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A STUDY ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN INDIA: COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES ACROSS STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES OF INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable tourism in India is increasingly recognized as a critical approach to balance economic growth, environmental conservation, and socio-cultural development. This study provides a comprehensive review of sustainable tourism practices, government initiatives, and policies across all Indian states and Union Territories. It highlights region-specific strategies, including community-based eco-tourism, heritage and cultural preservation, marine and coastal conservation, high-altitude eco-tourism, and wildlife protection. The analysis emphasizes the importance of low-impact tourism, eco-friendly infrastructure, community participation, and regulatory frameworks in achieving sustainable outcomes. The study also identifies best practices, challenges, and opportunities between States and Union Territories of India and to enhance environmental stewardship, support local livelihoods, and ensure the long-term viability of tourism in India.

KEYWORDS: Sustainable tourism, eco-tourism, community-based tourism, green tourism, biodiversity conservation, wildlife tourism, heritage tourism, cultural preservation, eco-friendly infrastructure, renewable energy, waste management, rural tourism, village tourism, marine tourism, adventure tourism, policy framework, government initiatives and environmental sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors globally and plays a vital role in economic development, employment generation, and cultural exchange. In India, tourism contributes significantly to GDP and supports millions of livelihoods. However, rapid tourism growth has led to environmental degradation, resource depletion, and socio-cultural impacts.

Sustainable tourism refers to tourism that minimizes environmental impact while promoting conservation and benefiting local communities. The Government of India defines eco-tourism as



responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.

India's diverse landscapes—including forests, coastal regions, mountains, and islands—make it an ideal destination for eco-tourism. Regions such as the Western Ghats, Himalayas, and Andaman & Nicobar Islands are globally recognized for their ecological significance.

MEANING OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Sustainable Tourism refers to a responsible way of traveling and managing tourism activities that protects the environment, respects local culture, and supports the well-being of local communities. It focuses on using natural resources carefully so that they are not overexploited or damaged. This type of tourism aims to reduce pollution, conserve biodiversity, and maintain ecological balance. At the same time, it ensures that local people benefit economically through employment and income opportunities. Sustainable tourism also promotes awareness among tourists to behave responsibly and respect cultural traditions. Overall, it seeks to balance tourism development with environmental protection and social welfare, ensuring that the needs of the present are met without affecting the ability of future generations to enjoy these resources. In simple terms, sustainable tourism means “responsible travel” that protects nature, respects local cultures, and supports local economies.

DEFINITIONS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

- a) **According to World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Defines**, Sustainable tourism is defined as: “Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.”
- b) **According to United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) defines** “Sustainable tourism is tourism that results in minimal environmental impact and supports the conservation of biodiversity and cultural heritage”
- c) **Butler, R. W. (1999), defines**, “Sustainable tourism is tourism that is developed and maintained in an area in such a way that it remains viable over an indefinite period without degrading the environment”.
- d) **Hunter, C. (1997) defines**, “Sustainable tourism is an adaptive approach that balances environmental, economic, and social aspects of tourism development”.
- e) **Sharpley, R. (2000) defines**, “Sustainable tourism focuses on meeting the needs of tourists and host communities while protecting and enhancing future opportunities”.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN INDIA

Sustainable tourism in India focuses on balancing economic growth with environmental conservation



and socio-cultural preservation. It promotes responsible travel practices that minimize negative impacts on natural resources and local communities. The Ministry of Tourism emphasizes eco-friendly infrastructure, waste management, and renewable energy use in tourism development. India encourages community participation through homestays and rural tourism, ensuring inclusive growth and livelihood generation. Conservation of biodiversity in national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and coastal regions is a key priority. Cultural heritage is preserved through responsible promotion of traditions, festivals, and historical sites. Policies such as eco-tourism guidelines and sustainable tourism criteria support long-term planning. Campaigns like responsible travel awareness promote ethical tourist behavior. Region-specific approaches address sustainability in mountains, beaches, and heritage destinations. The sustainable tourism in India ensures long-term economic viability while maintaining ecological balance and cultural integrity.

The Ministry of Tourism promotes eco-friendly infrastructure, waste management, and renewable energy in tourism development. In 2019, India introduced the Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI) to guide responsible tourism practices. In 2020, campaigns like Dekho Apna Desh encouraged responsible domestic tourism and awareness. In 2021, initiatives such as the Responsible Tourism Mission (notably in states like Kerala) strengthened community participation and local livelihoods. In 2022, the *National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism* was launched to align with global sustainability goals. The Government of India also supports eco-tourism through schemes like *Swadesh Darshan* and *PRASHAD*, focusing on sustainable infrastructure and heritage conservation. Biodiversity protection in national parks and coastal areas remains a key priority. Cultural preservation and promotion of local traditions are integrated into tourism planning. Overall, these year-wise initiatives ensure long-term economic viability while maintaining ecological balance and cultural sustainability.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are as under:

1. To study the importance of Sustainable Tourism in India.
2. To analyze key initiatives of sustainable tourism practices in India.
3. To Analyze the role of Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India in Promoting Sustainable Tourism and Economic Viability of Tourism.
4. To compare Eco-Tourism practices across Indian states and Union Territories of India.
5. To suggest measures for improving sustainable tourism in India.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Aftabuddin S.K & Kadambari Jain (2017), The main objective of the study is to know about Green Tourism and its Characteristics and Principles of and to understand the relationship between Green and Sustainable Tourism, Possibilities of Implementing green tourism nationwide and Globally and



to study the Challenges while Implementing sustainable Green Tourism. The study concluded that tourism will emerge as a key factor in eco-development in the coming years It is more important that we support green innovation as a catalyst of tourism's sustainable growth.

Shashi Bhushan Dubey (2017), The major objective of the study is to find out the role of Sustainable Tourism and the initiatives taken by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. The study concluded that Sustainability ensures future and survival of the tourism sector as a whole.

Dipankar Karmakar (2022), The main aim of the study is to understand and analyze the sustainable tourism practices in Sikkim on the basis of four main criteria that is Eco-Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Adventure Tourism and Community Based Tourism initiated by the state. The study concluded that Sikkim has wide basket of tourism products like eco-tourism, wildlife tourism, wellness tourism, Cultural tourism, heritage tourism, adventure tourism etc. The State have the power to capture significantly Indian and foreign market tourists, and developed that sustainable tourism site management practices. The Sikkim Tourism agencies has adopted sustainable tourism practices initiated by the Sikkim State Government. The Government formulated strong sustainable human settlement development, sound and culturally sensitive tourism programmes in both urban and rural settlements tourist places.

Mayank Nautiyal (2022), The study main objective is to measure the Factors Affecting the Sustainable Tourism in India. For this empirical, 190 respondents were targeted to share their viewpoints on the factors affecting the sustainable tourism in India. The study concluded that India can achieve a balance between tourist growth and sustainability by taking these elements into account and putting into practise sustainable tourism practises. This would allow India to preserve its natural and cultural assets for present and future generations to enjoy, while also creating job opportunities and assisting local livelihoods.

Shruthi. B (2023), the main objective of the study is to measures the significance of sustainable tourism development in India and to examine the issues of sustainable tourism development and suggest appropriate measures in terms of design policies and guidelines to address the issues in India. The study found that Issues are environmental, ecological, socio-cultural, economic, legal and various forms of pollution etc.

Bhawani Prasad Sharma (2023), This paper attempts to provide a comprehensive analysis of sustainable tourism in India, focusing on its current status, challenges, and future prospects. The study examines the concept of sustainable tourism and its importance in the Indian context, considering the country's diverse cultural, natural, and historical heritage. The study concluded that The government



has implemented various initiatives and policies to promote sustainable tourism, such as the Swadesh Darshan scheme and the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture. The private sector has also increasingly embraced sustainable practices, including the development of eco-friendly accommodations and tour packages.

Sundararajan S and Ramar N (2024), The aim of this article is to better understand the development processes of tourism development towards sustainable development in Tamil Nadu according to key actors: local authorities, tourism operators and local communities, focusing mainly on the challenges and weaknesses that exist within and spread outside the borders. The local government and hinder the development of India as an important tourist destination in Tamil Nadu. The study derived a number of broad implications. Economic viability, local prosperity, employment quality, social equity, visitor fulfilment, local control, community wellbeing, cultural richness, physical integrity, biological diversity, resource efficiency, and environmental purity are the 12 goals of sustainability in tourism.

Manroilang Dkhar and Soumendra Nath Biswas (2025), The study main objective is to develop a strategic blueprint for destination development in Meghalaya through tribal tourism and to examine how tribal tourism can be structured to ensure long-term regional sustainability. The study concluded that Meghalaya can establish a tourism model that is both economically sustainable and environmentally conscious. It is important to strategically develop tourism infrastructure and implement effective management strategies to enhance visitor experience without compromising the region's resources.

Vinita Mod (2025), the study mainly focused on understand the relationship between Eco Tourism and Sustainable Tourism and to understand the Possibilities of Implementing Sustainable tourism nationwide and globally. The study concluded that there is no economic growth in tourism without sustainability, without conservation of natural resources and without incentives to citizenship. Long term sustainability requires a balance between sustainability in economic, socio-cultural, and environmental terms. The need to reconcile economic growth and sustainable development also brings in an ethical dimension.

Shaju Mathew and Anitha M.N (2026), the study examines the role of sustainable development in enhancing tourist satisfaction and revisit intention in Kerala, India. With Kerala being a globally recognized destination for ecotourism and sustainable tourism initiatives, it is crucial to assess how these initiatives influence visitor experiences. The study majorly focused on policies implemented by the government and private sector and analyzing feedback on eco-tourism initiatives, waste management, and conservation efforts. This study concluded that sustainable development plays a crucial role in enhancing tourist satisfaction and revisit intention in Kerala. Tourists appreciate eco-



friendly initiatives, cultural preservation, and community-based tourism, positively impacting their travel experiences.

Dr. Prithwiraj Swargiary (2026), the study focused on the North-East region of India, known for its rich biodiversity, scenic landscapes, and diverse indigenous cultures, possesses significant potential for the development of sustainable tourism. This paper examines the pathways, prospects, and policy challenges of sustainable tourism and ecotourism in the North-East region. Based on secondary sources and existing literature, the study highlights the importance of community participation, effective policy frameworks, and environmentally responsible tourism practices for ensuring sustainable and inclusive tourism development. Tourism and ecotourism in North-East India have experienced steady growth over the past two decades, with significant recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. The region accounts only a small share of India's total tourism market, its immense natural, cultural, and ecological resources provide vast opportunities for sustainable tourism development.

Jessie R. Tamayo (2026), The study aims to determine the eco-tourism practices and green development programs of selected local government units in Metro Manila. The present study was carried out with a descriptive research design that was well matched to support the objective of the study. The study shows that the three groups of respondents were satisfied of the green development programs of their respective local government. This shows that the government strengthens its mandate to make every corner of the city nature-inspired and this attracts tourists and visitors.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine sustainable tourism practices, government initiatives, and eco-tourism strategies across all Indian states and Union Territories. The primary focus is on identifying key policies, initiatives, and tourism activities that contribute to environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and socio-economic development. Secondary data were collected from official government sources, state tourism department portals, published policy documents, eco-tourism guidelines by the Ministry of Tourism, research papers, and credible online reports. Information regarding sustainable tourism practices, community participation, eco-friendly infrastructure, and biodiversity conservation was collated systematically for each state and UT. The study uses a comparative approach, analyzing similarities and differences in sustainable tourism initiatives across regions. State-wise tables were prepared to summarize key policies, government programs, and tourism activities. The study also identifies exemplary models, challenges, and best practices in sustainable tourism. The research covers all 28 states and 8 Union Territories of India, with attention to ecological, cultural, and socio-economic dimensions of sustainable tourism. Special emphasis is given to region-specific practices such as marine conservation in coastal areas, high-



altitude eco-tourism in Himalayan regions, community-led eco-tourism in Northeast India, and heritage preservation in culturally rich states.

Importance of Sustainable Tourism in India

1. **Environmental Conservation:** Sustainable tourism plays a vital role in protecting India's rich natural resources, including forests, wildlife, rivers, and coastal ecosystems. It promotes responsible use of resources and reduces environmental degradation caused by mass tourism. Conservation efforts are particularly important in ecologically sensitive regions such as Andaman and Nicobar Islands. By encouraging eco-friendly practices, sustainable tourism helps maintain ecological balance.
2. **Preservation of Cultural Heritage:** India is known for its diverse cultural heritage, traditions, and historical monuments. Sustainable tourism helps preserve these cultural assets by promoting responsible tourism practices and reducing damage caused by overcrowding. It encourages respect for local customs and traditions. This ensures that cultural heritage is protected for future generations.
3. **Economic Development and Employment Generation:** Sustainable tourism contributes significantly to economic growth by generating income and employment opportunities. The Government of India promotes tourism as a key sector for GDP contribution and regional development. It creates jobs in hospitality, transport, handicrafts, and local services. This leads to inclusive and balanced economic development.
4. **Community Development and Empowerment:** Sustainable tourism encourages the active participation of local communities in tourism activities. It helps generate income for local people and improves their standard of living. Community-based tourism initiatives ensure that benefits are shared equitably. This empowers local populations and strengthens rural and regional economies.
5. **Conservation of Biodiversity:** India is one of the world's biodiversity-rich countries, and sustainable tourism helps protect its unique flora and fauna. Eco-tourism practices in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries promote conservation and awareness. These efforts are often supported by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Sustainable tourism ensures that biodiversity is preserved while allowing controlled tourist access.
6. **Promotion of Responsible Tourism Practices:** Sustainable tourism promotes responsible behavior among tourists, such as reducing waste, conserving resources, and respecting local culture. It creates awareness about environmental protection and ethical travel. This leads to a more conscious and responsible tourism industry. It also enhances the overall quality of tourist experiences.
7. **Balanced Regional Development:** Sustainable tourism encourages the development of lesser-known and rural destinations. This helps reduce pressure on overcrowded tourist hotspots and



distributes tourism benefits across regions. It supports infrastructure development in remote areas. As a result, regional disparities are reduced.

8. **Long-Term Sustainability of Tourism Industry:** By focusing on conservation and responsible practices, sustainable tourism ensures the long-term viability of the tourism sector. It prevents over-exploitation of natural and cultural resources. This helps maintain the attractiveness of destinations over time. It also secures continuous economic benefits for future generations.
9. **Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation:** Sustainable tourism supports efforts to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change impacts. It promotes the use of renewable energy, eco-friendly transport, and sustainable infrastructure. These practices help minimize the environmental footprint of tourism. They also strengthen the resilience of tourism destinations.
10. **Enhancement of India's Global Image:** Adopting sustainable tourism practices enhances India's reputation as a responsible and eco-friendly tourism destination. It attracts environmentally conscious international tourists. This improves competitiveness in the global tourism market. It also aligns India with international sustainability standards.
11. **Resource Efficiency and Conservation:** Sustainable tourism promotes the efficient use of natural resources such as water, energy, and land. It encourages practices like rainwater harvesting, renewable energy use, and waste reduction. This is especially important in resource-scarce regions of India. Efficient resource use ensures long-term environmental and economic sustainability.
12. **Reduction of Environmental Pollution:** Sustainable tourism helps reduce pollution caused by tourism activities, including air, water, and land pollution. Measures such as waste management, plastic bags, and eco-friendly transport contribute to cleaner environments. These practices improve the overall quality of tourist destinations. They also protect ecosystems and public health.
13. **Strengthening Local Economies:** By promoting local products, handicrafts, and services, sustainable tourism strengthens local economies. Tourists are encouraged to purchase locally made goods and experience local cuisine. This increases income for small businesses and artisans. It also supports self-reliance and economic resilience at the community level.
14. **Infrastructure Development in Remote Areas:** Sustainable tourism leads to the development of infrastructure such as roads, communication, and basic amenities in rural and remote areas. The Government of India supports such development through tourism initiatives. This improves accessibility and quality of life for local residents. It also enhances tourism potential in less-developed regions.
15. **Promotion of Inclusive Growth:** Sustainable tourism ensures that tourism benefits are distributed equitably among different sections of society. It includes women, rural populations, and marginalized communities in tourism activities. This promotes social inclusion and reduces inequalities. It contributes to overall socio-economic development.
16. **Crisis Resilience and Recovery:** Sustainable tourism enhances the ability of the tourism sector to withstand crises such as pandemics, natural disasters, and economic downturns. By promoting



domestic tourism and diversified tourism products, India ensures stability. It helps the industry recover more quickly from disruptions. This strengthens long-term resilience.

17. **Encouragement of Innovation and Green Technology:** Sustainable tourism encourages the adoption of innovative solutions such as smart tourism technologies and green infrastructure. This includes energy-efficient systems, digital platforms, and eco-friendly construction. These innovations improve operational efficiency and reduce environmental impact. They also enhance tourist satisfaction.
18. **Improvement of Destination Competitiveness:** Destinations that adopt sustainable practices become more attractive to environmentally conscious tourists. Sustainable tourism enhances the quality, safety, and uniqueness of destinations. This improves India's competitiveness in the global tourism market. It also leads to increased tourist arrivals and revenue.
19. **Protection of Indigenous Knowledge and Traditions:** Sustainable tourism helps preserve indigenous knowledge, traditional practices, and local lifestyles. It encourages the documentation and promotion of cultural heritage. This protects unique identities of communities across India. It also enriches the cultural experience for tourists.
20. **Enhancement of Quality of Life:** Sustainable tourism improves the overall quality of life for local communities by providing better infrastructure, employment, and social services. It ensures a cleaner and healthier environment. Communities benefit from improved living standards and economic opportunities. This creates a positive relationship between tourism and society.

Sustainable Tourism Practices in India

India has adopted a wide range of sustainable tourism practices in eco-tourism destinations to ensure environmental protection, cultural preservation, and long-term economic benefits. The Ministry of Tourism, along with state governments, promotes these practices across various regions of the country.

1. **Use of Renewable Energy (Solar and Wind):** Many tourism destinations in India are increasingly adopting renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power to reduce dependence on conventional energy and minimize carbon emissions. For instance, eco-resorts in Kerala and Rajasthan use solar panels for electricity generation and water heating. In remote areas like Ladakh, solar energy is widely used due to limited access to conventional power, making tourism operations more sustainable and environmentally friendly.
2. **Waste Management and Recycling Systems :** Proper waste management is a critical component of sustainable tourism in India. Tourist destinations have implemented waste segregation, recycling, and plastic reduction initiatives to maintain environmental cleanliness. For example, Sikkim has banned plastic bags and promotes eco-friendly waste disposal practices. Similarly, popular hill stations like Manali have introduced waste collection and recycling systems to manage tourist-generated waste effectively.



3. **Rainwater Harvesting:** Rainwater harvesting is widely practiced in eco-tourism destinations to address water scarcity and ensure sustainable water use. Many hotels and resorts, especially in dry regions such as Rajasthan, have installed rainwater harvesting systems to collect and store rainwater. This practice not only conserves water but also reduces dependency on groundwater resources, making tourism operations more sustainable.
4. **Eco-Friendly Accommodations:** Eco-friendly accommodations, also known as green hotels or eco-resorts, are designed to minimize environmental impact through sustainable construction and operations. These accommodations use local materials, energy-efficient systems, and water conservation techniques. For example, eco-resorts in Goa and Kerala follow green building practices and promote responsible tourism among visitors. Many of these establishments also adhere to sustainability certifications and guidelines.
5. **Conservation of Biodiversity:** India places strong emphasis on conserving biodiversity in eco-tourism destinations, particularly in national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and biosphere reserves. Tourism activities in areas like Kaziranga National Park and Jim Corbett National Park are carefully regulated to protect wildlife and natural habitats. Eco-tourism initiatives also include awareness programs that educate tourists about conservation and responsible behavior.
6. **Promotion of Local Culture and Traditions:** Sustainable tourism in India strongly supports the preservation and promotion of local culture, traditions, and heritage. Tourists are encouraged to experience local lifestyles, festivals, handicrafts, and cuisine. For instance, in Rajasthan, village tourism initiatives showcase traditional art forms and crafts, while in Nagaland, cultural festivals like the Hornbill Festival attract tourists and promote indigenous traditions. This approach not only preserves cultural identity but also generates income for local communities.
7. **Plastic-Free Tourism Initiatives:** India promotes plastic-free tourism to reduce environmental pollution and protect fragile ecosystems. States like Sikkim have implemented bans on single-use plastics in tourist areas. This helps maintain cleanliness and prevents harm to wildlife and natural habitats. It also encourages tourists to adopt eco-friendly practices during their visits.
6. **Carrying Capacity and Visitor Management:** To prevent over-tourism, India manages tourist inflow in ecologically sensitive destinations. In places like Ladakh, visitor entry is regulated through permits and restrictions. This approach reduces environmental degradation and pressure on local resources. It ensures the long-term sustainability of fragile tourism ecosystems.
7. **Sustainable Transport Systems :** India promotes eco-friendly transportation options such as electric vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrian pathways in tourist destinations. Cities like Mysuru are adopting green mobility solutions to reduce pollution. These initiatives help lower carbon



emissions and improve environmental quality. They also support sustainable urban tourism development.

8. **Green Certification and Eco-Labeling:** Tourism enterprises in India are encouraged to adopt green certification programs to ensure sustainable operations. These certifications promote efficient use of energy, water, and waste management systems. They help maintain environmental standards across hotels and tourism facilities. Additionally, they enhance the credibility of destinations among environmentally conscious tourists.
9. **Community-Based Homestay Programs:** Homestay programs allow tourists to experience local culture by staying with host families. States like Uttarakhand actively promote this form of tourism. It provides direct economic benefits to local communities and creates employment opportunities. At the same time, it helps preserve traditional lifestyles and cultural heritage.
10. **Conservation of Marine Ecosystems:** India emphasizes the protection of marine ecosystems in coastal and island destinations. In regions such as Andaman and Nicobar Islands, tourism activities like diving and snorkeling are regulated. This prevents damage to coral reefs and marine biodiversity. It also raises awareness among tourists about the importance of ocean conservation.
11. **Promotion of Organic and Local Food:** Tourism in India encourages the use of locally sourced and organic food products. States like Sikkim integrate organic farming with tourism development. This reduces carbon emissions related to transportation and supports local farmers. It also provides tourists with authentic and healthy culinary experiences.
12. **Heritage Conservation and Adaptive Reuse:** India promotes the preservation of historic structures through adaptive reuse for tourism purposes. In Rajasthan, many palaces and forts have been converted into heritage hotels. This approach helps protect cultural heritage while generating revenue. It ensures that historical sites remain functional and economically viable.
13. **Environmental Awareness and Education:** Environmental education is an important component of sustainable tourism in India. Tourist destinations provide awareness programs, eco-guides, and interpretation centers. These initiatives educate visitors about responsible behavior and conservation practices. They play a key role in protecting natural and cultural resources.
14. **Skill Development and Capacity Building:** The Ministry of Tourism conducts training and skill development programs for tourism stakeholders. These programs focus on sustainable practices, hospitality, and service quality. They enhance employment opportunities and improve professional standards. This ensures effective implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives.
15. **Water Conservation and Smart Resource Use:** Tourism establishments in India adopt water conservation techniques such as rainwater harvesting and efficient water management systems. This is especially important in water-scarce regions like Rajasthan. These practices reduce



water wastage and ensure sustainable resource use. They contribute to the long-term sustainability of tourism operations.

16. **Promotion of Rural and Agro-Tourism:** Rural and agro-tourism are promoted to diversify tourism and reduce pressure on urban destinations. These initiatives allow tourists to experience village life, agriculture, and local traditions. They generate income and employment opportunities for rural communities. At the same time, they help preserve rural culture and heritage.

Role of Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India promoting Sustainable Tourism and Economic viability

(A) Promoting Sustainable Tourism

1. The Ministry of Tourism promotes tourism that balances environmental protection, cultural preservation, and social development.
2. Focus on eco-friendly infrastructure such as green hotels, renewable energy use, and sustainable transport systems.
3. Encouragement of low-carbon tourism practices to reduce environmental impact and carbon footprint.
4. Protection of natural resources and biodiversity through eco-tourism in national parks and protected areas in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
5. Promotion of responsible tourist behavior, including waste reduction, conservation awareness, and respect for local culture.
6. Development of sustainable tourism policies and standards such as Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI).
7. Support for community-based tourism, ensuring participation of local people in tourism activities.
8. Management of tourist flow in fragile ecosystems to prevent over-tourism and environmental degradation.
9. Promotion of lesser-known destinations to reduce pressure on overcrowded tourist spots.
10. Implementation of cleanliness and waste management systems in tourist destinations.

(B) Promoting Economic Viability

1. The Government of India ensures tourism contributes to GDP growth, employment generation, and regional development.
2. Promotion of community-based tourism to generate local employment and improve livelihoods.
3. Encouragement of local products and services, boosting small businesses and traditional industries.



4. Development of diverse tourism products such as eco-tourism, rural tourism, cultural tourism, and adventure tourism.
5. Investment in sustainable infrastructure to improve tourist satisfaction and increase repeat visits.
6. Promotion of **domestic tourism** through campaigns like Dekho Apna Desh to maintain steady revenue.
7. Encouragement of public-private partnerships (PPP) to attract investment and improve service quality.
8. Adoption of sustainable business practices that reduce operational costs (energy, water, waste).
9. Focus on balanced regional development by promoting tourism in rural and remote areas.
10. Ensuring long-term economic sustainability by preserving natural and cultural resources for future tourism growth.

Sustainable and Eco-Tourism Practices in India: States and Union Territories :

1. **Kerala:** Kerala is widely recognized as a pioneer in responsible tourism, driven by strong community participation and inclusive development models. The state's eco-tourism strategy integrates environmental conservation with socio-economic benefits, ensuring that local communities actively participate in and benefit from tourism activities. Sustainable practices such as scientific waste management, promotion of local employment, and preservation of traditional art forms and culture are key components of its tourism framework. A major highlight of Kerala's sustainable tourism is its backwater tourism, particularly in regions like Alappuzha and Kumarakom. These areas are known for their interconnected network of lagoons, canals, and lakes, where tourism activities are carefully managed to protect fragile ecosystems. Houseboat tourism, a key attraction, is increasingly adopting eco-friendly practices such as solar-powered boats, bio-toilets, and regulated waste disposal systems to minimize environmental impact. The state also promotes village tourism in backwater regions, allowing tourists to experience local lifestyles, traditional fishing, coir-making, and agriculture.
2. **Rajasthan:** Rajasthan promotes heritage-based eco-tourism by conserving and adaptively reusing its historical forts, palaces, and havelis. Many of these structures have been converted into heritage hotels, which not only preserve architectural and cultural identity but also generate sustainable economic opportunities. Major tourist attractions like Jaipur City Palace, Mehrangarh Fort, and Udaipur City Palace follow conservation-based tourism models, where restoration and maintenance are carried out using sustainable methods. In desert destinations such as Jaisalmer Fort and the Thar Desert, eco-friendly practices include solar-powered accommodations, controlled tourism activities, and promotion of traditional mud architecture that naturally regulates temperature. Wildlife and eco-tourism destinations like Ranthambore



National Park and Keoladeo National Park emphasize biodiversity conservation through regulated safari tourism, habitat protection, and environmental awareness programs. These sites maintain strict visitor guidelines to minimize ecological disturbance. Additionally, Rajasthan promotes rural and cultural tourism in villages such as Sam Village, where tourists experience local traditions, handicrafts, and folk performances.

- 3. Himachal Pradesh:** co-tourism in Himachal Pradesh is strongly centered on protecting fragile mountain ecosystems while promoting adventure and nature-based tourism. The state enforces strict plastic bans, especially in high-altitude and trekking regions, and implements forest conservation programs to preserve biodiversity. Tourist activities such as trekking, camping, and mountaineering are regulated through permits and carrying capacity limits to reduce environmental pressure and maintain ecological balance. Popular destinations like Spiti Valley and Manali encourage sustainable tourism practices, including minimal resource use and promotion of local architecture that blends with the natural environment. The state also focuses on community-based tourism, where local residents are actively involved in guiding, hosting, and providing tourism services. This approach not only generates livelihood opportunities but also ensures that tourism development aligns with local traditions and environmental conservation. Areas such as Great Himalayan National Park follow strict eco-tourism guidelines to protect endangered species and ecosystems. Overall, the state integrates renewable energy use, community participation, and strict environmental regulations to ensure long-term sustainability in tourism.
- 4. Uttarakhand:** Uttarakhand promotes eco-tourism by encouraging homestays and rural tourism initiatives that actively involve local communities. The state emphasizes the conservation of Himalayan biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. It supports livelihood generation by linking tourism with local culture and traditional practices. Additionally, spiritual tourism and nature-based activities form the core of its sustainable tourism approach. Few sustainable tourism activities in Uttarakhand includes eco-trekking in regulated zones, wildlife conservation tours in national parks, organic farming experiences, village-based tourism, and yoga and wellness retreats. The state also promotes responsible pilgrimage, waste management practices, and awareness programs to preserve its fragile mountain ecosystem.
- 5. Goa:** Goa promotes sustainable tourism by focusing on responsible coastal development and effective beach management practices. The state has adopted Blue Flag certification standards to ensure high levels of cleanliness, safety, and environmental quality at its beaches. It encourages eco-friendly resorts, waste management systems, and water conservation techniques to reduce environmental impact. Key sustainable tourism activities in Goa include eco-friendly beach tourism, dolphin watching with regulated guidelines, heritage walks in old quarters, spice plantation tours, cycling tours, and nature trails. The state also promotes water

sports with environmental regulations, yoga and wellness retreats, and community-based cultural tourism to ensure a balance between tourism development and ecological conservation.

- 6. Madhya Pradesh:** Madhya Pradesh is well known for its wildlife-based sustainable tourism, especially in national parks and tiger reserves. Tourism activities are carefully regulated to protect biodiversity and natural habitats. The state promotes eco-lodges, responsible travel practices, and conservation awareness programs for visitors. Its approach focuses on sustainable safari tourism while ensuring long-term wildlife conservation. The key sustainable tourism activities in the state include guided wildlife safaris with limited vehicle entry, nature walks and birdwatching, eco-trails, and community-based tourism involving local tribal groups. Heritage tourism, cycling tours around forest areas, and environmental education programs are also encouraged to promote conservation and responsible tourism practices.
- 7. Odisha:** Odisha promotes eco-tourism through its rich mangroves, wetlands, and wildlife reserves. The state focuses on conserving coastal ecosystems and biodiversity while encouraging active community participation for inclusive growth. Sustainable infrastructure development further supports environmentally responsible tourism practices. The main sustainable tourism activities include mangrove boat tours, bird watching in wetlands, guided wildlife safaris, turtle conservation visits, and nature trails. The state also promotes eco-friendly beach tourism, community-based village tourism, cultural heritage tours, and environmental awareness programs to ensure long-term conservation and sustainable livelihoods.
- 8. Karnataka:** Karnataka promotes eco-tourism through its forest reserves, wildlife sanctuaries, and eco-resorts, with a strong focus on biodiversity conservation and sustainable forest tourism. The state encourages eco-friendly accommodations and responsible nature-based travel to minimize environmental impact. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided wildlife safaris, trekking in forested regions, bird watching, and nature trails that highlight rich flora and fauna. Additionally, river-based activities, plantation tours, and community-based rural tourism are promoted to support local livelihoods. Environmental education programs and conservation awareness initiatives are also integrated into tourism experiences, ensuring a balance between tourism development and ecological preservation.
- 9. Tamil Nadu:** Tamil Nadu focuses on eco-tourism in its hill stations and protected forest areas, emphasizing wildlife conservation and the development of eco-parks as key features of its tourism model. The state promotes sustainable tourism while ensuring the preservation of natural ecosystems and biodiversity. Few initiatives of sustainable tourism activities include guided nature walks, trekking in hill regions, bird watching, and wildlife safaris in reserved forests. It also encourages eco-friendly boating, plantation visits, and cultural tourism linked



with local traditions. Community-based tourism and environmentally responsible practices are promoted to support local livelihoods and reduce ecological impact.

- 10. Gujarat:** Gujarat promotes sustainable tourism by emphasizing wildlife conservation, heritage preservation, and eco-friendly travel practices. Under important government initiatives such as the Gujarat Sustainable Tourism Policy, the state focuses on eco-resorts, responsible trekking, and community participation. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided wildlife safaris, bird watching, visits to salt marshes and mangroves, heritage walks, eco-camping, and rural cultural tourism. Popular sustainable tourism destinations include Gir National Park, Rann of Kutch, Saputara Hills, Narayan Sarovar, Sardar Patel Museum, Statue of Unity, and Gandhi Ashram. These measures ensure a balance between tourism development, ecological conservation, and support for local communities.
- 11. West Bengal:** West Bengal promotes eco-tourism in the Sundarbans region with a strong focus on mangrove conservation and biodiversity protection. Tourism activities are carefully regulated to enhance climate resilience and minimize environmental impact. The state supports sustainable livelihood opportunities for local communities through responsible tourism practices. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided mangrove boat safaris, bird watching, wildlife observation, and nature interpretation tours. It also promotes eco-friendly village tourism, cultural experiences, and environmental awareness programs. Low-impact accommodations and community-based tourism initiatives further ensure a balance between conservation and tourism development.
- 12. Maharashtra:** Maharashtra promotes sustainable tourism through its forest areas and eco-resorts, with a strong emphasis on environmental conservation and responsible travel practices. The state prioritizes waste management, eco-friendly infrastructure, and resource efficiency as key components of its tourism model. It encourages nature-based tourism while ensuring the protection of biodiversity and natural habitats. Important sustainable tourism activities include guided wildlife safaris, trekking in forest regions, bird watching, and nature trails. Additionally, agro-tourism, eco-camping, and community-based rural tourism are promoted to support local livelihoods. Environmental awareness programs and conservation initiatives are also integrated into tourism to maintain ecological balance and long-term sustainability.
- 13. Assam:** Assam is a major eco-tourism destination known for its rich wildlife and biodiversity, with tourism largely centered around national parks and sanctuaries such as Kaziranga National Park. Strict regulations are followed to protect endangered species like the one-horned rhinoceros and maintain ecological balance. The state promotes important sustainable tourism policies focusing on conservation, community participation, and regulated visitor management. Key sustainable tourism activities include controlled wildlife safaris, birdwatching, river cruises, nature trails, and guided eco-tours led by local communities. Conservation awareness programs and eco-friendly accommodations are widely encouraged

to minimize environmental impact. Overall, Assam aims to balance tourism growth with long-term wildlife protection and sustainable development.

- 14. Meghalaya:** Meghalaya is widely recognized for its community-based eco-tourism model, where local communities play a central role in managing and benefiting from tourism. Natural attractions such as the Living Root Bridges, caves, and waterfalls are carefully conserved through sustainable practices. The state follows important sustainable tourism policies that emphasize community participation, conservation of natural resources, and low-impact tourism development. Key sustainable tourism activities include trekking to root bridges, cave exploration, waterfall visits, guided village tours, and bird watching. Home stays, eco-friendly camping, and cultural tourism experiences are promoted to support local livelihoods. Overall, Meghalaya ensures a balance between tourism growth, environmental protection, and preservation of its unique cultural heritage.
- 15. Arunachal Pradesh:** Arunachal Pradesh promotes eco-tourism with a strong focus on biodiversity conservation and minimal environmental impact. Tourism activities are carefully regulated in eco-sensitive zones under important government initiatives such as the Arunachal Pradesh Eco-Tourism Policy, which emphasizes community involvement, conservation, and sustainable development. The state encourages nature-based and adventure tourism while protecting forests and wildlife through low-density visitor management. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided treks, wildlife and bird watching tours, river rafting, camping, and visits to tribal villages. Eco-friendly accommodations, cultural tourism, and environmental awareness programs are also promoted. Arunachal Pradesh aims to ensure ecological sustainability while providing meaningful tourism experiences that benefit local communities.
- 16. Manipur:** Manipur promotes eco-tourism around its natural attractions, notably Loktak Lake, the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India. The state implements important government initiatives, such as the Manipur Eco-Tourism Policy, which emphasize wetland conservation, community participation, and sustainable development. Tourism activities are designed to protect fragile aquatic ecosystems while promoting local culture and traditions. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided boat tours, bird watching, nature trails, fishing with traditional practices, village home stays, and eco-friendly camping. The state also encourages environmental awareness programs and community-led conservation projects. Overall, Manipur's strategy balances tourism growth with ecosystem protection and local livelihood support. **Mizoram :** Mizoram emphasizes nature-based eco-tourism with minimal environmental impact. Forest conservation and biodiversity protection are key priorities. Tourism activities are developed in a controlled manner to avoid ecological damage. The state promotes peaceful and sustainable tourism experiences.
- 17. Nagaland:** Nagaland promotes sustainable tourism by focusing on biodiversity conservation, cultural preservation, and community-led initiatives. Under important government initiatives



such as the Nagaland Eco-Tourism Policy, the state emphasizes eco-friendly accommodations, responsible trekking, and promotion of indigenous culture. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided nature treks, bird watching, wildlife observation, visits to tribal villages, cultural festivals, and eco-camping. Popular sustainable tourism destinations include Dzukou Valley, Khonoma Village, Intanki National Park, and Shilloi Lake.

- 18. Mizoram:** Mizoram promotes sustainable tourism by emphasizing forest conservation, biodiversity protection, and community participation. Under important government initiatives such as the Mizoram Eco-Tourism Policy, the state encourages eco-friendly accommodations, low-impact trekking, and responsible cultural tourism. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided nature treks, birdwatching, wildlife tours, visits to tribal villages, eco-camping, and participation in local festivals. Popular sustainable tourism destinations include Phawngpui Blue Mountain, Dampa Tiger Reserve, Vantawng Falls, and Reiek Hills. These initiatives ensure a balance between tourism growth, environmental sustainability, and local community empowerment.
- 19. Tripura:** Tripura promotes eco-tourism by leveraging its rich natural and cultural heritage, including eco-parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and heritage sites developed under sustainable practices. The state implements important government initiatives such as the Tripura Eco-Tourism Policy, which focus on environmental conservation, community participation, and preservation of tribal culture and traditions. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided nature walks, wildlife and birdwatching tours, village homestays, trekking, heritage site visits, and eco-friendly camping. The state also promotes cultural tourism, local handicrafts, and community-led conservation projects. These practices ensure a balance between tourism development, ecological protection, and livelihood support for local communities.
- 20. Sikkim:** Sikkim stands out as a model for sustainable tourism, being India's first fully organic state. Under important government initiatives such as the Sikkim Sustainable Tourism Policy, the state has implemented strict bans on plastic, promotes eco-friendly accommodations, and emphasizes low-impact tourism. Key sustainable tourism activities include trekking and nature walks in protected areas, birdwatching, visits to organic farms, home stays in local villages, and eco-camping. The state also encourages cultural tourism, wellness retreats, and biodiversity conservation programs that involve local communities. These practices ensure a balance between tourism growth, environmental protection, and support for sustainable livelihoods.
- 21. Punjab:** Punjab promotes sustainable tourism by focusing on cultural heritage, rural experiences, and eco-friendly travel practices. Under important government initiatives such as the Punjab Sustainable Tourism Policy, the state emphasizes heritage conservation, waste management, and community participation. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided heritage walks in historic sites, rural and agro-tourism experiences, eco-friendly cycling tours,



visits to wildlife and bird sanctuaries, and participation in local cultural festivals. Popular sustainable tourism destinations include Golden Temple, Jallianwala Bagh, Sheesh Mahal, and Harike Wetland. These practices ensure a balance between tourism development, environmental conservation, and support for local communities.

- 22. Bihar :** Bihar promotes sustainable tourism by emphasizing heritage conservation, eco-friendly travel, and community participation. Under important government initiatives such as the Bihar Sustainable Tourism Policy, the state focuses on preserving historical sites, promoting rural and cultural tourism, and implementing waste management practices. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided heritage walks, river-based eco-tours along the Ganges, visits to wildlife and bird sanctuaries, agro-tourism, and village home stays. Popular sustainable tourism destinations include Bodh Gaya, Nalanda University, Rajgir, and Valmiki National Park. These initiatives ensure a balance between tourism development, environmental protection, and livelihood support for local communities.
- 23. Jharkhand:** Jharkhand promotes sustainable tourism by focusing on forest conservation, wildlife protection, and community participation. Under important government initiatives such as the Jharkhand Eco-Tourism Policy, the state emphasizes eco-friendly accommodations, waste management, and preservation of natural and cultural heritage. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided wildlife safaris, trekking in forested areas, birdwatching, nature trails, visits to waterfalls, and community-based village tourism. Popular sustainable tourism destinations include Betla National Park, Dassam Falls, Hazaribagh Wildlife Sanctuary, and Rajrappa Temple. These measures ensure a balance between tourism development, ecological conservation, and support for local livelihoods.
- 24. Chattisgarh:** Chhattisgarh promotes sustainable tourism by emphasizing forest conservation, wildlife protection, and community participation. Under important government initiatives such as the Chhattisgarh Eco-Tourism Policy, the state focuses on eco-friendly accommodations, heritage preservation, and responsible tourism practices. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided wildlife safaris, trekking in forested and tribal regions, bird watching, visits to waterfalls, village and tribal cultural tourism, and nature trails. Popular sustainable tourism destinations include Kanha National Park, Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary, Chitrakoot Falls, and Boramdeo Temple. These initiatives ensure a balance between tourism growth, ecological conservation, and local community development.
- 25. New Delhi :** New Delhi promotes sustainable tourism by focusing on heritage conservation, green spaces, and eco-friendly urban development. Under important government initiatives such as the Delhi Sustainable Tourism Policy, energy-efficient practices, waste management, and environmental awareness are emphasized. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided heritage walks, eco-friendly cycling tours, visits to urban parks and biodiversity gardens, birdwatching, and cultural experiences in local communities. Popular sustainable

tourism sites include India Gate, Lodhi Garden, Qutub Minar, and Humayun's Tomb. These measures aim to balance tourism development with heritage conservation, environmental protection, and community participation.

- 26. Telegana:** Telangana promotes sustainable tourism by focusing on heritage preservation, eco-parks, and responsible rural tourism. Key activities include guided tours of historic sites, nature trails, wildlife observation, cultural village experiences, and eco-friendly water-based tourism. Important government initiatives, such as the Telangana Eco-Tourism and Heritage Policy, encourage community participation, conservation awareness, and eco-friendly accommodations. Popular destinations include Ramoji Film City eco-tours, Kuntala Waterfalls, Pakhal Lake, and Nehru Zoological Park. These efforts ensure a balance between tourism development, environmental protection, and support for local communities.
- 27. Haryana:** Haryana promotes sustainable tourism by emphasizing heritage conservation, rural experiences, and eco-friendly practices. Key activities include guided heritage walks at forts and havelis, rural village tours, cycling trails, eco-friendly nature parks, and wildlife observation in Aravalli hills. Important government initiatives, such as the Haryana Tourism and Eco-Tourism Policy, encourage community participation, waste management, and promotion of local culture. Popular destinations include Kurukshetra, Pinjore Gardens, Sultanpur National Park, and Morni Hills. These measures balance tourism development with environmental conservation and local livelihood support.
- 28. Andaman and Nicobar Islands:** Andaman and Nicobar Islands promotes eco-tourism with a focus on marine biodiversity, coral reefs, and fragile island ecosystems. Under important government initiatives such as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Eco-Tourism Policy, tourism activities are strictly regulated to minimize environmental impact, including restrictions on visitor numbers in sensitive areas. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided scuba diving and snorkeling in coral reef zones, glass-bottom boat tours, island trekking, bird watching, and eco-friendly beach camping. Community-based initiatives like local village tours and cultural experiences are also encouraged. Popular eco-tourism beaches include Radhanagar Beach, Kalapathar Beach, Elephant Beach, North Bay Beach, and Wandoor Beach. These practices ensure a sustainable balance between tourism development, marine conservation, and local community benefits.
- 29. Jammu and Kashmir:** Jammu and Kashmir promotes eco-tourism and adventure tourism with a strong emphasis on sustainability and environmental protection. Under important government initiatives such as the Jammu & Kashmir Eco-Tourism Policy, sustainable trekking practices, forest conservation, and low-impact tourism are prioritized to ensure ecological balance. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided treks in the Himalayas, wildlife and bird watching tours, nature trails, camping in eco-sensitive zones, and community-based cultural tourism. Popular eco-tourism destinations include Gulmarg, Pahalgam,



Sonamarg, and Dachigam National Park. These initiatives aim to balance tourism growth with biodiversity conservation, promote local livelihoods, and ensure that tourism development aligns with ecological sustainability.

- 30. Ladakh:** Ladakh promotes high-altitude eco-tourism with a strong focus on sustainability and environmental protection. Under important government initiatives such as the Ladakh Sustainable Tourism Policy, the region emphasizes the use of solar energy, water conservation, waste management, and controlled visitor numbers to minimize ecological impact. Key sustainable tourism activities include trekking and camping in eco-sensitive zones, wildlife and birdwatching tours, visits to high-altitude lakes, cultural tours in local villages, and mountain biking. Popular eco-tourism destinations include Pangong Lake, Tso Moriri Lake, Nubra Valley, and Hemis National Park. These initiatives ensure low-impact tourism while promoting community participation and climate-resilient practices.
- 31. Lakshadweep:** Lakshadweep focuses on low-impact eco-tourism to protect its fragile coral reef ecosystems and marine biodiversity. Under important government initiatives such as the Lakshadweep Sustainable Tourism Policy, tourist inflow is strictly regulated to maintain environmental balance, and eco-friendly practices are promoted across all tourism activities. Key sustainable tourism activities include snorkeling and scuba diving in coral-rich zones, glass-bottom boat tours, kayaking, guided nature trails, and eco-friendly beach camping. Community-based initiatives such as local village visits, cultural experiences, and traditional handicraft workshops are encouraged to support local livelihoods. Popular eco-tourism spots include Bangaram Island, Agatti Island, Kadmat Island, and Minicoy Island. These measures ensure sustainable tourism while conserving delicate marine and island ecosystems.
- 32. Puducherry:** Puducherry promotes sustainable coastal tourism with initiatives focused on clean and well-managed beaches. Under important government initiatives such as the Puducherry Eco-Tourism and Coastal Management Policy, eco-friendly tourism practices, waste management systems, and environmental awareness programs are implemented to maintain high environmental quality. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided nature walks along coastal areas, eco-friendly water sports, birdwatching, cycling tours, and visits to mangroves and backwaters. Community-based tourism and home stays are promoted to support local livelihoods. Popular eco-tourism spots include Promenade Beach, Paradise Beach, and Auroville Beach. These measures ensure a balance between tourism development, conservation of coastal ecosystems, and sustainable economic growth.
- 33. Chandigarh:** Chandigarh emphasizes urban eco-tourism by leveraging its green spaces, gardens, and planned city design. Under important government initiatives such as the Chandigarh Sustainable Tourism Policy, waste management, energy efficiency, and environmental sustainability are prioritized. Key sustainable tourism activities include guided park tours, cycling trails, eco-friendly heritage walks, bird watching, and visits to urban

biodiversity parks. Community-based cultural events and eco-conscious recreational activities are also promoted to support local engagement. Popular eco-tourism sites include Rock Garden, Sukhna Lake, and Rose Garden. These initiatives ensure a balance between tourism development, environmental protection, and sustainable urban growth.

34. Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu promote eco-tourism by conserving forests, beaches, and wetlands under the Dadra & Nagar Haveli Eco-Tourism Policy. Key sustainable tourism activities include nature trails, bird watching, guided forest walks, heritage site tours, and eco-friendly beach visits. Community participation is encouraged through village tourism and cultural experiences. Waste management, regulated visitor numbers, and low-impact accommodations are promoted to maintain ecological balance. Popular destinations include Silvassa forest reserves, Devka Beach, Ghoghla Beach, and heritage forts in Daman.

Table # 1: Showing Key Initiatives or Polices and Tourism Practices in India: State wise Comparison

S N o	State/UT	Key Government Initiatives / Policies	Key Sustainable Tourism Practices / Activities	Popular Destinations / Examples
1	Kerala	Responsible Tourism Mission	Eco-friendly houseboat tours, backwater village tourism, organic farming, cultural preservation	Alappuzha, Kumarakom
2	Rajasthan	Rajasthan Sustainable Tourism / Heritage Conservation	Heritage hotels, eco-friendly desert stays, regulated safaris, rural cultural tourism	Jaipur City Palace, Mehrangarh Fort, Ranthambore NP, Sam Village
3	Himachal Pradesh	Eco-Tourism Guidelines, Forest Conservation Programs	Trekking, camping, mountaineering, guided forest tours, community-based tourism	Spiti Valley, Manali, Great Himalayan NP
4	Uttarakhand	Uttarakhand Eco-Tourism Policy	Eco-trekking, wildlife tours, village tourism, organic farming, yoga retreats, responsible pilgrimage	Jim Corbett NP, Nainital, Rishikesh
5	Goa	Blue Flag Beaches, Coastal Management Policy	Eco-friendly beaches, dolphin watching, heritage walks, spice plantation tours, nature trails, regulated water sports	Baga Beach, Radhanagar Beach, Spice Plantations



6	Madhya Pradesh	Madhya Pradesh Eco-Tourism Policy	Guided wildlife safaris, eco-trails, bird watching, community-based tribal tourism, heritage cycling tours	Kanha NP, Bandhavgarh NP, Pachmarhi
7	Meghalaya	Meghalaya Community-Based Eco-Tourism Policy	Trekking to root bridges, cave exploration, guided village tours, bird watching, eco-camping, homestays	Living Root Bridges, Mawsmai Cave, Cherrapunji
8	Odisha	Odisha Eco-Tourism Policy	Mangrove boat tours, bird watching, wildlife safaris, turtle conservation, village tourism	Chilika Lake, Bhitarkanika NP, Puri
9	Karnataka	Karnataka Eco-Tourism Policy	Wildlife safaris, trekking, bird watching, nature trails, plantation tours, rural tourism	Bandipur NP, Coorg, Dandeli
10	Tamil Nadu	Tamil Nadu Eco-Tourism Policy	Guided nature walks, trekking, bird watching, wildlife safaris, plantation visits, community tourism	Nilgiri Hills, Mudumalai NP, Kodaikanal
11	Gujarat	Gujarat Sustainable Tourism Policy	Wildlife safaris, bird watching, heritage walks, eco-camping, rural cultural tourism	Gir NP, Rann of Kutch, Statue of Unity, Sardar Patel Museum
12	West Bengal	Sundarbans Eco-Tourism Policy	Mangrove boat safaris, bird watching, village tourism, cultural experiences, nature interpretation tours	Sundarbans NP, Sunderban Mangroves
13	Maharashtra	Maharashtra Eco-Tourism Policy	Wildlife safaris, trekking, bird watching, agro-tourism, eco-camping, rural tourism	Tadoba NP, Sanjay Gandhi NP, Matheran
14	Assam	Assam Eco-Tourism Policy	Controlled wildlife safaris, bird watching, river cruises, guided eco-tours	Kaziranga NP, Manas NP
15	Arunachal Pradesh	Arunachal Pradesh Eco-Tourism Policy	Guided treks, wildlife tours, river rafting, eco-camping, tribal village visits	Tawang, Ziro Valley, Namdapha NP

16	Nagaland	Nagaland Eco-Tourism Policy	Nature treks, bird watching, tribal village visits, cultural festivals, eco-camping	Dzukou Valley, Khonoma Village, Intanki NP
17	Manipur	Manipur Eco-Tourism Policy	Guided boat tours, bird watching, nature trails, village home stays, eco-camping	Loktak Lake, Keibul Lamjao NP
18	Mizoram	Mizoram Eco-Tourism Policy	Nature treks, bird watching, wildlife tours, tribal village visits, eco-camping, festival participation	Phawngpui Blue Mountain, Dampa Tiger Reserve
19	Tripura	Tripura Eco-Tourism Policy	Guided nature walks, wildlife tours, trekking, village home stays, heritage visits, eco-camping	Neermahal, Sepahijala Wildlife Sanctuary
20	Sikkim	Sikkim Sustainable Tourism Policy	Trekking, nature walks, bird watching, home stays, eco-camping, farm visits, wellness retreats	Tsomgo Lake, Yumthang Valley, Pelling
21	Punjab	Punjab Sustainable Tourism Policy	Heritage walks, rural/agro-tourism, cycling tours, wildlife visits, cultural festivals	Golden Temple, Harike Wetland, Sheesh Mahal
22	Bihar	Bihar Sustainable Tourism Policy	Guided heritage walks, river eco-tours, wildlife visits, agro-tourism, village home stays	Bodh Gaya, Nalanda, Rajgir, Valmiki NP
23	Jharkhand	Jharkhand Eco-Tourism Policy	Wildlife safaris, trekking, bird watching, nature trails, waterfalls, village tourism	Betla NP, Dassam Falls, Hazaribagh Wildlife Sanctuary
24	Chhattisgarh	Chhattisgarh Eco-Tourism Policy	Wildlife safaris, trekking, bird watching, waterfall visits, tribal village tourism	Kanha NP, Chitrakoot Falls, Boramdeo Temple
25	New Delhi	Delhi Sustainable Tourism Policy	Heritage walks, cycling tours, park visits, bird watching, cultural community experiences	India Gate, Lodhi Garden, Qutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb
26	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Andaman & Nicobar Eco-Tourism Policy	Snorkeling, scuba diving, glass-bottom boat tours, trekking, eco-beach camping, village tours	Radhanagar Beach, Elephant Beach, North Bay Beach



27	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu & Kashmir Eco-Tourism Policy	Trekking, wildlife tours, camping, nature trails, village cultural tourism	Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonamarg, Dachigam NP
28	Ladakh	Ladakh Sustainable Tourism Policy	Trekking, camping, mountain biking, wildlife tours, village cultural tours	Pangong Lake, Tso Moriri, Nubra Valley, Hemis NP
29	Lakshadweep	Lakshadweep Sustainable Tourism Policy	Snorkeling, scuba diving, kayaking, nature trails, eco-beach camping, village visits	Bangaram, Agatti, Kadmat, Minicoy Islands
30	Puducherry	Puducherry Eco-Tourism & Coastal Management Policy	Nature walks, bird watching, cycling tours, eco-water sports, mangrove/backwater visits	Promenade Beach, Paradise Beach, Auroville Beach
31	Chandigarh	Chandigarh Sustainable Tourism Policy	Park tours, cycling trails, heritage walks, bird watching, biodiversity park visits	Rock Garden, Sukhna Lake, Rose Garden
32	Haryana	Haryana Tourism & Eco-Tourism Policy	Heritage walks, rural village tours, cycling trails, eco-parks, wildlife observation	Kurukshetra, Pinjore Gardens, Sultanpur NP, Morni Hills
33	Telangana	Telangana Eco-Tourism & Heritage Policy	Heritage site tours, nature trails, wildlife observation, village experiences, eco-friendly water tourism	Kuntala Waterfalls, Pakhal Lake, Ramoji Film City, Nehru Zoological Park
34	Andhra Pradesh	Andhra Pradesh Sustainable Tourism Policy	Heritage and rural tours, eco-lodges, trekking, wildlife and bird watching, cultural village tourism	Araku Valley, Borra Caves, Kolleru Lake, Horsley Hills
35	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	DNH Eco-Tourism Policy	Nature trails, bird watching, guided forest walks, heritage site tours, eco-friendly beach visits	Silvassa Forest Reserves, Devka Beach, Ghoghla Beach, Daman Forts
36	Lakshadweep	Lakshadweep Sustainable Tourism Policy	Snorkeling, scuba diving, kayaking, nature trails, eco-beach camping, village visits	Bangaram, Agatti, Kadmat, Minicoy Islands



Source: Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India and Respective UTs Tourism Department and

Policies

Recommendations and Suggestions:

Based on the analysis and findings of this study, several key recommendations and suggestions have been drawn to promote sustainable tourism across Indian states and Union Territories. These recommendations aim to enhance environmental conservation, support local communities, preserve cultural and heritage assets, and ensure long-term sustainability in tourism development. The suggested measures focus on policy implementation, community participation, eco-friendly infrastructure, responsible tourism activities, and monitoring mechanisms to balance tourism growth with ecological and socio-economic priorities.

1. Involve local communities in tourism planning, management, and service delivery.
2. Promote home stays, local guides, and craft-based tourism for inclusive economic benefits.
3. Encourage community-led profit-sharing models to ensure equitable growth.
4. Implement strict waste management, plastic bans, and recycling systems at tourist sites.
5. Promote renewable energy (solar, wind) in hotels, resorts, and tourism infrastructure.
6. Conduct regular environmental impact assessments for all tourism projects.
7. Encourage eco-lodges, green buildings, and energy-efficient accommodations.
8. Integrate water conservation, rainwater harvesting, and sustainable transport systems.
9. Develop low-impact adventure and nature tourism infrastructure.
10. Promote regulated eco-tourism activities such as trekking, wildlife safaris, cycling, and bird watching.
11. Encourage cultural and heritage tourism with minimal environmental impact.
12. Support eco-friendly water sports and responsible beach tourism.
13. Strengthen state and UT eco-tourism policies with clear monitoring mechanisms.
14. Conduct awareness campaigns for tourists, local communities, and tourism operators.
15. Provide training on sustainability practices, biodiversity conservation, and cultural preservation.
16. Establish databases to track ecological impacts, visitor numbers, and community benefits.
17. Encourage academic and policy research on sustainable tourism models and environmental conservation.
18. Monitor and evaluate tourism projects to ensure compliance with sustainability standards.
19. Promote eco-tourism circuits across states to share best practices.
20. Foster public-private partnerships for sustainable tourism and conservation initiatives.
21. Collaborate on cross-border programs for biodiversity protection and community-based tourism.



CONCLUSION:

The study highlights that sustainable tourism in India has evolved as a multidimensional approach, balancing environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and socio-economic development. States and Union Territories have implemented diverse initiatives, ranging from community-based eco-tourism in Meghalaya and Kerala to high-altitude conservation tourism in Ladakh and marine biodiversity-focused tourism in Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. There was a significant progress has been made in promoting eco-friendly infrastructure, renewable energy use, and responsible tourism practices, challenges such as unregulated tourist inflow, environmental degradation, and uneven policy implementation remain. Effective sustainable tourism requires continuous community engagement, strict monitoring of ecological impacts, and integration of cultural and heritage preservation into tourism planning. By adopting low-impact practices, promoting eco-friendly accommodations, and enforcing government policies, India can ensure that tourism growth does not compromise natural and cultural assets. Overall, sustainable tourism presents an opportunity to create long-term economic benefits for local communities while safeguarding biodiversity, heritage, and ecosystems for future generations.

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