**ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT UNDER TRIPURA JICA PROJECT (SCATFORM)**

The Tripura Forest Department (TFD), as the custodian of more than 60% of the state’s geographical area, recognizes the strong interlinkage between nature conservation and ecotourism. Guided by the Tripura Ecotourism Policy (2004), the department envisions the development of ecotourism as a sustainable, equitable, and community-based initiative that improves the living standards of host communities while conserving biodiversity. In alignment with this vision, MoD Component C3.6 of Tripura JICA Project (SCATFORM) integrates ecotourism as a vital element under its Livelihood Development component. It includes the strategic vision, resource allocation, implementation modalities, stakeholder responsibilities, and guidelines for convergence and community involvement.

**Objectives**

**The ecotourism component aims to:**

* Strengthen the institutional framework for ecotourism development
* Promote nature-based and culturally rich tourism
* Enhance local community participation and benefit sharing
* Upgrade existing ecotourism infrastructure and develop new destinations

**Key Stakeholders:**

* Tripura Forest Department (TFD): Lead agency responsible for planning, regulation, capacity building, and coordination
* Tripura Tourism Department: Technical support, including promotional activities
* Other Government Departments: Support through convergence with departmental schemes
* Tourism Industry: Private sector investment, infrastructure development, and service delivery
* Community Institutions (JFMCs/SHGs/EDCs): Grassroots implementation and benefit maximization.

**Strategic Interventions**

1. **Macro-Level Interventions:**

* Review and redrafting of the outdated Tripura Ecotourism Policy
* Development of a comprehensive ecotourism vision and strategy
* Establishment of an Ecotourism Development Organisation (EDO)
* Creation of an Ecotourism Development Fund

1. **Micro-Level Interventions:**

* Upgradation of eco parks and existing destinations
* Development of new ecotourism destinations through a cluster-based approach
* Capacity building, enterprise promotion, and marketing

**Ecotourism Development Organisation (EDO):**

Tripura Nature Trails and Resorts (TNTR) Ltd., a Public Sector Undertaking under the Tripura Forest Department, has been identified to act as the Ecotourism Development Organisation (EDO) under the SCATFORM Project. Established in 2022, TNTR aims to facilitate sustainable ecotourism growth in Tripura while empowering local communities and preserving ecological balance.

**Ecotourism sites identified for development and upgradation under Tripura SCATFORM Project, implemented by TNTR Ltd. across designated DMUs/SDMUs in Tripura:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Ecotourism site** | **Name of Ecotourism site** | **District Management Unit (DMU) / Sub-Divisional Management Unit (SDMU)** |
| Upgradation of the Existing Eco-Parks | Rungthang Eco-Park | Sepahijala / Bishalgarh |
| Unakoti Eco-Park | Unakoti / Kailashahar |
| Banabiti Eco-Park | Khowai /Khowai |
| Development of New Ecotourism Destination | Nakuchara (Dumboor Biodiversity Park) | Dhalai / Gandacherra |
| Sita chara (Tui-chinta) Eco-Park | West / Sadar |
| Jampui Hill | North / Kanchanpur |

**Role of TNTR as EDO:**

* Institutionalizing ecotourism through strategic planning and policy support
* Managing the Ecotourism Development Fund
* Providing technical and enterprise development support to communities
* Overseeing ecotourism infrastructure development and promotion

**Major Activities Envisaged:**

* Creation of community ecotourism centres and log huts
* Development of eco-tour packages and homestay networks
* Promotion of community-based enterprises (souvenir, hospitality, guiding, etc.)
* Capacity building in hospitality, interpretation, and cultural integration
* Participation in national and international tourism fairs
* Development of online ecotourism portal and promotional publications

Ecotourism under SCATFORM Project is envisioned as a transformative force for biodiversity conservation and rural prosperity in Tripura. With the Tripura Forest Department providing leadership, and TNTR Ltd. acting as the Ecotourism Development Organisation, the Project aims to establish a replicable model of community-led, sustainable tourism that showcases Tripura’s natural and cultural richness while contributing to environmental sustainability and economic resilience.