits of sustainable adventure and ecotourism, their apprehensions, if any have to be allayed and they have to be encouraged to participate and be part of the value chain. In order to ensure inclusive and responsible tourism, most of the supplies and services must be sourced from local providers. Their capacity building will have to be done to ensure they become part of the supply chain.

Chapter 3 – State Assessment, Ranking and Strategy

3.1. Ranking of the States on Ecotourism

3.1.1. Ranking as a capacity building exercise

The Ministry of Tourism will conduct ranking of the States, with the key objective to foster competitiveness and encourage States to work proactively towards developing ecotourism with the overarching objective of promoting sustainable tourism. It will be implemented as a capacity development exercise to encourage mutual learning among all states and to provide support in policy formulation and implementation.

3.1.2. Ranking to be based on globally recognized parameters

The broad areas and action points for ranking exercise will be taken global rankings of countries in ecotourism. The States may be suitably classified into leaders, aspiring leaders and emerging States. This will also help prepare a State Specific Report containing analysis of respective ecosystems for promotion of ecotourism, strengths and priority areas for future and best practices adopted by the States.

3.1.3. Ranking to be done through professional support

The ranking exercise will be carried out with professional support and through independent experts from various Institutions both Government and Private. The Ministry of tourism will provide necessary training to the officials and other stakeholders and handhold the States for their participation in the exercise.

3.2. Improving India's world ranking in Ecotourism

Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with other Ministries and State Governments will prepare a plan to improve the ranking of the country in the ecotourism parameters, listed in The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017 of the World Economic Forum. The plan shall be implemented expeditiously and updated as and when new assessment reports are received.

3.3. Need for A Comprehensive State Strategy

Ecotourism like tourism itself require a whole of government approach across the three tiers of the Government namely Central, State and Local Government and strong engagement with private sector, local community and Civil Society organizations. A comprehensive strategy and long-term shared vision will bring all the stakeholders together to unlock the State's ecotourism potential and use tourism as a vehicle for sustainable social and economic development and jobs.

3.4.   **Guiding Principles for Ecotourism**

3.4.1. Ministry of Environment and Forest has laid down following principles for development of ecotourism:

(i).   Adopt low-impact wildlife tourism that protects ecological integrity of forest and wildlife areas, secures wildlife values of the destination and its surrounding

(ii).   Highlight the biodiversity richness, their values and their ecological services to people

(iii). Highlight the heritage value Of India's wilderness and protected areas

(iv).   Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect

(v).   Facilitate the sustainability of ecotourism enterprises and activities

(vi).   Provide livelihood opportunities to local communities

(vii). Use indigenous, locally produced and ecologically Sustainable materials for tourism activities

3.4.2. In addition to the above regulatory guidelines, the Strategy for ecotourism will also include marketing and promotion, ease of travel, tourism infrastructure and ICT infrastructure, training and capacity building etc.

3.5.   **Assistance to the States for preparing Strategy**

Ministry of Tourism will extend necessary assistance to the States in the preparation of the State Strategy for Eco Tourism.

Chapter 4 – IEC, Capacity Building and Certification

4.1.   Information, Education and Communication

4.1.1.   The need for IEC

Ecotourism is still evolving and there is great need for a well-planned Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign to create awareness and understanding amongst all stakeholders. The campaign will have to be spearheaded by the Central Government and State Governments will full support of the industry and other Stakeholders including local government functionaries, forest and wildlife officials, local communities and non-government organizations working in the field.

4.1.2.   Development of IEC material

Ministry of Tourism with the assistance from technical experts will devise overall IEC material, which can be customised and expanded by the State Governments keeping in view their specific needs and requirements. The material will be both digital and print and will be made available on websites, social media and other channels.

4.1.3.   State support for IEC

In addition to IEC material being made available through various channels, the Ministry will work with the States to organize sensitization and training workshops for various stakeholders including Government and Private Sector officials, NGOs and local communities/ institutions. Apart from various aspects of sustainable and responsible tourism, adventure tourism and ecotourism, it will also cover the need for enhancing the visitor experience and value chain enhancement for competitive advantage. This tourism focus should be an essential component of each destination.

4.2.   National and State Resource Centres

The Ministry of Tourism will set up a National Resource Centre as a source of capacity and expertise at the National level for ecotourism. Similarly, the Ministry will also encourage the State Governments to set up State Resource Centres. These resource centres along with other identified institutions will help in developing adequate material, preparing a pool of master trainers, training of trainers and other capacity building initiatives.

4.3.   Capacity Building of field functionaries and conservation agencies

4.3.1.   The Ministry of Tourism will support the State Governments in building the capacity of the conservation agencies and communities for developing and operating world

class ecotourism programmes, in partnership with various stakeholders and private sector. It shall be continuously improved and enhanced.

4.3.2.   The State Governments will endeavour to prepare a capacity building plan for communities and regulatory staff for every site to ensure progressive improvement in quality of operations and flow of benefits to communities. Special attention will be paid to impart specialized training to field functionaries on green skilling, on Eco-tourism activities etc.

4.4.   Skill development and entrepreneurship

4.4.1.   The State Governments will identify the capacity needs of local communities to benefit from ecotourism programmes, through jobs and entrepreneurship development, among other things. This may include training to discharge specialized tasks such as tourist guides, natural science interpreters, patrol partners for protection work, entrepreneurs for small scale homestead-based hospitality industry, small business operators (like souvenir shops, equipments for hire, photography etc).

4.4.2.   Ministry of Tourism will support State Governments in undertaking various skill development and entrepreneurship development activities as identified for meeting the needs of the local community. The State Government will also facilitate them in placement and starting their own venture.

4.5.   Setting up of Interpretation Centres

4.5.1.   Interpretation Centres are an important tool for education and interpretation of ecotourism potential of the area and provide crucial information to the visitors in order to enable them to appreciate the eco-system services and intangible benefits provided by the area. The visitors are sensitized to the significance of conservation and expected behavioural requirements while they are within the pristine area through an effective communication plan.

4.5.2.   The Ministry of Tourism and the State Governments will endeavour to set up Interpretation Centres at all the important ecotourism destinations. to Interpretation centres will be equipped with appropriate electronic visualisation tools, signage, audio-visual presentations, interactive learning tools, safety protocol and information material on the area.

4.6.   Education, Research & Training on Sustainable, Eco and Adventure Tourism

4.6.1.   Ecotourism research, monitoring and training facilities shall be created in identified Institutions across the country to develop ecotourism as a full-fledged academic discipline in the country. School and college curricula should also incorporate

sustainable tourism. Ecotourism shall be included as a discipline in the professional training curricula of all levels of foresters and wildlife managers and their capacity shall be regularly updated through in-service training and study tours to acclaimed ecotourism destinations in India and abroad.

4.6.2. Education and Skill training will cover various aspects of responsible Tourism such as awareness of over tourism impacts, environmental impact and concept of carrying capacity, community participation, indigenous solutions and tourism offerings, entrepreneurship and community development initiatives at local level (Vocal for Local).

4.7. Training and Certification of Guides

Guides and naturalists being one of the most important elements of imparting quality ecotourism experience. The Ministry of Tourism will strengthen the facilities for their training and certification of guides/ naturalists through nationally accepted certification processes across the country.

4.8. Certification for Ecotourism

In order to promote development of adventure tourism and ecotourism in a professional, sustainable and responsible manner, Certification Scheme for tour operators, and other service providers for ecotourism and adventure tourism will be framed.

4.9. Digitalization and branding of Certification Schemes

The entire process of adventure and eco-tourism certification shall be end to end digital. The Certification will have an attractive branding and it will be aggressively promoted by the Ministry of Tourism through all its channels including incredible India website and mobile application.

Chapter 5 – Marketing and Promotion

5.1. Creating a Sub brand

In order to promote India as a destination for Ecotourism, a sub brand around these themes shall be created under the overall "Incredible India" Brand.

5.2. Dedicated Promotional Campaign

There is a need to have a dedicated promotional campaign for positioning India as an adventure tourism destination. India has to focus on utilising its natural heritage. This will require a different promotional strategy than the one for selling monuments and culture. It has to focus on our mountains, rivers, forests and deserts. These campaigns should be planned in partnership with Industry Stakeholders.

5.3. State Specific Campaigns

Every State has its own unique offerings and therefore the States have to plan their own campaign to popularise the State as ecotourism and adventure tourism destination.

5.4. Destination Specific Campaign

It is ultimately the destination which succeeds or fails and therefore destinations will have to plan specific campaigns to showcase their unique offerings.

5.5. Campaign for Responsible Travellers

While supply side interventions are required, there is also a need to work on demand side by making the traveller aware of sustainable and responsible tourism. Responsible behaviour by travellers and demand for more sustainable tourism will lead to more demand for ecotourism. The Ministry in partnership with the States, Industry and Destinations will launch a campaign for responsible traveller. The Campaign will encourage travellers to behave responsibly.

Chapter 6 – Destination and Product Development

6.1. Identification of destinations, profiling and prioritization

6.1.1. Identification of existing and new potential sites

Each State will identify areas for eco-tourism within the Protected Areas, in pristine areas rich in biodiversity or of aesthetic significance through a participatory process involving stakeholders, particularly the local communities, tribal & other traditional forest dwellers. A list of ecotourism destinations both existing and new potential sites will be prepared and profiled.

6.1.2. Prioritization of destinations for development

The State Government will prioritize development of identified destinations based on the existing connectivity and tourist circuits, current tourism ecosystem, unique tourism offerings of the destination/ site and future potential.

6.1.3. Decongestion of existing destination

Established ecotourism destinations shall be decongested where necessary (e.g. prominent tiger reserves; popular trekking trails) through long-term ecotourism planning to spread tourism benefits to other destinations/ sites across Protected Areas, landscapes and other natural habitats.

6.2. Development of prioritized destinations

Development plans for the prioritized ecotourism destinations shall be prepared based on the detailed gap study and benchmarking with national and international best practices and standards. It will include recommendations for connectivity, hard and soft interventions for developing the destination.

(i). **Improving the Connectivity**

Most of the ecotourism activities happen in remote areas and it is important to improve the connectivity of these destinations/ attractions to reduce the travel time. The Development plan must address the challenges of connectivity, if any. The State Governments will explore time saving and cost-effective means such as Chopper and Sea Plane Connectivity.

(ii). **Ecotourism development and management plan**

Ecotourism development and management plans shall be prepared as per the ecotourism guidelines of the Ministry of Environment and Forests in consultation with all stakeholders, professional associations, non-profits

and recognised experts. Ecotourism plans embedded in existing forest working plans, micro plans, wildlife management plans of the forest departments and the zonal master plans and area development plans of other departments/ agencies, shall be reviewed and updated.

The Plan may also include retrofitting existing ecotourism destinations with basic visitor facilities (e.g. interpretation facilities, signage, toilets, garbage disposal, drinking water) inside forests, or along hiking/mountaineering trails.

(iii). **Special restrictions**

Ecologically vulnerable and fragile sites, such as breeding areas, nesting colonies, erosion-prone locations, sites with RET plant species, sources of drinking water, certain parts of core areas of tiger reserves, biodiversity heritage sites, cultural and religious sites etc. may be placed under special restrictions, or may be made no-go areas, if deemed necessary by local authorities, experts and other stakeholders.

(iv). **Demand for budget accommodation**

In view of the large, and growing domestic market consisting of families, students and budget travellers, adequate facilities to accommodate this demand shall be created while ensuring that this segment has a rich educational and recreational experience with minimum environmental impact.

(v). **Soft interventions**

Ecotourism or adventure tourism development plans shall also include the soft interventions such as skill development and entrepreneurship, capacity building, marketing and branding, itinerary development.

(vi). **Impact Assessment**

Potential impacts of every ecotourism activity shall be recorded at the planning stage and mitigation plans shall be developed accordingly. Environmental and social impact assessment of ecotourism in important existing destinations shall be carried out expeditiously and appropriate mitigation plans/ safeguards shall be implemented at the earliest.

(vii). **Monitoring**

Eco-tourism plans will invariably include a dynamic monitoring mechanism, covering number of tourists visiting and the pattern, their level of satisfaction, involvement of local people, scope for improvement, etc. This will facilitate

prediction of growth and preparation for management of the growth of eco-tourism in terms of visitation management, growth of hospitality facilities in neighbourhood, need for security arrangements for the area and so on.

6.3. Implementation of Development Plans

The State Nodal Agency responsible for ecotourism will converge various Central Government and State Government plans for mobilizing resources for implementing the plan. A destination or site level management organization or committee should be set up with the participation of all the stakeholders to spearhead the implementation of development and management plan on ground.

Chapter 7 - Public Private and Community Partnerships

7.1.   Strengths of Private Sector

Strengths of the private sector in areas of marketing, operations, product and experience creation, quality assurance and finance etc. shall be harnessed to develop and spread ecotourism through mutually beneficial partnerships including public-private, community-private, public-private-community among others.

7.2.   Framework for Private Sector Participation

Central and State Governments will work jointly to evolve a framework for enlisting ecotourism operators, on the basis of globally recognised parameters:

(i).   Those seeking to participate in government or community concessions (contracts) must be enlisted based on their credentials through a transparent process. Such competent and qualified private operators shall be mandated to develop well-dispersed eco-lodges/ camps to develop/ conduct ecotourism and adventure activities.

(ii).   Standardised contract documents and operational guidelines, related to the development and management of contracts and partnerships with private operators, shall be developed, for the benefit of implementing authorities and communities.

(iii).   Appropriate tax and non-tax incentives or other suitable benefits may be provided, by the Central Government as well as State Governments, to ecotourism operators to encourage them to follow globally recognised standards and practices of ecotourism.

(iv).   Private Sector Operators for a particular project shall be selected following a transparent and competitive process.

7.3.   Ecotourism Blocks to be given for development and management

State Governments should designate areas for private sector operator to be called ecotourism block for development and management:

(i).   Suitable procedure for delineating "ecotourism blocks" in forest lands shall be developed by the State Governments keeping in view laws and regulations.

(ii).   State Governments may give the selected private sector Operator exclusive access to ecotourism block, on long-term agreement, preferably in partnership with local communities for development and management.

(iii). The operator shall have no right over the forest produce or forest land, except using it for running ecotourism operations as per an approved plan. The local communities shall be entitled to use the forest land as per their rights and privileges as recognised by law.

(iv). Management of forests included in an ecotourism block shall be decided by the State Government in consultation with the operator and the dependent local communities.

(v). Ordinarily, only basic tourist conveniences such as toilets, rain-shelters, zero impact or seasonal tented camping facilities, hiking/ biking trails, dirt tracks, hides/ machaan etc. shall be allowed to be developed on the forest land.

(vi). Residential and other commercial facilities shall be developed outside the forest areas. Where no suitable private land adjoining the assigned land is available for developing residential facilities, limited forest land may be allowed for this purpose, within a minimum impact format and without clearing/ cutting trees. However, no new residential facilities shall be allowed on the forest land included in protected areas notified under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

(vii). The operator shall be obliged to return the site to its original pristine condition at the end of the agreement period. The facilities thus created will need to be based on sustainable practices, such as, limited capacity, usage of renewable energy, water harvesting and recycling, local employment, solid waste management and sewage treatment plants etc., to ensure pollution free, eco-friendly and socially acceptable operations.

(viii). The operator shall also be obliged to trade the forest carbon in the international market on behalf of the government/ communities, in accordance with international mechanisms such as CDM, REDD+ and other environmental economic instruments.

7.4. Community and Private Conservancy

7.4.1. Owners of farmland adjoining forests may be encouraged to adopt ecotourism as an alternative land use, by developing their lands as wilderness or wildlife habitats, individually or collectively, in the form of private or community conservancies.

7.4.2. The Government shall support community and private conservancies through appropriate incentives as such operations will create additional wildlife habitats / wilderness with the concomitant flow of ecosystem services and will also generate rural livelihoods and employment opportunities.

7.4.3.   Conservancies shall be encouraged to run ecotourism operations in collaboration with suitable private operators, under an equitable profit/ benefit sharing arrangement, in order to ensure market access, quality of operations and capital inflow.

7.5.   **Homestays and Community lodges**

Homestays and community lodges, shall be encouraged through appropriate incentives. Partnerships between community-based hospitality initiatives and private operators or reputed conservation NGOs shall be encouraged with the objective of quality assurance. Community initiatives will have to maintain the same environmental standards related to water and energy conservation and garbage disposal as private operators.

Chapter 8 – Governance and Institutional Framework

8.1. Action Plan

Ministry of Tourism will prepare a detailed National Action Plan in consultation with relevant Ministries, State Governments and Industry Stakeholders for implementation of the Strategy. The Action plan will be reviewed and monitored in accordance with the laid down governance mechanism for the same.

State Governments will prepare State specific policy and action plan for development of sustainable tourism, adventure tourism and ecotourism. The Ministry will help with model policies and action plans for guidance of the States.

8.2. Governance

In order to ensure that the Strategy is effectively implemented, there is need to review the progress and resolve the issues. Following institutional structure will be followed for the same.

(i). Vision Group under Union Minister for Tourism

A Vision Group on Sustainable Tourism under the Union Minister for Tourism will be set up. The Vision Group will include all the Stakeholder Ministries, States, Industry, NGO and Experts. It will provide overall vision and guidance for the development of Sustainable Tourism, Adventure Tourism and Eco Tourism in the Country.

(ii). IMCCT

Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee under Cabinet Secretary, already in place, will review and resolve inter-Ministerial issues, which may arise and provide guidance for greater convergence of Central Schemes.

(iii). National Board on Sustainable Tourism under Secretary (Tourism)

National Board on Sustainable Tourism under Secretary (Tourism) will be set up. The National Board will include the representatives of the Key Ministries, leading States in sustainable tourism and representatives from Industry, NGO and Experts.

The Board will guide the operationalisation and implementation of various strategic initiatives to strengthen the ecosystem for development of sustainable tourism and ecotourism in the Country:

(i)   Certification Schemes
(ii)   Capacity building

(iii)   Marketing and promotion
(iv)   Destination and product development
(v)   Private Sector Participation
(vi)   Specific strategies
(vii)   Any other measures for growth of sustainable tourism and ecotourism in the country.

(iv).   State Steering Committee under Chief Secretary

The States will set up a State Steering Committee under Chief Secretary. The Committee will have representation from all the relevant Departments at the State level, representatives of Industry, NGOs and Experts.

The Committee will coordinate, review and resolve issues regarding implementation of strategy and other State specific issues for development and promotion of sustainable tourism and ecotourism in the State.

(v).   District level Committee

The States will set up a district level Committee under District Collector to coordinate and review progress at the district level.

(vi).   Site level monitoring and Coordination Committee

The States will set up a destination/ site level "Ecotourism Committee", consisting of forest officers, district authorities, representatives of local communities, tour operators, lodge owners and other local stakeholders to provide to provide a forum/ platform for guidance and smooth running of Ecotourism operations.

8.3.   National Nodal Agency

Ministry of Tourism will designate National Nodal Agency to support the Ministry of Tourism in coordinating and evolving strategy and actionable plans and schemes for promotion and development of ecotourism in the Country. The Nodal agency will in particular assist the Ministry in undertaking the following functions:

(i).   Preparation of detailed Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy.

(ii).   Identifying national and global best practice and prepare tool kits for their replication by the States

(iii).   Benchmarking State policies and standards and prepare model policies and standards

(iv).   Capacity Building measures including setting up of Resource Centres and Centres of Excellence

(v).   Facilitating adoption of digital technologies for ecotourism

(vi).   Formulation of dedicated scheme to support development of ecotourism in the Country

(vii).   Any other support, which can facilitate the Ministry of Tourism in development of ecotourism in the Country.

The Nodal agency will set up appropriate structures and professional staffing for supporting the Ministry of Tourism in the implementation of the strategy. The Ministry will provide necessary budgetary support to the Nodal Agency through various schemes for promotion and development of tourism.

8.4.   **State Nodal Agency**

The States will designation a State Nodal Agency to coordinate, facilitate and promote sustainable tourism including promotion of adventure and ecotourism in the State. The agency should be provided with adequate budgetary resources and staff to carry out the assigned responsibilities. The Ministry of Tourism will work with the designated State Nodal Agency to provide necessary financial and technical support under various schemes of the Ministry for development of tourism infrastructure, tourism promotion and capacity building of tourism service providers.

National Strategy
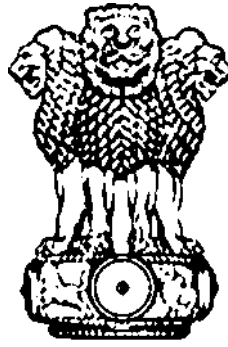
for

Adventure Tourism

सत्यमेव जयते

29th April, 2022

Ministry of Tourism
Government of India

National Strategy and Roadmap
for
Adventure Tourism

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1. India's unrivalled natural attractions

The natural attractions in India are almost unrivalled in the world, ranging from pristine forests, snow-clad Himalayas, montane grasslands, golden and silver deserts, rivers, lakes, wetlands, mangroves, beaches, volcanoes and corals, housing tremendous biodiversity. Besides, we have the mega-fauna consisting of iconic species such as tigers, lions, elephants, rhinos, leopards, wild buffaloes, Indian bison (gaur), etc. and more than 1200 species of birds.

1.2. Adventure Tourism – India's significant geographical advantage

India has significant geographical advantage owing to its rich natural & eco-tourism resources:

- 70 per cent of the Himalayas
- 7,000 kms of coastline
- Among the one of the three countries in the world with both hot and cold deserts
- Ranks 10th in total area under forest cover
- Ranks 6th in terms of number of recognized UNESCO Natural Heritage sites

1.3. India's potential for Adventure Tourism

Despite natural wealth and potential, India ranks quite low in global adventure tourism. India holds great potential to become a global marketplace for adventure activities and sports. India has tremendous potential to attract adventure tourists from different parts of the World. From North to South and East to West, the geographical conditions of the country provide a competitive edge regarding the development of adventure tourism opportunities.

1.4. Adventure Tourism – A niche tourism segment

Adventure tourism is a type of niche tourism where exploration or travel involves some degree of risk (real or perceived), may require special skills, physical effort. Adventure tourism can be any tourism activity that includes physical activity, cultural exchange, and connection with nature. Adventure tourism experiences are generally divided into two types hard adventure and soft adventure.

1.5. Adventure Tourism – promotes core values of sustainable tourism

Adventure tourism incorporates and promotes core values of sustainable tourism. It attracts visitors outside of peak season, highlights the natural and cultural values of a destination, thereby promoting its preservation, and creates resilient and

committed travellers. Adventure tourism is resilient, attracts high value customers and supports local economies. Adventure tourism practitioners encourage sustainable tourism because without pristine natural environment and meaningful cultural experiences, adventure tourism cannot exist.

1.6. National Strategy on Sustainable Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism has also drafted national strategy on Sustainable tourism which focuses promoting environmental sustainability, protecting biodiversity, promoting economic sustainability and promoting socio-cultural sustainability. The strategy aims to mainstream sustainability into tourism sector. Adventure tourism is one of the important segments to promote sustainable tourism.

1.7. National Strategy on Rural Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism has recently notified national strategy on rural tourism. Keeping in view that adventure tourism activities are largely away from the cities, the strategy for rural tourism is also relevant for promotion of adventure tourism in the country.

1.8. National Strategy for Adventure Tourism

1.8.1. Adventure Tourism has grown exponentially worldwide over the past years with tourists visiting destinations previously undiscovered. This allows for new destinations to market themselves as truly unique, appealing to those travellers looking for rare, incomparable experiences.

1.8.2. In order to provide impetus to the development of adventure tourism in the Country, National Strategy for adventure tourism has been prepared. The Strategy focuses on developing adventure destinations, promoting safety in adventure tourism, skill development, capacity building and marketing.

Chapter 2 – Vision, Mission and Strategy

2.1. **Adventure Tourism**

2.1.1. **Definition**

Adventure tourism is a trip that includes at least two of the following three elements physical activity, natural environment and cultural immersion.

2.1.2. **Hard adventure activities**

Adventure tourism activities that involve a high level of risk and require a greater level of expertise, skills, training and experience. Tourists taking hard adventure activities, need to have the knowledge of hard adventure activity, high level of expertise, physical & mental fitness, and expert guidance. High altitude mountaineering, river rafting, scuba diving, hang gliding, skydiving comes etc. are hard adventure activities.

2.1.3. **Soft adventure activities**

Adventure tourism activities that involve moderate levels of risk and the tourists involved in these activities do not require particular skill or experience. Most tourists take soft adventure activities for recreation and fun as it involves a lesser level of risk. Hiking, camping, biking comes under soft adventure activities.

2.2. **Vision**

To position India as a preferred destination for adventure tourism globally.

2.3. **Mission**

To develop an enabling ecosystem for growth of Adventure Tourism in the Country and creating synergies amongst Central Government, State Governments, Private Sector and local communities, for development of Adventure Tourism.

2.4. **Strategic Pillars**

Following strategic pillars have been identified for development of sustainable tourism, adventure tourism and ecotourism:

(i).   State assessment, ranking and strategy
(ii).   Skills, capacity building and certification
(iii). Marketing and promotion
(iv).   Strengthening adventure tourism safety management framework
(v).   National and state level rescue and communication grid
(vi).   Destination and product Development

(vii). Governance and Institutional Framework

2.5. Stakeholders

2.5.1. Key Stakeholders

Promotion and development of adventure tourism will involve a diverse set of stakeholders, whose role will be crucial for the success of the Strategy. The key stakeholders are:

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

2.5.2. Central Ministries

Various Central Ministries are involved in the development of adventure tourism. Programs and initiatives of the following Ministries need to be studied in detail for promotion and development of adventure tourism:

(i). **Ministry of Tourism**

Ministry of Tourism is responsible for promotion of Tourism in the Country. The Ministry implements various schemes for creation of infrastructure, marketing and promotion and skill development initiatives for tourism. Various schemes of the Ministry can be leveraged for promotion and development of adventure tourism.

(ii). **Ministry of Rural Development**

Ministry of Rural Development is working towards sustainable and inclusive growth of rural India through a multipronged strategy for eradication of poverty by increasing livelihoods opportunities, providing social safety net and developing infrastructure for growth. The Ministry can contribute towards development of adventure tourism through various schemes being implemented by the Ministry and reap the benefits of adventure tourism in promoting socio-economic development livelihood opportunities.

(iii). **Ministry of Environment and Forests**

The Ministry is responsible for implementation of policies and programmes relating to conservation of the country's natural resources including its lakes

and rivers, its biodiversity, forests and wildlife. Ministry of Environment is responsible for framing laws and regulations for environment and forests and has a key role in development of sustainable tourism.

(iv). **Ministry of Culture**

Ministry of Culture is responsible to preserve, promote and disseminate all forms of art and culture in the Country and has a large number of Institutions and organization involved in the field of art and culture. The Ministry can contribute in the promotion of culture and heritage in a sustainable and responsible manner.

(v). **Ministry of Development of North East Region**

The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region is responsible for the matters relating to the planning, execution and monitoring of development schemes and projects in the North Eastern Region. Its vision is to accelerate the pace of socio-economic development of the Region so that it may enjoy growth parity with the rest of the country. Ministry can help development of adventure tourism in north east region.

(vi). **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship**

Ministry of Skills can help with various skill development initiatives for sustainable and responsible tourism including promotion of entrepreneurship for adventure tourism.

(vii). **Ministry of Textiles**

Ministry of Textiles is responsible for promotion of handicrafts and handlooms and these activities are concentrated in rural areas. Many tourists may be interested to know about handicrafts and the Ministry can provide support and synergy in developing responsible tourism.

(viii). **Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare**

Department of Agriculture is responsible for agriculture, cooperation and farmers welfare. The Department implements various schemes, which impact the farming activities and communities in rural areas. The Department may provide support for Farmstays, agri tourism and other related activities, which have synergies with sustainable and responsible tourism including adventure tourism.

(ix). **Department of Youth Affairs and Sports**

Department of Youth Affairs pursues the twin objectives of personality building and nation building, i.e. developing the personality of youth and involving them in various nation-building activities to channelize the constructive and creative energies of the youth. The Department also promotes adventure sports in the country and can contribute towards developing adventure tourism.

2.5.3. Indian Mountaineering Foundation

Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF) is the apex national body for mountaineering and allied sports. IMF supports, promotes and regulates national and international climbing and mountaineering in India. IMF is also engaged in mountain protection work, knowledge building and creating awareness of the Indian Himalaya. IMF has a critical role in promoting adventure tourism particularly mountaineering and trekking in Himalayas.

2.5.4. State Governments

State Governments have a key role for development of tourism in their respective states. Many states have taken important measures for development of sustainable and responsible tourism. Many states have prioritized development of adventure tourism in their respective States. States can provide impetus to the development of adventure tourism working in partnership with Central Government and other stakeholders.

2.5.5. Panchayati Raj Institutions

Panchayati Raj Institutions have a strong influence on local communities and their support is vital to the success of rural tourism. Village Panchayats and other institutions have to be consulted and involved in the preparation of plans for developing adventure tourism in their villages and also providing support for adventure tourism.

2.5.6. Industry

Industry players, who specialize in adventure tourism and tour operators apart from accommodation providers such as hotel, B&B, Farm Stay owners and tourist guides are important stakeholders. There is a need to involve industry players, who may be willing to be part of developing sustainable tourism destinations. Industry can create innovative adventure tourism products to attract visitors from India and abroad.

2.5.7. Local Community

Local community is a key stakeholder and has to be taken on board. The Community has to be made aware of the benefits of sustainable adventure tourism, their

apprehensions, if any have to be allayed and they have to be encouraged to participate and be part of the value chain. In order to ensure inclusive and responsible tourism, most of the supplies and services must be sourced from local providers. Their capacity building will have to be done to ensure they become part of the supply chain.

Chapter 3 – State Assessment, Ranking & Strategy

3.1. Ranking of the States on Adventure Tourism

3.1.1. Ranking as a capacity building exercise

The Ministry of Tourism will conduct ranking of the States on Adventure Tourism, with the key objective to foster competitiveness and encourage States to work proactively towards developing adventure tourism with the overarching objective of promoting sustainable tourism. It will be implemented as a capacity development exercise to encourage mutual learning among all states and to provide support in policy formulation and implementation.

3.1.2. Ranking to be based on globally recognized parameters

The broad areas and action points for ranking exercise will be taken global rankings of countries in adventure tourism. There will also be a State Specific Report containing analysis of respective ecosystems for promotion of adventure tourism, strengths and priority areas for future and best practices adopted by the States.

3.1.3. Ranking to be done through professional support

The ranking exercise will be carried out with professional support and through independent experts from various Institutions both Government and Private. The Ministry of tourism will provide necessary training to the officials and other stakeholders and handhold the States for their participation in the exercise.

3.2. Improving India's world ranking in Adventure Tourism

Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with other Ministries and State Governments will prepare a plan to improve the ranking of the country in global Adventure Tourism Development Index (ATDI) prepared by Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA). The improvement is dependent on all stakeholders, government and private, making a concerted effort.

3.3. Need for a comprehensive state strategy for adventure tourism

Adventure tourism requires support across the three tiers of the Government namely Central, State and Local Government and strong engagement with private sector and local community. A comprehensive strategy and long-term shared vision will bring all the stakeholders together to unlock the State's adventure tourism potential and use tourism as a vehicle for sustainable social and economic development and jobs.

3.4. Guiding Principles for Adventure Tourism

The enabling environment for adventure tourism encompasses many interrelated factors that affect the success of sustainable and responsible adventure tourism in the country or the State:

(i). Adventure tourism in any area must be developed in consultation with local community and mechanism to seek social legitimacy, credibility and trust of the community must be set out.

(ii). The strategy should prioritize adventure tourism by proposing investment in research on target adventure markets, adventure trends, products with potential and encourage public-private partnerships.

(iii). Adherence to safety standards is especially important for the adventure sector, where activities can be risky. The strategy must ensure compliance and strict enforcement of regulations regarding safety and service standards.

(iv). Adventure destinations need policies that prioritize the type of infrastructure valued by adventure tourists such as signage, good guide training, and clean trails.

(v). A destination that is not well connected loses competitiveness. Adventure opportunities need to be discoverable online and easily bookable. Destinations benefit when tourists share their experiences in real-time, which may inspire others in that traveller's network to book a holiday as well.

(vi). In view of increasing number of destinations offering adventure tourism activities, price competitiveness of the destination is important unless it is offering something unique and that must be communicated to the consumers. The strategy should also include accurate and innovative marketing.

3.5. **Assistance to the States for preparing Strategy**

Ministry of Tourism will extend necessary assistance to the States in the preparation of the State Strategy for Adventure Tourism.

Chapter 4 – Skills, Capacity Building and Certification

4.1. **Skill Development of Adventure Activity Service Providers**

Keeping in view the specialized nature of adventure activities and risks involved, proper training and certification of the workforce of adventure activity service providers is essential. The Ministry is already providing various skills in adventure tourism through Indian Institute of Travel and Tourism, National Institute for Wate Sports, National Institute of Skiing and Mountaineering. There are other training institutions run by Central Ministries and State Governments. Detailed plans will be worked out in consultation with the States.

4.2. **Skill Training and capacity building of local communities**

The State Governments will identify the capacity needs of local communities to benefit from adventure tourism, through jobs and entrepreneurship development, among other things. This may include training to discharge specialized tasks such as guides, entrepreneurs for small scale homestead-based hospitality industry, small business operators like souvenir shops, equipment for hire, photography etc. Ministry of Tourism will support States in skill training and capacity building of local communities.

4.3. **Training and Certification of Guides**

Guides are one of the important elements for ensuring quality experience. It further assumes significance in case of adventure tourism keeping in view the risks involved in adventure activities. The Ministry of Tourism will strengthen the facilities for their training and certification through nationally accepted certification processes across the country.

4.4. **National and State Resource Centres**

The Ministry of Tourism will set up a National Resource Centre as a source of capacity and expertise at the National level for adventure tourism. Similarly, the Ministry will also encourage the State Governments to set up State Resource Centres. These resource centres along with other identified institutions will help in developing adequate material, preparing a pool of master trainers, training of trainers and other capacity building initiatives for Adventure Tourism.

4.5. **Certification for Adventure Activity Service Providers**

In order to promote development of adventure tourism in a professional, sustainable and responsible manner, Certification Scheme for tour operators, and other service providers for adventure tourism will be framed. The entire process of adventure

tourism certification shall be end to end digital. The Certification will have an attractive branding and it will be aggressively promoted by the Ministry of Tourism through all its channels including incredible India website and mobile application.

Chapter 5 – Marketing and Promotion

5.1.   Creating a Sub brand

In order to promote India as a destination for Adventure tourism, a sub brand around adventure tourism shall be created under the overall "Incredible India" Brand.

5.2.   Dedicated Promotional Campaign

There is a need to have a dedicated promotional campaign for positioning India as an adventure tourism destination. India has to focus on utilising its natural heritage. This will require a different promotional strategy than the one for selling monuments and culture. It has to focus on our mountains, rivers, forests and deserts. These campaigns should be planned in partnership with the States and Industry Stakeholders.

5.3.   State Specific Campaigns

Every State has its own unique offerings and therefore the States have to plan their own campaign to popularise the State as adventure tourism destination. The States should also collaborate with Ministry of Tourism for creating synergies with "Incredible India" campaign.

5.4.   Destination Specific Campaigns

Every major adventure tourism destination also needs to plan specific campaign to highlight and showcase their unique tourism offerings. It is ultimately the destination which succeeds or fails and it is therefore important to keep the focus on specific destinations.

5.5.   Campaign for Responsible Travellers

In order to ensure sustainable and responsible development of adventure tourism in the country, there is a need to make the traveller aware of sustainable and responsible tourism. Responsible behaviour by travellers and demand for more sustainable tourism will go a long way in developing sustainable adventure tourism in the Country. The Ministry in partnership with the States, Industry and Destinations will launch a campaign for responsible traveller.

Chapter 6 – National Adventure Tourism Safety Management Framework

6.1.   **Need for Adventure Tourism Safety**

All adventure activities involve inherent risk of harm and adventure activity service providers have to manage those risks. The degree of risk varies among activities and locations. It is important that adventure activity providers take necessary steps to manage the risks and deliver adventure activities safely while keeping alive the sense of adventure and excitement. In order to promote adventure tourism, there must be adequate measures for safety to mitigate and reduce the risks involved in adventure activities.

6.2.   **Current Efforts for Adventure Tourism Safety**

6.2.1.   **Advisory regarding Guidelines framed by ADTOI**

Ministry of Tourism has released the guidelines on safety and quality norms for adventure Tourism in India formulated along with the Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI). The guidelines have been framed for 15 Land Based, 7 Air Based and 7 Water Based activities, which cover the entire gamut of Adventure Tourism available in India. The guidelines help adventure tour operators and other stakeholders understand and execute safety measures in a better manner.

6.2.2.   **State level measures for adventure safety**

In addition to the guidelines circulated by the Ministry of Tourism, some of the States have also adopted various regulatory and administrative measures for promoting safety in adventure tourism. In some cases, there have been judicial directions to the States to take necessary steps for safety in various adventure activities.

6.2.3.   **Safety management standards**

ISO 21101:2014 and BIS have laid down standards for safety management by adventure activity service providers and act as benchmarks for adopting measures for safe adventure activities.

6.3.   **National Adventure Tourism Safety Management Framework**

Ministry of Tourism will work with other Central Ministries, State Governments and Industry Stakeholders to put in place a comprehensive framework for adventure tourism safety in the country.

6.4.   **Key objectives of Safety Framework**

The key objectives of the framework would be:

(i).   To mitigate risks in adventure activities
(ii).   To provide guidance to Adventure Service Providers for safety
(iii). To encourage Adventure Service Providers for skill upgradation
(iv).   To build confidence among the adventure tourists
(v).   To set up internal and external audit systems

6.5.   Guiding principles for Safety Framework

National Adventure Tourism Safety Management Framework will follow the following guiding principles:

(i).   Setting up safer conditions for the adventure tourists and the activity providers
(ii).   To keep a check on all the adventure tourism activities
(iii). To keep the standards at par with global standards
(iv).   Continuous improvement of Safety Management System
(v).   Coordinate with global tourism bodies on adventure tourism safety
(vi).   To promote effective communication of safety measures

6.6.   Strategic elements of Safety Framework

National Adventure Tourism Safety Management Framework will have the following strategic elements to comprehensively cover all the aspects of safety:

(i).   National and State level Institutional set up for Adventure Safety
(ii).   Standards of equipment required for adventure activities
(iii). Standard Operating Procedures for adventure activities
(iv).   Communication – pre activity, during activity and post activity
(v).   Registration and approval of Adventure Activity Service Providers
(vi).   Inspection and Certification of Equipment
(vii). Training and Certification of Personnel/ Instructors/ Guides
(viii). Setting up of internal and external auditing systems
(ix).   Risk management framework
(x).   Incident recording and analysis
(xi).   Root cause analysis and corrective action
(xii). Emergency Response Planning System

Chapter 7 – National/ State Level Rescue and Communication Grid

7.1. Immediate evacuation and rescue to save casualty

The risk level varies in adventure tourism activities and sometimes it may be due to natural conditions like weather, terrain and sometimes may be due to some machine or equipment failure or due to human error. Some of the adventure activities like high altitude mountaineering and trekking may put adventure tourists into danger and require immediate rescue and evacuation to save casualties. The immediate evacuation or rescue may have a different impact on the Adventure Tourism perspective of the adventure tourists.

7.2. National and State Rescue and Communication Grid

An efficient Communication grid provides all the relevant information to the adventure tourists and this reduces the confusion arising due to lack of information. The communication grid will be helpful in setting a fast communication among the Service Providers, Rescue Teams, Medical Teams and Government Authorities. The Rescue and Communication Grids should be formed at National, State and Regional Levels and should be connected with each other.

7.3. Functions of Rescue and Communication Grid

The Rescue and Communication Grid Should be able to provide:

(i).   Immediate rescue and evacuation of stranded adventure tourists form the site through ground, water and air rescue teams.

(ii).   Should be able to guide the related agencies to tackle the incidents and accidents.

(iii). Should have the live maps of all the adventure sites with latitudes and longitudes.

(iv).   Must have the updated weather reports.

(v).   Should be having a helpline number at national Level.

(vi).   Allowing limited use of satellite phones and drones for the safety of tourists.

7.4. Composition of Rescue and Communication Grid

(i).   Dedicated rescue teams covering each adventure site. It may be from an adventure institute or may be from the defence or paramilitary forces deputed nearby. NDRF and SDRF teams may also be allotted the rescue team tasks.

(ii).   Local health officers should be deputed in the rescue and communication grids so they can guide the nearby hospitals regarding making necessary arrangements to tackle accidents and incidents that may happen because of the adventure activities happening in a particular zone.

(iii).   Should have a member from the recognised adventure tourism association.

(iv).   Should have a member from adventure training institute.

Chapter 8 – Destination and Product Development

8.1.   **Identification of destinations, profiling and prioritization**

8.1.1.   Each State will identify the adventure destinations by offerings e.g. land, air and water based activities in soft, hard and other categories and create a detailed profile. It will include both existing adventure tourist destinations as well as potential adventure tourist destinations.

8.1.2.   The State Government will prioritize development of identified destinations based on the existing connectivity and tourist circuits, current tourism ecosystem, unique tourism offerings of the destination/ site and future potential.

8.2.   **Development of prioritized destinations**

Development plans for the prioritized adventure destinations shall be prepared based on the detailed gap study and benchmarking with national and international best practices and standards. It will include recommendations for connectivity, hard and soft interventions for developing the destination.

Most of the adventure activities happen in remote areas and it is important to improve the connectivity of these destinations/ attractions to reduce the travel time. The Development plan must address the challenges of connectivity, if any. The State Governments will explore time saving and cost-effective means such as Chopper and Sea Plane Connectivity.

8.3.   **Implementation of Development Plans**

The State Nodal Agency responsible for adventure tourism will converge various Central Government and State Government plans for mobilizing resources for implementing the plan. A destination or site level management organization or committee should be set up with the participation of all the stakeholders to spearhead the implementation of development and management plan on ground.

8.4.   **Private Sector partnership in Adventure Tourism**

Strengths of the private sector in areas of marketing, operations, product and experience creation, quality assurance and finance etc. shall be harnessed to develop and spread ecotourism through mutually beneficial partnerships including public-private, community-private, public-private-community among others.

8.5.   **Homestays and Community lodges**

Homestays and community lodges, shall be encouraged through appropriate incentives. Partnerships between community-based hospitality initiatives and

private operators or reputed conservation NGOs shall be encouraged with the objective of quality assurance. Community initiatives will have to maintain the same environmental standards related to water and energy conservation and garbage disposal as private operators.

Chapter 9 – Governance and Institutional Framework

9.1.   **Action Plan**

Ministry of Tourism will prepare a detailed National Action Plan in consultation with relevant Ministries, State Governments and Industry Stakeholders for implementation of the Strategy. The Action plan will be reviewed and monitored in accordance with the laid down governance mechanism for the same.

State Governments will prepare State specific policy and action plan for development of sustainable tourism, adventure tourism and ecotourism. The Ministry will help with model policies and action plans for guidance of the States.

9.2.   **Governance**

In order to ensure that the Strategy is effectively implemented, there is need to review the progress and resolve the issues. Following institutional structure will be followed for the same.

(i).   **Vision Group under Union Minister for Tourism**

A Vision Group on Sustainable Tourism under the Union Minister for Tourism will be set up. The Vision Group will include all the Stakeholder Ministries, States, Industry, NGO and Experts. It will provide overall vision and guidance for the development of Sustainable Tourism, Adventure Tourism and Eco Tourism in the Country.

(ii).   **IMCCT**

Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee under Cabinet Secretary, already in place, will review and resolve inter-Ministerial issues, which may arise and provide guidance for greater convergence of Central Schemes.

(iii).   **National Board on Adventure Tourism under Secretary (Tourism)**

National Board on Adventure Tourism under Secretary (Tourism) will be set up. The National Board will include the representatives of the Key Ministries, leading States in adventure tourism and representatives from Industry, NGO and Experts.

The Board will guide the operationalisation and implementation of various strategic initiatives to strengthen the ecosystem for development of adventure tourism in the Country:

(i)   Certification Schemes
(ii)   Safety guidelines

(iii)   Capacity building

(iv)   Marketing and promotion

(v)   Destination and product development

(vi)   Private sector participation

(vii)   Specific strategies

(viii)   Any other measures for growth of sustainable tourism, adventure tourism and ecotourism in the country.

(iv).   **State Steering Committee under Chief Secretary**

The States will set up a State Steering Committee under Chief Secretary. The Committee will have representation from all the relevant Departments at the State level, representatives of Industry, NGOs and Experts. The Committee will coordinate, review and resolve issues regarding implementation of strategy and other State specific issues for development and promotion of adventure tourism in the State.

(v).   **District level Committee**

The States will set up a district level Committee under District Collector to coordinate and review progress at the district level.

(vi).   **Site level monitoring and Coordination Committee**

The States will set up a destination/ site level Committees, consisting of local officials, representatives of local communities, tour operators, lodge owners and other local stakeholders to provide to provide a forum/ platform for guidance and smooth running of adventure activities.

9.3.   **National Nodal Agency**

Ministry of Tourism will designate National Nodal Agency to support the Ministry of Tourism in coordinating and evolving strategy and actionable plans and schemes for promotion and development of Adventure Tourism in the Country. The Nodal agency will in particular assist the Ministry in undertaking the following functions:

(i).   Preparation of detailed Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy.

(ii).   Identifying national and global best practice and prepare tool kits for their replication by the States

(iii). Benchmarking State policies and standards and prepare model policies and standards

(iv).   Capacity Building measures including setting up of Resource Centres and Centres of Excellence

(v).   Facilitating adoption of digital technologies for adventure tourism

(vi).   Formulation of dedicated scheme to support development of adventure tourism in the Country

(vii).   Any other support, which can facilitate the Ministry of Tourism in development of adventure tourism in the Country.

The Nodal agency will set up appropriate structures and professional staffing for supporting the Ministry of Tourism in the implementation of the strategy. The Ministry will provide necessary budgetary support to the Nodal Agency through various schemes for promotion and development of tourism.

9.4.   **State Nodal Agency**

The States will designation a State Nodal Agency to coordinate, facilitate and promote adventure tourism in the State. The agency should be provided with adequate budgetary resources and staff to carry out the assigned responsibilities. The Ministry of Tourism will work with the designated State Nodal Agency to provide necessary financial and technical support under various schemes of the Ministry for development of tourism infrastructure, tourism promotion and capacity building of tourism service providers.