

Ministry of Tourism in association with UNEP, RTSOI, and IITTM organises regional workshop at Hyderabad for Southern Region on Development of Sustainable and Responsible Tourist Destinations

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With a view to develop sustainable and responsible tourist destinations and promote sustainable tourism in the country, Ministry of Tourism (MoT) in association with Indian Institute of Tourism & Travel Management (IITTM), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Responsible Tourism Society of India (RTSOI) organised the third regional workshop on Development of Sustainable and Responsible Tourist Destinations at Hyderabad on 28th February, 2023. The workshop witnessed wide participation of senior Government officials and tourism industry stakeholders from the States/ Union Territory of the Southern region viz. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana.



The workshop was kickstarted with an inaugural speech delivered by Shri Mohamed Farouk, Regional Director, India tourism Bangalore / Bengaluru. In his address, he highlighted the need of approaching the growth of tourism sector while considering the limitation of resources and protecting the ecosystem.

Shri Alok Sharma, Director, IITTM set the context of the regional workshop by highlighting the need of bringing the concept of sustainable tourism into actions and mainstreaming it. He defined that the initiative of conducting regional workshop for sustainable tourism by Ministry of Tourism is an effort to familiarise the initiatives taken by Central Government for development of sustainable tourism.

Shri Aravind Viswanathan, Ministry of Tourism shared success stories of Swadesh Darshan 1.0, the flagship centrally sponsored scheme of Ministry of Tourism for creating tourism infrastructure in the country. He also gave an overview of Swadesh Darshan 2.0 and illustrated how it integrates sustainability in destination development.

Smt. Mridula Tangirala, representative of RTSOI deliberated with the participants on the need for sensitising the tourist and creating a demand for responsible travel. She introduced the Responsible Travellers campaign and explained ways to educate tourists about responsible behaviour.



Ms. Kaushik Chandrashekar, UNEP shared some landmark efforts like the Global Tourism Plastics initiative and the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism launched in November 2021 in climate change CoP 26. Interventions at State Level and guidelines on plastic waste management in tourism sector were highlighted. He encouraged stakeholders to join such initiatives.

Presentations were also made by representatives of State and UTs Tourism Departments from Southern region, calling attention to their best sustainable tourism practices. States and UTs highly spoke about the positive economic, environmental, social and cultural impacts of their interventions such as getting Blue Flag Certifications to many beaches, economic growth while implementing carrying capacity, and global recognition to Responsible Tourism initiatives and Rural Tourism development.



Central Nodal Agency for Sustainable Tourism, Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management briefed the participants about the salient features of Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI). The participants also took the [Travel for LiFE pledge](#) to seek their commitment towards travelling responsibly.

Industry leaders also presented their innovative ways of implementing sustainable tourism and success stories from different areas of Southern regions to where they have created tangible positive impact. Taj Krishna by IHCL Group shared that the key to ensure economic growth for the business has been regular monitoring of the sustainability initiatives. Key focus areas and interventions for Sustainable Adventure, Heritage, and Beach Tourism were highlighted during the session.



Considering Green Tourism has been identified as one of the key priorities during India's G20 presidency, the Regional Workshops for Sustainable Tourism strengthens India's efforts to mainstream sustainability in tourism sector. The Tourism Working Group is working on a roadmap to use Tourism as a vehicle for achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

The workshop strengthened the engagement among the Ministry of Tourism, State Governments/ UT Administrations and Industry stakeholders towards achieving Sustainability Goals.

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