

FROM THE PRESIDENT



It took us a couple of decades to wake up to environmental concerns in India. But now that we know that this is a global issue and affects all of us, we need to work together to keep our environment intact – communities, corporates, governments and individuals. ESOI was thrilled to hear our prime minister's call for niche tourism, which unfortunately went to a different level. But it is not the sole responsibility of the government to protect our environment. We must take control and stop the destruction before there is nothing left. I am happy to see the serious approach that both MOEF and MOT have adopted to take eco concerns forward. I am also glad that our website, Facebook and Twitter pages are interactive and request all our stakeholders and partners to get active and connect with each other on those forums.

Steve Borgia

NEWS & UPDATES

Ecotourism facilities in Haryana being handed over to HFDC

The Haryana Forest Department had established ecotourism facilities in four major areas. However, these facilities lay nonfunctional for some time, and now a decision has been taken that the ecotourism activities at Thapli, Morni, Chuharpur, Bansantor, Kalesar, Masani and Bhondsi will be carried out by Haryana Forest Development Corporation (HFDC). This has



been done for the more effective management and operation of the facilities, for which HFDC will be responsible. All activities will be guided by the Ecotourism Society of Haryana and carried out as per the guidelines set by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

EVENTS & DEVELOPMENTS

Heritage tourism comes to the fore

Rakesh Mathur represented ESOI at the Annual Convention of the Indian Heritage Hotel Association held at Ranthambhore on September 22-23,



for two panel discussions. One was to ascertain if there is a need to have an apex body on all institutions engaged in restoration, preservation and promotion of our natural and built heritage, and two, if there is a need for a national policy on heritage tourism for both natural and built heritage.

Other panelists included

Maharaj Gaj Singh ji of Jodhpur; S.K. Mishra, Chairman of ITRHD; Sujit Banerjee, Chairman, Advisory Committee, UNESCO; and S.K. Agarwal, Principal Secretary - Tourism, Government of Rajasthan.

A committee will be set up to look into both topics and make recommendations to the parliament committee and MOT. The annual convention was inaugurated by Chief Guest, Vasundhara Raje, Chief Minister of Rajasthan. Also present were K.D Singh, MP, Chairman of the Parliamentary Tourism Committee and Raja Sanjay Sinh of Amethi, MP.

The evolution of ecotourism in India

Founding Member of ESOI, Mandip Singh Sooin contributed an article to the Earth Care Awards coffee table book, titled 'Towards a Green India'. The article talks about how ecotourism can be used to walk a fine line between sustainable habitats and income generation, but it needs



Green initiatives by Dhole's Den

Dhole's Den is a safari-homestay run by Karthik and Ingrid Davey and is unique in more ways than one. It is the first in Bandipur and the entire district to use a mix of wind and solar energy. With 40 solar panels and a windmill, the 10.5 KV of power generated here is green. The homestay is

minimalistic with less walls and doors to reduce the use of artificial light, while the open construction invites more ventilation and natural light. Only 10% of the area has been used for construction and the building is on a north-south axis to reduce heat in the rooms. LED bulbs are used for lighting, are available only in guest areas so as not to disturb nocturnal animals and insects. The kitchen waste is turned into bio gas and a compost pit turns all dead leaves to manure. Organic vegetables from the garden are cooked for the guests and the local species of trees and fruiting trees are for birds to feed and nest on. Moreover, guests are encouraged to take back their garbage which helps reduce accumulation at the homestay, and they get a special gift for this.

Local garbage management at Bhimashankar

At Bhimashankar, one of the biggest headaches for the forest department was the huge piles of garbage left behind by religious tourists. Employing people for collection and management of this waste was out of question for the cash strapped department. This is where ecotourism measures made a difference. From the money generated at the entry gate, local youth were employed not only to collect the waste, but to also monitor tourist activities to ensure that they did not litter, disturb animals or vandalise the forest. Today, the local youth accompany the tourists, sharing great knowledge about the Bhimashankar forest and at the same time ensuring that the source of the Bhima River remains pristine. *Article by Anirudh Chaoji*

Travel Inn: Committed to responsible tourism

Over the years, Travel Inn has realised that ecotourism constitutes an important part of any travel experience. With concern to our environment and its preservation, we take extra care in choosing the lodges and our logistics providers in wildlife areas for providing services to our clients. We give preference to working with local partners who are committed to responsible tourism. Regular monitoring is conducted so that best practices are adhered to by our staff and network of local associates. Travel Inn endorsed the TOFT agreement in December 2006 and is proud to join this elite club for the noble cause of saving tigers.



In one of its recent initiatives, Travel Inn is promoting the Satpura Under Canvas programme with Reni Pani Jungle Lodge in Satpura National Park, Madhya Pradesh.

a robust will on the part of the stakeholders and a whole host of management systems. It maps the rise of ecotourism in India, the groundwork activities and



measures and the birth of ESOI. Ending on a positive note, Mandip sees a promising future for ecotourism in the country

and says, *"We can actually aspire to be one of the world's leading ecotourism destinations by 2025 if we can fix the loopholes like poor management systems and really develop the tourism potential of India, which is immense, in accordance with the principles of ecotourism and responsible and sustainable tourism."*

Meet Mandip Singh Soin – An interview by Sanctuary Asia

"(As ESOI), we want to make ecotourism the engine that drives responsible tourism that benefits



communities and wilderness areas. We hope to harmonise the action at a policy level between the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Environment at one level and at the other end bring about best practices in the tourism and hospitality industry."

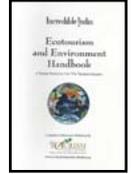
Read more at <http://www.sanctuaryasia.com/people/interviews/10102-meet-mandip-singh-soin.html#sthash.glr7o1B8.dpuf>

PUBLICATIONS

Ecotourism and Environment Handbook

The handbook is a collation of ideas, guidelines, articles and contacts in ecotourism, with over 290 pages. The printing was funded by the Ministry of Tourism and an additional 1,000 copies by Sita. Postage and handling: Rs.150/-

Write to admin@ecotourismsocietyofindia.org to avail of a copy.



ESOI GOVERNING BODY

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We are in pursuit of like-minded people at the state level to spread our network nationwide. If you are interested in associating with us, please write to Steve Borgia at steve@indecotourism.com

ESOI GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS (2014-2016)

1. Suhail Gupta
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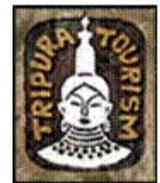
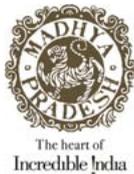
SPECIAL INVITEES

1. Dipak Deva
2. Toby Sinclair
3. Anil Kumar Sharma

GRAND PATRON MEMBERS



PATRON MEMBERS



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