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BEST ECO-TOURISM DESTINATIONS IN INDIA

Explore Thekkady: With These Ultimate Eco-Friendly Travel Guide

India, a land teeming with varied landscapes and a rich history, is a favourite among many travellers. One gem particularly worth noting is Thekkady, nestled in Kerala's Western Ghats. This small town is especially appealing for its lush forests, exotic wildlife, and aromatic spice plantations.



Ishika Jain Updated: Oct 07, 2024 7:00 PMIST

India is a country with a rich civilization and various landscapes, which give tourists a wide range of choices. It's one of these treasures that is Thekkady, a small town located within the Western Ghats hills in Kerala's southern state. Thekkady is well known for its dense forests, extensive wildlife and spice plantations; it is therefore an ideal destination for nature-loving tourists with eco-friendly orientation. This article examines some of the best eco-friendly travel spots located at Thekkady where sustainable tourism practices blend seamlessly with nature's beauty.

1. Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary

Situated at the heart of Thekkady, Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary epitomizes what ecotourism is all about. Covering a total area of 925 square kilometres, this sanctuary has diverse flora and fauna including majestic Indian elephant, Bengal tiger and endangered species such as Lion tailed macaque monkeys among others. Tourists can do guided walks through forests or take up bamboo rafting on peaceful Periyar lake or enjoy boat safaris but according to strict ecological regulations applicable in this sanctuary.

2. Mangala Devi Temple



The thickly forested landmass around Thekkady houses Mangala Devi Temple which symbolizes the spiritual past of the place. Built to worship Goddess Mangala Devi for centuries now people have been visiting this temple just to meditate under its calm atmosphere besides seeing panoramic ranges spread below them from here. Thereby minimizing

vehicular pollution to be caused on their way to reach it by foot only visitors are encouraged to take a scenic trek before getting into this temple.

3. Gavi Eco-Tourism

Gavi Eco-Tourism provides an excellent escape into wildernesses off-the-grid for those looking for eco-adventure experiences like no other place would offer them. An invitee presence having unspoiled natural beauty is what Gavi is, surrounded by pristine forests and rich in endemic wildlife. Bird watching, camping and walking around nature are among the activities that tourists do here to feel like they are living in this place instead of just being visitors. They also ensure that eco-tourism practices in Gavi are sustainable by appropriate waste management strategies and popularization of eco-friendly lodging facilities.

4. Spice Plantations



Given Thekkady's fertile soil and favourable climatic conditions, it has become a spice growing region with plantations all over as far as one can see. Visiting these spice plantations does not only allow smelling cloves, cardamom or pepper but also teaches on the methods used for sustainable farming today. All this happens when eco-aware travellers get knowledge concerning organic farming, participate in harvesting spices and promote fair trade with local communities.

5. Tribal Heritage Museum

A visit to tribal heritage museum is essential to have an understanding of cultural threads weaving through Thekkady. The Mannan, Paliyan and Oorali tribes who have been dwelling in these jungles for centuries can be learned about here among others. Through its interactive exhibits and curated displays, the museum shows how these communities relate to their natural environment hence putting emphasis on preserving indigenous knowledge amidst modernization.

Conclusion

Thekkady serves as an example of ecotourism at its best where sustainability weaves into the innate beauty of nature. Embracing responsible travel choices and supporting initiatives that prioritize environmental

conservation allows travellers to embark on a life-changing journey that not only restores one's inner peace but also protects future generations from harm by taking care of our planet. It may involve exploring Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary's dense woods or enjoying flavoursome organic spices; whichever it is, you are invited for a visit to Thekkady that should impart some positive influence on earth through your steps there being light ones.

Source:

<https://travel.india.com/guide/destination/explore-thekkady-with-these-ultimate-eco-friendly-travel-guide-7305511/>

New trekking rules in Karnataka: 300 trekkers per day cap introduced

Created: Oct 5, 2024, 23:18 IST

Synopsis

Karnataka limits trekkers to 300 per day at popular sites to control crowds and protect nature. An online portal has been launched for bookings and managing plastic waste. The government aims to balance eco-tourism with conservation. Group bookings and flexible cancellations are also available through the portal.



Photo courtesy: Canva

The Karnataka government has introduced a cap on trekkers at trekking sites across the state. As per the new regulation, the number of trekkers is now limited to 300 per day on all trekking routes. This step has been taken to try and control overcrowding of these sites, and protect the environment. The need to balance ecotourism with environmental conservation was felt deeply because, back in January, approximately 6000 tourists visited Kumara Parvatha in a span of just a couple of days. This overcrowding brought several problems like chaos and safety concerns.

Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre launched an online ticket booking portal, (<https://aranyavihaara.karnataka.gov.in>) for trekking routes in Karnataka. Visitors can use this portal to book tickets for trekking sites of their choice across the state. As for now, visitors can book for five trails: Kumara Parvatha (via Subrahmanya), Bidahalli to Kumara Parvatha, Bidahalli-Kumara Parvatha-Subrahmanya, Chamarajanagar-Nagamale, and Talacauvery-Nishani Motte.

If reports are to go by, by the end of October, 40 more trekking routes will be added to the portal. Visitors can also use the website to book wildlife safaris and boat safaris. Soon, major national parks and tiger reserves will reopen for the season.



Photo courtesy: Canva

Earlier, it was a common practice for the private companies to purchase tickets in bulk, limiting access for genuine trekkers in the process. With this portal, it will not be possible to continue the unfair practice. Now, the process is such that trekkers must upload government-issued ID cards when reserving tickets.

Each phone number can be used to book up to 10 tickets, making it convenient for group bookings. The portal also offers flexible cancellation policies. Trekkers who cancel their bookings seven days in advance will receive a full refund, while those cancelling closer to the trek will receive a partial refund, with a certain amount deducted.

In addition to managing crowd control, the government is also taking steps to reduce plastic waste on trekking routes and forest roads. A ban on plastic items, including water bottles, carry bags, and food packaging, has been introduced. Travelers and trekkers will be required to dispose of prohibited items at designated checkpoints. In the second phase of this initiative, inspections will be conducted on trekking routes and forest roads to ensure compliance. Fines will be imposed on those found carrying banned items such as plastic bottles, liquor bottles, cigarettes, and lighters.



Photo courtesy: Canva

The online booking portal also provides detailed information on the various trekking routes available in Karnataka, including

descriptions and images to help trekkers make informed decisions. This ensures that visitors are well-prepared before embarking on their trekking adventures, contributing to a better-managed and more sustainable trekking experience.

With the implementation of these new regulations, the Karnataka government aims to promote eco-tourism while ensuring the preservation of the state's natural environment. By controlling the number of trekkers and reducing plastic waste, the government hopes to offer a more organised and sustainable trekking experience for both visitors and locals. Source:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/travel/travel-news/new-trekking-rules-in-karnataka-300-trekkers-per-day-cap-introduced/articleshow/113971427.cms>

What India (and the World) Can Learn from Sustainable Tourism in Kerala

By Shivya Nath 24th October 2024



These are difficult times for the tourism industry and we have much to learn from sustainable tourism in Kerala. Cover photo: Ponraj Krishna Pandi (CC)

These days, lying under the warm sun, soaking up spring in my hometown Dehradun (luckily 'Im in lockdown here!), I've been thinking a lot about Kerala. Just a few weeks ago, I was lost in the bountiful south's magical beauty. Cycling along bright yellow marigold fields. Hiking amid the mist-engulfed Western Ghats. Devouring organic, sumptuous, vegan Kerala meals off banana leaves. And devouring stories of kindness, humility, entrepreneurship and humanity from the many souls I met along the way.



Cycling along the lowland farms near Thekkady.

Being in an unprecedented lockdown has led to many of us discussing the future of travel. We have no idea when the on-going crisis will be behind us. Or what the world – and travelling in it – will look like thereafter.

But one thing is for sure.

Responsible travel will become more important than ever. After all, nature might have wreaked havoc on us to remind us of the havoc we've been wrecking on her.

When Kerala Tourism reached out to me with their latest campaign on the 'humanscape' of Kerala, it immediately reminded me of something I've been meaning to write. Responsible tourism lessons for India and other developing countries, from my travels across 'god's own country':

Create linkages between vocational skills training and responsible tourism



A micro-entrepreneur who grew her family business through sustainable tourism in Kerala.

It's no surprise that Kerala was India's first state to launch a "Responsible Tourism Mission" in pursuit of a single-minded goal: "Making better places for people to visit and better places for people (locals) to live in."

Tourism projects often tend to focus only on the former. To create more infrastructure for tourists, for instance. This mindless focus has led to roads being built through pristine forests and hill stations being overwhelmed with ugly, concrete construction. Officials often feel obliged to pander to tourist demands, no matter how they destroy the local ecology or culture. In the dry mountain desert of Ladakh for instance, that has led to the phasing out of centuries-old dry composting toilets in favour of flush toilets. Across India, that means tourism often hampers local life instead of enhancing it.

This winter, while travelling across Kerala, I understood what the latter part of that statement meant. I ended up meeting several micro entrepreneurs and women's self-help groups who were trained by Kerala's RT Mission to develop their vocational skills (one of the mission's many initiatives). These range from making papadum and crafting recycled candles to sewing cloth bags to replace plastic bags. Vocational training is offered by many Indian states, but often fails due to the lack of job opportunities. Kerala's success came from integrating these skills with tourism. By connecting entrepreneurs with hotels, resorts and homestays, market

linkages were created to sustain livelihoods.

Many entrepreneurs I met have managed to grow their business and improve their standard of living. Responsible tourism accommodations now have a steady supply of locally sourced, environmentally conscious products. Together creating a better place to visit and a better place to live!

Support dying art forms by creating value for the time and knowledge of local artisans



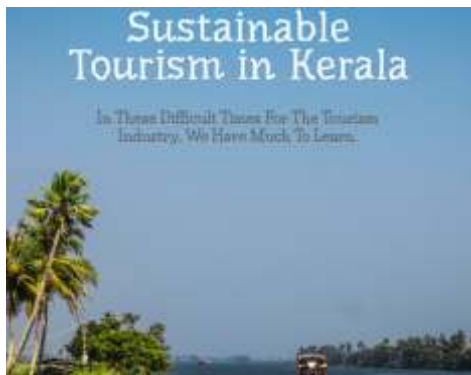
Nangiar Koothu – an awe-inspiring storytelling artform in Thrissur.

Many of us would love to support traditional arts, music, dance, crafts, storytelling rituals and other creative expressions that date back several centuries. But for a long time, I struggled with the how. As much as I value the effort and intricacy behind many dying crafts across the country, I simply don't have the space in my bags (and the money in my wallet) to invest in them. And even if I did, the minimalist in me would probably cringe. Besides, many ornamental crafts are only relevant to a specific lifestyle – performing artists, ritualistic storytellers and the like.

And yet, I still want to experience and value their efforts. I want to fill myself with awe as I watch a bell jar artist at work or comprehend why a jaali artist continues to use rudimentary tools instead of giving in to modern temptations.

While travelling along the River Nila with the Kerala-based travel organisation, The Blue Yonder, I had a moment of clarity. We spent time with several artisans who are single-handedly keeping their craft alive. We learnt about their lives, asked them burning questions and documented some of their work. It was unlikely that we'd buy Kathakali ornaments or metal (bell jar) mirrors though!

But unlike most responsible travel companies I've travelled with, The Blue Yonder compensates artisans for the time and knowledge they share with travellers. A novel concept for artisans who rely on the sale of tangible creations, but perhaps the only way to leverage tourism to save many of India's dying arts!



Leverage environmentally-conscious luxury travel for employment opportunities



Sustainable tourism in Kerala: A cottage at Spice Village thatched with elephant grass.

Environmentalists and conscious travellers often argue that high-end, large-scale tourism is detrimental to the environment and the local way of life. I used to feel the same way. But I've come around to the fact that hotels and lodges create significantly more job opportunities than homestays or guesthouses, with the potential to impact many – for better or for worse.

This winter in Kerala, one family-run business settled my internal conflicts. CGH Earth currently operates several accommodations across Kerala (and Tamil Nadu), employing 1500 people directly and many more indirectly. Their signature property – Spice Village in Thekkady – is a single-use plastic free zone, runs 70% on solar energy, has kept the tribal art of elephant grass thatching alive (so no air conditioning is offered / needed, even on hot days), has its own water bottling plant to collect rainwater and recycles paper waste for registration sheets at its own handmade paper making unit, among many other environmental initiatives.

To me, Spice Village is setting the benchmark for luxury travel. One that offers unique experiences, creates large-scale employment, preserves the indigenous culture and is largely positive for the environment.

Tap indigenous wisdom for wildlife conservation



Sustainable tourism in Kerala: Rafting on Periyar River on handcrafted bamboo rafts.

Travelling through the tribal belts of Odisha and Chhattisgarh left me quite disenchanted with the concept of development. In our “modern” scheme of things, the indigenous people of India are considered “backward”. Despite their connection with the earth, their invaluable knowledge of nature and their largely sustainable way of life. Instead of tapping upon their vast reserves of wisdom, they've been sidelined into the fringes of society. Relocated from their forest homes, and encouraged to change their diet, clothing, traditions, customs and rituals to fit in with the rest of the country.

In Central Kerala, in Thekkady's Periyar Tiger Reserve though, I was inspired to learn about a visionary forest department initiative. The Mannan tribe lived in this forest for centuries, sharing their space with tigers, leopards and other wild creatures. They cultivated small patches of remote forest land, fished occasionally and largely lived off forest produce. When relocated to the buffer zone, with little to no livelihoods, many resorted to poaching. A community tourism initiative set out to create alternate sources of income. They were born in these forests, so basic tourism training readied them to be guides, bamboo rafting crew and anti-poachingsquad.

Leveraging indigenous knowledge has aided wildlife protection, created sustainable livelihoods and offered travellers an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the forest through guided walks and treks. An idea that can and should be replicated in the rest of India's tribal areas.

Encourage tourism as a means to support sustainable development in rural villages, not an end in itself



Farming life in Kerala. Photo: Nandhu Kumar (Unsplash)

The current pandemic has put a lot in perspective. In the responsible travel space, one important learning is that tourism – with all its ups and downs – can no longer be relied upon as a rural community's only source of income.

This made me reminisce about my first trip to North Kerala and the conversations I had with the founders of Kabani and URUVU, Kerala-based social enterprise and NGO respectively. In the picturesque village of Thrikkaipetta aka Bamboo Village (named after its bamboo artisans), they've developed a community tourism program with a difference.

The goal is first, to supplement farming and craft incomes, through minimal investment in tourism development. That means the experience is raw and genuine – living with local families in their homes, sharing meals and conversations, hiking, getting involved in farming if you're so inclined.

The second goal is to ensure that the entire community, even those not directly involved in tourism, reaps the benefits. While 25% of the tourism revenue is used for administrative costs, the remaining 75% is channelled in two ways. Towards direct tourism providers – homestays, guides etc, and towards a sustainable development fund for the entire village.

The assessment of what rural dwellers need is often done in air-conditioned offices with gross misassumptions. So, the third goal is then, to let the community decide how to use the village development fund. This could include vocational skills development, waste management, renewable energy initiatives and organic farming – and ultimately contributes to the empowerment and sustainable development of the entire village.

Lower carbon emissions through local plant-based cuisine



Sustainable tourism in Kerala: A sumptuous vegan meal in Kerala.

I guess I can wax lyrical about inspiring initiatives that promote sustainable tourism in Kerala. But like the rest of India and the world, much of Kerala too can learn from Kerala itself.

A conversation still jarringly missing in the sustainable tourism space is the conversation about food. Tourism currently accounts for 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions. I haven't yet come across a study that estimates the carbon footprint of food in tourism. But this is what we know: Animal agriculture – raising livestock for meat and dairy – accounts for 14.5% of global emissions, a whopping 7 times more than flying! This doesn't include emissions from fisheries, which is now estimated to be higher than previously believed. So, my guess is that animal-based food contributes significantly to the carbon emissions of the tourism industry.

Besides, to travel responsibly means factoring in the ethical aspect of using animals for food, clothes, zoos, riding and festivals. I hope that in the near future, the mission will evolve include a third goal: to create better places for all living beings that share this planet with us.

Which brings me to a small ray of hope in Kerala – a vegan homestay in the hills of Thekkady! Indhrivanam (a combination of two Malayalam words to imply “a feeling of forest”) is the home of Sarah and Morten. Built painstakingly with local materials, featuring dry composting toilets and rainwater harvesting. But what really sets it apart from other sustainable tourism projects in Kerala is the focus on locally-sourced plant-based cuisine. The food offered here – curries, millets, cashew cheese, lemon cake, kombucha and other mouth-watering delights – is entirely plant-based with substantially lower carbon emissions. And no animals are harmed in the process.

Source: <https://the-shootingstar.com/sustainable-tourism-in-kerala/>

10 Best Things to Do in Thekkady, Kerala

By Tusk Travel Team- November 2, 2024 - Kerala



Thekkady is like a paradise for those people who love nature, here you get to see many types of wildlife in that green environment. This is a very beautiful natural place present in Kerala where you can enjoy many types of adventures. In this article, we will know about 10 such places which are present in Thekkady and where you can enjoy by reaching.

Table of Contents

Top 10 Must-Do Experiences in Thekkady:

1. Serene Boating Tours
2. Bamboo Rafting and Hiking
3. Tour The Hill Stations
4. Mangaladevi Temple
5. Surreal Chellarkovil
6. Magical Land of Gavi
7. Bullock Cart Discoveries

8. Shop Spices Off the Streets
9. Spring Valley Mountain
10. Admire The Pandikuzhi

Top 10 Must-Do Experiences in Thekkady:

1. Serene Boating Tours



Boating in Periyar Lake can be a good plan when you go to some natural and beautiful places to visit the lakeside, it is one of the top ideas to do in Thekkady. At this place, many beautiful trees, plants, and animals are seen on the banks of the lake, where you can see elephants roaming with your children, in such a way you can enjoy all kinds of natural scenery through boating.

At the place, you can go for boating pleasure from 7:00 AM to 9:30 AM or 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM, apart from 4:00 PM you can also board the boat. You can sit and enjoy the beautiful view.

- **What to Expect:** Take a scenic boat ride on Periyar Lake within the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary, where you can spot elephants, bison, and various bird species along the shore.
- **Best Time to Visit:** Early morning or late afternoon for optimal wildlife sightings.
- **Travel Tips:** Book tickets early, as boat tours are popular and fill up quickly.

2. Bamboo Rafting and Hiking



Bamboo rafting is a place similar to boat Bihar tourism where you can take part in the bamboo rafting program at Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary. Let's see the beautiful scenery, in the environment where you hear the sound of birds resonating.

Apart from this, many types of wildlife are also seen here, it is also a type of adventure which is very popular in Thekkady. During this, you can take the local guide with you, which gives you comfort.

- **What to Expect:** A full-day eco-tourism activity, combining bamboo rafting with guided jungle treks through the Periyar Tiger Reserve.
- **Best Time to Visit:** November to April for clear weather and scenic views.
- **Travel Tips:** Wear comfortable hiking shoes and carry water; this is a moderately challenging activity.

3. Tour The Hill Stations

Thekkady is surrounded by very beautiful hills,

there are also such hill stations where you can go for a walk. On these hill stations, you get to see many samples of natural beauty where there are dense forests, animals, birds, and wild animals.

There are also 2 famous hill stations, the picturesque Ramakkalmedu and the evergreen Panchalamedu where you can go for a walk.

- **What to Expect:** Explore Thekkady's lush hill stations like Vandiperiyar and Murikkady, known for their tea, coffee, and spice plantations.
- **Best Time to Visit:** October to March, when the weather is cool and clear.
- **Travel Tips:** Guided tours are available for in-depth insights into the plantation process.

4. Mangaladevi Temple



Located at a distance of about 15 kilometers from the main city of Thekkady, the historical temple of Mangala Devi is very beautiful, many people come here to visit this temple. This temple is very close to the border of Tamil Nadu, it is completely green all around.

It is surrounded by and is mostly visited by people belonging to the religious side. Apart from this, you get to see the natural beauty of Kerala. The place is one of the major places to visit in Kadi.

- **What to Expect:** An ancient temple dedicated to Mangaladevi, located 1,337 meters above sea level on the Kerala-Tamil Nadu border, offering panoramic views.
- **Best Time to Visit:** The temple is open to the public only during the Chithira Pournami festival in April/May.
- **Travel Tips:** A permit is required to visit; arrange it through the forest department.

5. Surreal Chellarkovil

This place is quite famous for its natural beauty and plains. This place displays the greenery in Thekkady. It is one of the best tourist places in Kerala. Tourists reach in large numbers to see this place.

Feel the peace where there is often mist and it seems that the clouds are very close to you. Traveling to such a place is very pleasant and amazing for everyone.

- **What to Expect:** A quiet village with stunning views of waterfalls, lush hills, and neighboring Tamil Nadu plains, especially captivating at sunset.
- **Best Time to Visit:** Monsoon season (June to September) for the most active waterfalls.
- **Travel Tips:** Bring a camera for sunset photography; there's also an eco-tourism center nearby.

6. Magical Land of Gavi

This is a place near Thekkady, where there are many high and low hills, as well as it is also called an ecotourism hotspot. This place has many great places to visit.

Where you can reach for trekking, apart from this you can enjoy the natural beauty by visiting many places here, on the high hills you can hear your voice as an echo. Which remains the center of attraction for many people.

- **What to Expect:** Known for its dense forests and biodiversity, Gavi offers trekking, camping, and safaris within its unspoiled landscapes.
- **Best Time to Visit:** November to March for pleasant weather.
- **Travel Tips:** Book a guided tour for a well-rounded experience, as the area is under forest department regulation.

7. Bullock Cart Discoveries



You can take a unique ride to see this place, here you can ride in a bullock cart to roam in the forests and tour the forests of Periyar, it reminds you of the village where you can amidst natural beauty.

While passing through the lush green trees, you can enjoy the best views here. When you travel by sitting in a belt cart, you walk comfortably, look at all the things, and can enjoy the beautiful environment.

- **What to Expect:** A traditional journey through local villages on a bullock cart, giving insights into rural life, spice farms, and scenic landscapes.
- **Best Time to Visit:** Year-round, though mornings and late afternoons are ideal to avoid the midday heat.
- **Travel Tips:** Perfect for families and children; cameras are encouraged to capture the countryside.

8. Shop Spices Off the Streets



The state of Kerala is famous for the production of spices. There are many plantations where different types of spices are produced. If you come to visit Kerala and do not know about spices, then your journey can be incomplete, so you can also shop for spices by coming to this place.

The spices present in Kerala are famous all over the world, here you get the original spices which are grown by the local farmers here, you can use these spices by taking them to your homes, this place is famous all over the world for its spices cultivation.

- **What to Expect:** Thekkady is famous for its fresh and aromatic spices. Street markets and spice shops offer everything from cardamom to black pepper and cloves.
- **Best Time to Visit:** Any time; shops are generally open year-round.
- **Travel Tips:** Look for government-regulated stores to ensure quality, and don't hesitate to bargain at smaller stalls.

9. Spring Valley Mountain

It is a very popular place that is present in the state of Kerala. It is also known by the local people as 'Kurisumala'. This is a very beautiful place to visit on foot where you can see natural beauty and the Periyar Tiger Reserve present here. Apart from this, on this hill, you also see a church on the summit, where you can spend some time after reaching.

This place is situated on a high hill so it is always pleasant here. You can feel the white fog on the hills. When the white spring of fog showers on the green hills, then this view becomes very beautiful which is a very good moment for the tourists reaching here and everyone enjoys such weather very much.

- **What to Expect:** A lesser-known mountain spot ideal for nature walks, birdwatching, and scenic views, offering tranquillity away from crowded spots.
- **Best Time to Visit:** October to March for clear skies and cool temperatures.
- **Travel Tips:** Pack a picnic and enjoy a day out in nature; it's a good spot for a leisurely hike.

10. Admire The Pandikuzhi

It is no less than a paradise for nature lovers, if you like natural plants, greenery, and animals, then this place will mesmerize you and you will not feel like going back from here.

Apart from this, you get to see attractive things like waterfalls, deep valleys, and lakes. By reaching this place, you can also click the best photos and cherish these beautiful

memories in your hearts forever. can keep.

- **What to Expect:** A scenic picnic spot located between Chellarkovil and the Tamil Nadu border, known for its rich flora, waterfalls, and mountain streams.
- **Best Time to Visit:** Monsoon (June to September) for active waterfalls, though November to March offers pleasant weather.
- **Travel Tips:** Great for photography and picnics; it's a good idea to bring your own refreshments, as facilities are limited.

Conclusion

These are the places around Thekkady, where you can complete your trip by reaching, all these places are natural and beautiful, and there are popular places in Kerala where you can make your trip memorable by reaching.

Course:

<https://www.tusktravel.com/blog/things-to-do-in-thekkady-kerala/>

Avian diversity falls over 70% at Assam's Bordoibam-Bilmukh Bird Sanctuary

Once home to 167 recorded bird species, recent surveys reveal a staggering decline, with only 47 species now remaining.

by Roopak Goswami

October 27, 2024



Guwahati: Once a flourishing refuge for numerous bird species, Assam's Bordoibam-Bilmukh Bird Sanctuary now faces an alarming biodiversity crisis, with avian diversity plummeting by over 70%. Once home to 167 recorded bird species, recent surveys reveal a staggering decline, with only 47 species now remaining.



Researchers have documented this drastic decline, underscoring the serious impacts of human activities on local bird populations. Their findings are detailed in the study, A drastic decline in avian diversity in and around the Bordoibam-Bilmukh Bird Sanctuary, Lakhimpur, Assam, published in the *Journal of Threatened Taxa*.

Bordoibam-Bilmukh, located on the boundary of Assam's Dhemaji and Lakhimpur districts, is one of the important bird areas and ecotourism hotspots of the northeastern region.



This wetland, spanning 11.25 sq km, was formed by the river Subansiri following a major earthquake in 1950. Recognizing its

ecological value, the Assam government designated it as a Bird Sanctuary in 1996 due to its rich biodiversity.

A survey conducted in 1997 recorded 167 bird species, but this number had dropped to 133 by 2017-18. Researchers surveyed the area between October 2022 and March 2024, cataloging bird species across seasons using visual counting techniques and binocular observations. They found that only a few migratory birds remained, along with species such as the Lesser and Greater Adjutants, both listed as "Near Threatened" on the IUCN Red List



Primary Causes of Decline

Researchers attribute the sharp decline in bird diversity to several human-induced factors. Local residents frequently fish in the sanctuary's wetland, endangering birds with fishing nets and noise from agricultural machinery. "Out of the 154 days of fieldwork, on around 101 days, local residents were observed fishing in the wetland area, which serves as a primary foraging and breeding ground for many resident and migratory bird species. During fishing, they spread nets just

below the water's surface and wait for 7-8 hours. Tragically, the birds' feet often get trapped in the nets, leading to suffering or death," the study noted.

Additionally, poaching remains a concern, with birds targeted for meat and eggs. Local children also engage in hunting as a sport, while expanding agriculture has led to habitat degradation, impacting the sanctuary's ability to support its avian population. The use of tractors and other machinery in rice cultivation on lands adjacent to the wetland's shore is further threatening species diversity.

Call for Action

"If no action is taken immediately, more damage will occur in the coming years, and the sanctuary's significance as a bird habitat may be lost forever," the study warns. Researchers have recommended urgent habitat restoration efforts and the development of management initiatives to protect avian diversity in the Bordoibam-Bilmukh Bird Sanctuary.

The report emphasizes that preserving the sanctuary's habitat is essential for safeguarding Assam's bird species and maintaining its ecological significance in the region.

Source:

<https://www.eastmojo.com/assam/2024/10/27/avian-diversity-falls-over-70-at-assams-bordoibam-bilmukh-bird-sanctuary/>

Exploring the Potential of Ecotourism in Bhudargad Tehsil, Kolhapur District, Maharashtra, India

Year: 2024 | Volume :13 | Issue: 02 | Page: 8-13

By Gayatri Dhananjay Jadhav, Madhav B. Kumthekar, A. N. Swaminathan

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ABSTRACT -1

Today, tourism is one of the main industries that produces income and jobs in the Indian economy. India is endowed with an abundant, naturally rich, and rich cultural legacy. India is a tourist haven because of its diverse biodiversity, topography, and geomorphology, which are found in many of its locations. The Kolhapur District of the Maharashtra region attracts many tourists because it is rich in historical sites, cultural offerings, and natural landscapes. Although India's tourism sector contributes significantly to the country's economy, several issues must be resolved. Conventional tourism has resulted in several issues such as increasing trash output, cultural erosion, overcrowding at popular places, and environmental deterioration. It is now imperative that tourism is developed without compromising the quality of the environment, as this leads to ecotourism. The true beauty of nature can be experienced through ecotourism. It emphasizes sustainable travel to preserved areas and provides an opportunity for tourists to reconnect with the environment. It entails going to locations close to the natural world without significantly altering local flora and animals. Thus, with the aid of sustainable tourism development, stronger family bonds have been established. Although Bhudargad, Tehsil in Kolhapur District, has a lot to offer tourists, it has not yet been thoroughly investigated as a potential tourism destination. The concept of ecotourism is examined in this study, highlighting the potential for ecotourism in Bhudargad, Tehsil, and Kolhapur districts.

Keywords: Ecotourism, Tourism, Ecotourism, Biodiversity, Natural Landscape.

Source: <https://journals.stmjournals.com/rjoe/article=2024/view=157088/>

Four Decades of Sustainable Tourism Research: Trends and Future Research Directions

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With the growth of sustainable tourism research and its practical relevance in today's world, it is important to integrate and synthesize the vast amount of intellectual work on this topic. This research applies a novel and robust structural topic modelling technique to analyse textual data from a total of 3289 research articles on sustainable tourism published between 1978 and 2022. The topics identified have been classified into macro, meso, and micro levels. Further, we compared and contrasted research themes across three time periods to provide a coherent, cohesive, and holistic overview of the extant literature in each period and discuss their contributions to knowledge. This article presents the publication trends, research evolution in the last four decades, and identifies emerging topics and future research opportunities to advance knowledge.

Keywords: 3M Framework, Literature Review, Structural Topic Modelling, Sustainable Tourism

Source: https://research-api.cbs.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/104232768/Journal_of_Tourism_Research_-_2024_-_Agarwal_-_Four_decades_of_sustainable_tourism_research_Trends_and_future_research.pdf

Preserving environmental quality of ecotourism sites through community participation in Purulia District of West Bengal, India

Piyall Chatterjee, Soumyendra Kishore Datta

The importance of valuing environmental resources, especially in ecotourism sites, has become increasingly important over the last two decades. Ecotourism is now considered as an important source of livelihood of local stakeholders in backward regions. Therefore, the preservation of ecotourism sites through community participation seems very important to maintain continued flow of tourists. This study aimed at recognizing the importance of community participation for the preservation of ecotourism sites. For this, this study executed a survey based on non-probability sampling in two ecotourism sites (Garpanchkot and Baranti) covering 100 respondents in Purulia District, West Bengal of India. The central issue of this study was to assess the tendency of community participation for the conservation of ecotourism sites and find the optimum condition for offering participatory labour time. This study showed that the participation of young people is high, and the majority of respondents are aware of the importance in protecting ecotourism sites. Because respondents were too poor to offer money, the contingent valuation method (CVM) was used to elicit their willingness to pay (WTP) participatory labour time for the conservation of ecotourism sites. Respondents' age, income, education level, caste, and their perceived environmental quality had significant relationship with their WTP participatory labour time by applying the ordinary least square (OLS) model. It was found that the mean WTP participatory labour time of each respondent in a month is approximately 3.64 h. The significance of this study is that community participation can improve the sense of belonging, trust, and credibility of ecotourism sites, making them more appreciative of the value and protection of these sites.

Keywords: Ecotourism site conservation; Community participation; Local stakeholders; Willingness to pay; Participatory labour time; Ordinary least square (OLS) model; Contingent valuation method (CVM)

Source: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666660X24000628>

Unpacking the economic impact of tourism: A multidimensional approach to sustainable development

Ceyhan Elgin, Adem Yavuz Elveren

Highlights

Tourism-Sustainability Nexus Unveiled. GDP per-capita plays a crucial role in the tourism-sustainability nexus. Methodological Innovation in Tourism Research

While the literature has extensively explored the advantages and drawbacks of tourism, as well as attempts to establish connections between growth/development and tourism, comprehensive studies addressing the sustainable development impact of tourism remain scarce. Addressing this gap, our investigation focuses on understanding the association between tourism and the achievement of sustainable development goals. Using a panel dataset encompassing 160 economies from 1995 to 2019, we explore the link between two distinct measures of tourism (tourist arrivals as a fraction of total population and tourism revenue as a percentage of total exports) and various indicators of sustainable development, encompassing health, economy, education, social progress, and the environment. Our findings reveal a significant interaction between tourism and sustainable development, with the relationship notably differing between developed and developing economies, particularly in light of GDP per capita. Our research addresses a critical gap in existing literature by focusing on the sustainable development implications of tourism, an area where comprehensive studies remain scarce. By analyzing the complex relationship between tourism and sustainable development across diverse economies, our study provides valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders seeking to navigate the challenges of balancing economic growth with environmental and social sustainability.

Keywords: Sustainable development; Tourism revenue; Tourist arrivals; Panel data; Cross-country analysis

Source: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652624033961>

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