

Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India

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The Ministry of Tourism has launched a Comprehensive Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI) for three major segments of tourism industry, namely Tour Operators, Accommodation and Beaches, Backwaters, Lakes and Rivers sectors. The criterion has been adopted by the stakeholders. The tour operators approved by the Ministry of Tourism have to sign a pledge for commitment towards “Safe & Honorable Tourism and Sustainable Tourism” to fully implement Sustainable Tourism practices, consistent with the best environment and heritage protection standards, such that the present tourism resource requirements optimize both local community benefit and future sustainable uses. As on date, 2787 Accommodation Units and 1633 Tourism Service Providers are recognized by Ministry of Tourism.

National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism was formulated by the Ministry and circulated to the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. In line with the strategy, Travel for Life (TFL) programme was initiated to encourage tourists and tourism businesses to adopt sustainable tourism practices. No separate budget has been allocated under the National Strategy for Sustainable tourism.

Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change conducted training programme of 15 days each for 210 persons during 2023-24 on Alternate Livelihood Programme (ALP) and Paryavaran Naavik Certificate (PNC) at five Ramsar sites [Sultanpur National Park (Haryana), Yashwant Sagar Dam and Sirpur Lake, Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Bhitarkanika Mangrove and Chilika Lake (Odisha)]. The convergence of the two Ministries aims at supporting the development of Nature Tourism at the Ramsar Sites for preserving and enhancing the local cultural and natural resources.

As per the guidelines of Ministry of Tourism, hotels at the project stage itself are required to incorporate various eco-friendly measures like Sewage Treatment Plant (STP), Rain Water Harvesting System, waste management system, pollution control, introduction of non-Chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) equipment for refrigeration and air conditioning, measures for energy and water conservation etc. The Swadesh Darshan scheme has been revamped to Swadesh Darshan 2.0 for integrated development of tourism destinations in partnership with the States/UTs and local governments for promoting sustainable and responsible tourism in the country. “Challenge Based Destination Development”, a sub-scheme under Swadesh Darshan 2.0 aims for holistic development of a destination to enhance tourist experience across all of tourism value chain to transform our tourist destinations as sustainable and responsible destinations.

This information was given by Union Minister for Tourism and Culture Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

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