India's responsible tourism

India is now arguably leading the world in adopting a Responsible Tourism approach. Sharing insights on the subject, policymakers talk about their experience and what India has to offer.

"Though India has a long way to go, I can say that the lessons learnt from COVID would certainly accelerate the RT movement in the country. The theme of the new 'Draft National Tourism Policy' to promote responsible tourism will cut across all the strategic pillars to achieve the vision to make India a top destination for sustainable and responsible tourism." — Vinod Zutshi, Former Secretary, MEA

"MP has drafted the Responsible Tourism Policy this year. We have signed an MoU with Kerala’s RT Mission and are also in the process of signing an MoU with the International Centre of Responsible Tourism. Our team is working on several initiatives, including a rural tourism project where we will recognize 100 villages for development of homestays." — Vatsa Rai Singh, Principal Secretary (Tourism) Government of Madhya Pradesh

"Our tourism policy has laid a lot of emphasis on how to develop communities, the local economy, and women empowerment through tourism. The new agro-tourism policy launched by the state government recently puts objectives of the responsible tourism framework in focus. We have made it mandatory for schools and colleges to do their educational trips to farm tourism spots." — Sonia Moona, Additional Managing Director, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board

"Kerala has always found the idea of responsible tourism innovative and sustainable. In 2008, Kerala adopted Responsible Tourism (RT) and developed an approach which ensured that the local communities benefited through village life experiences and producer cooperatives. In 2017, we formed Responsible Tourism Mission."

— Ritu Ganga, Secretary Tourism, Government of Kerala

Inputs by Meenakshi Puri