

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1099
ANSWERED ON 15.12.2022

TOURISM IN THE INDIAN HIMALAYAN REGION

1099. SMT. VANDANA CHAVAN:

Will the Minister of **TOURISM** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has conducted any studies to gauge the environmental impact of tourism on the Indian Himalayan region;
- (b) the amount of solid waste created annually by tourists in this region;
- (c) whether Government has considered establishing sustainable and regulated tourism standards for the Indian Himalayan region including maintenance of proper tourist capacity; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a): The G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (GBPNIHE), an autonomous institute under Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has conducted few studies on disaster risk assessment, socio-economic and cultural vulnerability of local people along with mitigation measures in Kedarnath valley. Similarly, Kullu, Manali in Himachal Pradesh and Valley of Flowers, Hemkund Sahib and Pindari Valley in Uttarakhand have been studied in terms of waste generation, waste compositions and microbial bio-composting techniques.

In addition, NITI Aayog (Working Group II) has prepared a report on Sustainable Tourism in the Indian Himalayan Region.

(b): Ministry of Tourism does not maintain the data on amount of solid waste generated by the tourists. However, according to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) 2019, Indian Himalayan Region is generating about 1.905 Metric Ton/Year of solid waste

(c) & (d): To position India as a preferred global destination for sustainable and responsible tourism all across the country including Indian Himalayan region, Ministry of Tourism has formulated National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism. Following strategic pillars have been identified for the development of sustainable tourism in the strategy document: -

1. Promoting Environmental Sustainability
2. Protecting Biodiversity

3. Promoting Economic Sustainability
4. Promoting Socio-Cultural Sustainability
5. Scheme for Certification of Sustainable Tourism
6. IEC and Capacity Building
7. Governance

A National Board for Sustainable Tourism has been constituted under the Chairpersonship of Secretary (T), comprising of representatives from identified Central Ministries/ organizations, State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations and Industry Stakeholders. The Board shall guide the operationalisation and implementation of various strategic initiatives for development of sustainable tourism and Eco-tourism in the Country:

- (i) Detailed action plans and formulation of dedicated schemes
- (ii) Certification Schemes
- (iii) Capacity building, replication of national and global best practices
- (iv) Marketing and promotion
- (v) Private Sector Participation
- (vi) Destination and Product Development
- (vii) Specific strategies for sustainable and ecotourism
- (viii) Any other measures for growth of sustainable and ecotourism

The Ministry has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Responsible Tourism Society of India (RTSOI) on 27th September 2021 on the occasion of World Tourism Day. The purpose of the MoU is to undertake measures to actively promote and support 'sustainability initiatives' in the tourism sector of each other and work in a collaborative manner wherever possible.

Ministry has launched Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI) Certification for accommodation units.
