

Sustainable Tourism Development in Rajasthan

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Abstract

Every Government has to prepare to meet the challenges and opportunities of this millennium to make Eco-Tourism and Environmental Impact, Sustainable Tourism a central aspect of the National tourism policy. This paper deals with one such conceptual framework to meet the Sustainable Eco-Tourism and Environmental Impact in the 21st century paying the way for providing Eco-Tourism for allanytime, anywhere by means of harnessing various technology

Keywords: GPS, Biological Diversity, Eco Tourism, Environmental Impact, National Parks, Wild life Sanctuary , Eco Parks.

Introduction

Eco-tourism focuses on local cultures, wilderness adventures, volunteering, personal growth and learning new ways to live on our vulnerable planet. It is typically defined as travel to destinations where the flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions. Responsible eco-tourism includes programs that minimize the adverse effects of traditional tourism on the natural environment, and enhance the cultural integrity of local people. Therefore, in addition to evaluating environmental and cultural factors, initiatives by hospitality providers to promote recycling, energy efficiency, water re-uses, and the creation of economic opportunities for local communities is an integral part of eco-tourism.

Fundamentally, eco-tourism means making as little environmental impact as possible and helping to sustain the indigenous common people, thereby encouraging the preservation of wildlife and habitats when visiting a place. This is responsible form of tourism and tourism development, which encourages going back to natural products in every aspect of life. It is also the key to sustainable ecological improvement.

Conforming to the principles of Eco Tourism, Rajasthan is a hot destination for Eco tours. The destination is proud for being a responsible Eco Tourism place and it includes programs to minimize the negative aspects of long-established tourism on the environment and gives you immense possibilities to relate with the local people. Hence, in addition to environmental and cultural features.

The beautiful state of Rajasthan is best known for its sand dunes, colourful festivals and events, camels and its beautiful palaces and forts. However, the other major attractions of the state are the wildlife sanctuaries and the national parks in Rajasthan. These beautiful sanctuaries and parks are home to a variety of wildlife, some of which have been categorised as critically endangered. The vegetation in these conservation grounds vary with the landscape but each and every wildlife sanctuary offers a wonderful opportunity to experience nature in a very unique way.

The most remarkable Eco Parks / wildlife Sanctuaries of Rajasthan include

1. Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary
2. Ranthambore Tiger Reserve
3. Sariska Tiger Reserve
4. Desert National Sanctuary, Jaisalmer
5. Keoladeo Ghana National Park
6. Arboretum Park
7. Amrita Devi Park
8. Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary, Kumbhalgarh
9. Darrah Sanctuary, Kota
10. Mount Abu Sanctuary, Mount Abu
11. Sita Mata Sanctuary, Pratapgarh



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12. National Chambal Wildlife Sanctuary, Kota

Despite being a desert state, Rajasthan has good network of protected areas. Forests of Rajasthan are also very rich in wildlife and contain a varied range of prey and predator animals. Some of the best managed National Parks and Sanctuaries are located in the State. The State has two world heritage wetlands, namely the Keoleodev National Park,

Bharatpur and Sambhar lake. In Desert belt of the State, large number of wildlife is generally sighted outside forest areas also. Rajasthan also has the unique Desert National Park sanctuary. This rich biodiversity thus attracts large number of tourists to Protected Areas of the State and has become popular tourist destination with large number of historical forts, palaces and religious places with heritage buildings.

Fig1: Wildlife Protected Areas of Rajasthan



Fig1: Wildlife Protected Areas of Rajasthan

Rajasthan is noted for its National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries. There are 5 National Parks in Rajasthan, these are:

Table-01: 5 National Parks in Rajasthan

| S.NO | Year Est. | National Park | Area (Sq.KM) | Districts |
|------|---|------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| 1 | 1980 | Ranthambore National Park | 282 | Sawai Madhopur |
| 2 | 1981 | Keoladeo Ghana National Park | 28.73 | Bharatpur |
| 3 | 1992 | Sariska National Park | 273.8 | Alwar |
| 4 | Desert National Park | 3162 | Jaisalmer, Barmer | Desert National Park |
| 5 | Mukundhara Hills (Darrah) National Park | 200.54 | Kota, Chittorgarh | Mukundhara Hills (Darrah) National Park |

Aims & Objective of Eco-Tourism

1. Sustainable Destinations: A suite of next generation strategic solutions, which aim to make sustainability manageable and accessible, while positioning destinations to meet the needs of their constituents and demonstrate increased global competitiveness.
2. Strategic Partnerships: We partner with businesses of all sizes, to help develop and implement practical and innovative sustainability initiatives that provide measurable return on investment.

3. Sustainable Tourism Education Program (STEP): STEP provides the tools you need to design and execute your sustainability policies and action plans, while measuring and managing your impacts and verifying your efforts. The STEP program includes a number of components created with specific industry sectors in mind.
4. Climate and Travelers' Philanthropy: Through our climate management and philanthropy programs, we help businesses and destinations reduce adverse effects and mitigate negative outcomes, while investing in community and conservation

initiatives that protect destinations for future generations.

5. Education and Training: Customized education, training and stakeholder awareness programs that help build capacity in critical areas of sustainability management, while increasing buy-in for sustainability initiatives.
6. Sustainability Marketing and Communications: Integrate sustainability into your marketing and product development strategy, leading to increased visitor numbers and stronger brand loyalty.

The state government has planned special promotional campaigns at schools and colleges in the city. Locals living nearby would be briefed about the importance of the places and made aware of the state's rich biological heritage. The promotional work will be undertaken with assistance of various NGOs working among wildlife, Dave said. The two sites in the city will be developed in about two-three months.

Rajasthan Eco-Tourism Destinations

Foreign and domestic tourist arrivals across Rajasthan in India between 2010 and 2019(in millions) (Table-02)

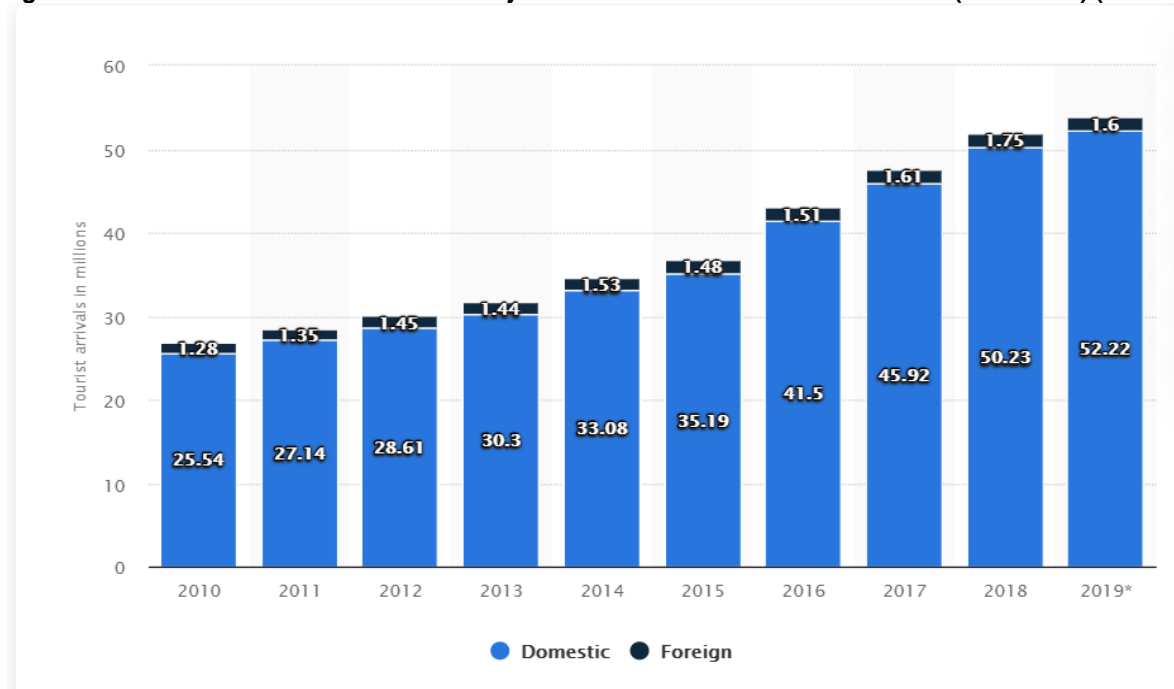


Table-02: Foreign and domestic tourist arrivals across Rajasthan in India between 2010 and 2019(in millions) India Inbound Tourism Statistics – 2019

Rich in terms of natural beauty and heritage, Rajasthan is an ideal place for Eco Tours. The hot destinations in Rajasthan for enjoying Eco Tours are much popular among travelers. Having Eco tours in the National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries besides visiting the heritage sites is a worth enjoying activity. The Eco Tours in Ranthambore National park and Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary / Keoladeo Ghana National Park are very enjoyable and remarkable. Here you can come face to face to some of the spectacular elements of wildlife and Eco Tourism. Your trip will be memorable with some exciting experiences. Entertainment in natural environment is the mantra of Rajasthan Eco Tours. In the year 2019, the domestic tourists arriving to the state of Rajasthan accounted for approximately 52 million, while the foreign tourist arrivals accounted for over 1.6 million. The state which lies in north India and shares a land border with neighboring Pakistan, is a one of the popular tourist destinations for both Indians and foreigners alike.

Month-wise Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India, Jan 2017 – June 2019

| Month | Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India | | | Percentage (%) Change | |
|-------------------------|--|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | 2017 | 2018 (P) | 2019(P) | 2018/17 | 2019/18 |
| January | 9,64,109 | 10,45,035 | 11,03,380 | 8.4 | 5.6 |
| February | 9,31,025 | 10,49,255 | 10,87,694 | 12.7 | 3.7 |
| March | 8,85,936 | 10,21,530 | 9,72,866 | 15.3 | -4.8 |
| April | 7,17,899 | 7,45,051 | 7,71,353 | 3.8 | 3.5 |
| May | 6,22,408 | 6,06,522 | 6,10,590 | -2.6 | 0.7 |
| June | 6,63,470 | 6,83,928 | 7,21,015 | 3.1 | 5.4 |
| July | 7,79,309 | 8,06,495 | | 3.5 | |
| August | 7,19,129 | 7,86,003 | | 9.3 | |
| September | 7,19,964 | 7,19,845 | | 0.0 | |
| October | 8,66,976 | 8,90,229 | | 2.7 | |
| November | 9,97,738 | 10,12,564 | | 1.5 | |
| December | 11,67,840 | 11,91,472 | | 2.0 | |
| Total (Jan-June) | 47,84,847 | 51,51,321 | 52,66,898 | 7.7 @ | 2.2 @ |
| Total (Jan-Dec) | 10035803 | 10557929 | | 5.2 | |

**Table-03: India Inbound Tourism Statistics – 2019
The top 10 countries Indian inbound Tourism -2018**

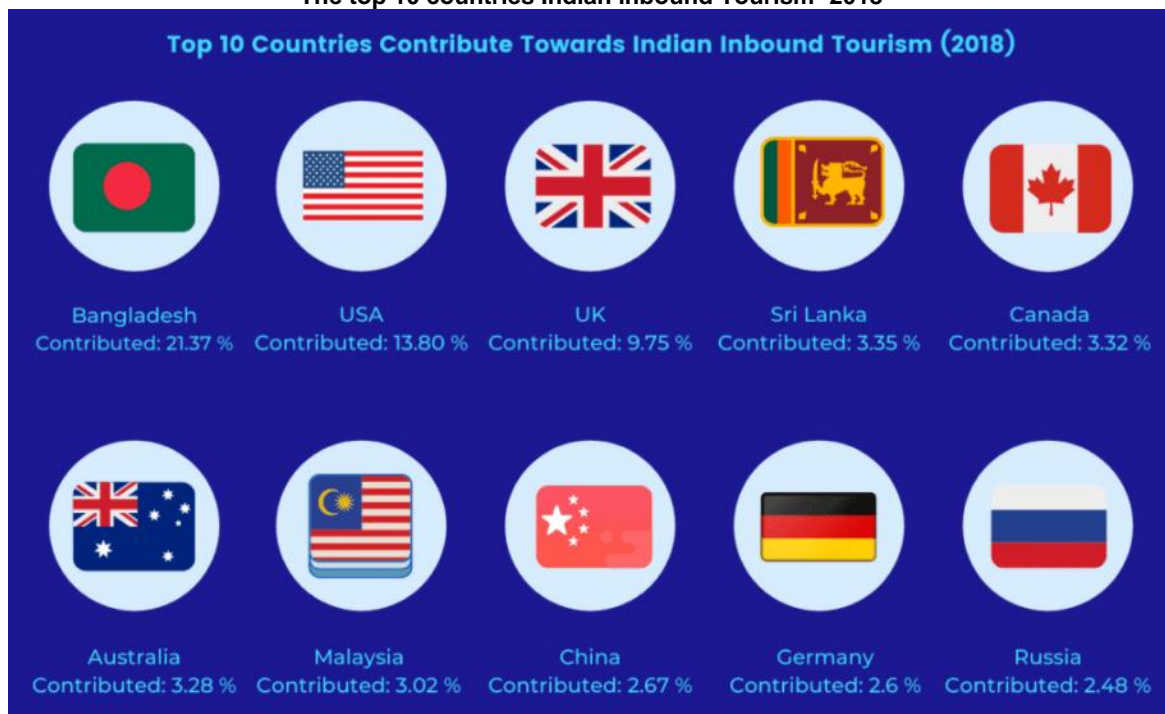


Table-04: Top 10 countries Indian inbound Tourism -2018

Eco Parks of Rajasthan

The Eco Parks of Rajasthan are a measure to restore the Eco system of environment and for co-existence of wildlife and plant life. The desert state of Rajasthan is a rich stock holder of plethora of flora

and fauna. The number of Eco parks here are an attraction for tourists and they also preserve and restore the endangered wildlife. The Eco parks provide a natural habitat to a plenteous species of wild animals, birds, reptiles and floral kingdom.

Eco Tourism Travel Instructions

1. The non-degradable stuffs as empty bottles, tins, plastic bags must not be littered but should be carried back and disposed in dustbins.
2. Polythene and plastics are non Bio-degradable and unhealthy for the environment and must not be used and littered.
3. It is illegal to take away flora and fauna in the forms of cuttings, seeds or roots.
4. Pollutants like detergent, in streams or springs while washing and bathing should be avoided.
5. Refrain from aerated drinks, alcohol, drugs or any other intoxicant.

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) is a non-profit association committed to promoting responsible tourism practices that benefit conservation and communities. Representing the voices of stakeholders from all corners of the world, TIES' global network supports and is supported by members from 124 countries, who are leading the vital efforts to make travel and tourism more

sustainable. TIES promotes ecotourism - "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people"(TIES, 1990) - through membership services, education and training, and global outreach and partnerships.

Principles of Ecotourism

Eco-tourism is about uniting conservation, communities and sustainable travel. This means that those who implement and participate in ecotourism activities should follow the following ecotourism principles:

1. Minimize impact.
2. Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect.
3. Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts.
4. Provide direct financial benefits for conservation.
5. Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people.
6. Raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate.



Rajasthan is to develop eight eco-tourism sites, including at Mount Abu, Udaipur and Jaisalmer, as windows to its diverse flora and fauna."The government will develop the Jhalana and Nahargarh biological parks in Jaipur into eco-tourism sites so that tourists would get a glimpse of the state's wildlife and also learn about the biological diversity,".

The forest department is upgrading these two sites."Tourists would be provided detailed information about the trees, plants, including medicinal ones, and the wildlife at these places. Wildlife experts will speak on conservation,"

Mount Abu, Udaipur and Jaisalmer are among the other proposed eco-tourism sites. The forest department would provide special tents to tourists at the Jhalana site. The shikargaha, or hunting lodges, will also be major attractions.

Responsive of the Environment

Today the "Green Laws" of conservation are making people aware of how man and the environment can live symbiotically for more time to come and ecotourism is the only way maximizes the economic, environmental and social benefits of tourism. Everyone is a stakeholder in the process and we clearly need to avoid our past shortcomings and negative impact that they have had.

In India to the movement is get-together momentum with more and more travel and travel related organization's are addressing the needs of the eco-tourists and promoting eco-tourism in the country. Some basic do's and don'ts of eco-tourism that we endorse in the country are listed below:

Do's

1. Carry back all non-degradable litter such as empty bottles, tins, plastic bags etc. These must

not litter the environment or be buried. They must be disposed in municipal dustbins only.

2. Observe the sanctity of holy sites, temples and local cultures.
3. Hack noise pollution. Do not blare aloud radios, tape recorders or other electronic entertainment equipment in nature resorts, sanctuaries and wildlife parks.
4. In case temporary toilets are set-up near campsites, after defecation, cover with mud or sand. Make sure that the spot is at least 30 meters away from the water source.
5. Admiration people's privacy while taking photographs. Inquire for previous permission before taking a photograph.

Don'ts

1. Do not take away flora and fauna in the forms of cuttings, seeds or roots. It is illegal, especially in the Himalayas. The environment is really delicate in this region and the bio-diversity of the region has to be protected at all costs.
2. Do not use pollutants such as detergent, in streams or springs while washing and bathing.
3. Do not use wood as fuel to cook food at the campsite.
4. Do not leave cigarettes butts or make open fires in the forests.
5. Do not consume aerated drinks, alcohol, drugs or any other intoxicant and throw bottles in the wild
6. Do not tempt the locals, especially children by offering them foodstuff or sweets. High opinion for local civilization.
7. Polythene and plastics are non bio-degradable and harmful for the environment and must not be used and littered.

Conclusion

A study of this kind would serve various purposes: it would help to test the usefulness, the appropriateness and the applicability of these indicators in the analysis of the sustainability of tourism, and it would contribute to the understanding of what different interest groups (including local community members, tourists, ecologists or businessmen) perceive as sustainable tourism development. A better understanding of these perceptions would help the planning of a tourism that is able to satisfy the needs of most groups for now and in the future.

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