



## **SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM**

*Making tourism count to communities, ecosystems and businesses*

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### **Challenges of Biodiversity Conservation through Ecotourism**

Over the past few decades ecotourism has emerged as one of India's fastest growing industries, thanks to its rich biological and cultural diversity and heritage. Historically, the increase of nature based and ecotourism is largely a result of the increase in awareness of the plight of the planet's diminishing biological diversity and a reaction against mass tourism and its demonstrative lack of care of conservation issues. In India integration of biodiversity conservation and tourism development has emerged as an important national objective, with strong support by government, industry and the community. Ecotourism has a potentially vital role to play in conservation by generating economic incentives for nature conservation, and a stimulus for an environmental ethic that goes beyond ecotourism. However, the central challenge of ecotourism is to develop and manage the tourism in a way which conserves its natural resource and built heritage base, and minimizes any negative environmental, societal, and cultural impacts. The greening of tourism is essential for the ecological and sociological advancement and sustainability of the industry. The applicability of tourism as a tool for biodiversity conservation and improving economic status of indigenous communities in India is discussed here.