



DarkSky International

5049 E. Broadway Blvd. Ste. 105

Tucson, AZ 85711

tel +1-520-293-3198

www.darksky.org

December 18, 2025

To: Government of India and State Departments (as applicable)

Subject: Endorsement and recognition of AstronEra as DarkSky International's Maharashtra Partner for Technical Support, Coordination, and Government Interface

Dear Sir/Madam,

DarkSky International (DarkSky), the global authority on light pollution mitigation and the accreditation body for the International Dark Sky Places program, hereby affirms that AstronEra, founded and led by Ms. Shweta Kulkarni (FRAS), serves as a recognized partner for the Maharashtra State in India. We are proud to provide an endorsement as a reflection of her Dark Sky Defender Award, achieved in 2024.

This partnership reflects AstronEra's alignment with DarkSky's global principles of sustainable lighting, environmental protection, and responsible astrotourism.

In support of national and state governments, DarkSky endorses AstronEra to:

1. Provide technical guidance and research inputs relevant to the development of India-specific dark sky policies, frameworks, and implementation guidelines.
2. Coordinate the Dark Sky Place certification process within Indian states, ensuring complete alignment with DarkSky standards while adapting procedures to local administrative and regulatory contexts.
3. Serve as a preferred liaison between DarkSky and government authorities, particularly for sites located on government-owned or government-managed land, where state-level approvals and inter-departmental coordination are essential.
4. Support departments and site managers with documentation, compliance pathways, measurement protocols, community engagement, and technical steps required to achieve and maintain international certification.

5. Ensure Indian applicants meet all official permissions, authorizations, and regulatory requirements, thereby upholding the integrity, legitimacy, and sustainability of the certification process.

This recognition does not imply that DarkSky is a party to any government MoU. Departments may engage AstronEra directly for planning, implementing, and coordinating activities related to dark sky policy development, site evaluation, conservation efforts, and certification pathways.

To provide further assurance, we will establish an MOU between DarkSky and AstronEra to ensure DarkSky expectations are upheld and maintained. As such, we recognise AstronEra as a valued partner in India and endorse AstronEra for this specialized technical work in Maharashtra. AstronEra's role enables coordinated action, ensuring that each department's mandate is strengthened through evidence-based, internationally benchmarked processes.

DarkSky will continue to extend its full technical support through AstronEra to ensure that India's emerging dark sky initiatives meet international best practices.

Sincerely,



Dan Oakley

Policy and Destination Senior Manager
DarkSky International
+44 7803 570818

Board of Directors

Officers: **Nalayini Brito-Davies, President, New Zealand. / Connie Walker, Vice President, U.S.A. / Brad Schlesselman, Treasurer, U.S.A. / Samyukta Manikumar, Secretary, Kenya. / Ruskin Hartley, CEO, U.S.A.** **Members:** **Fernando Avila Castro, Mexico / Doug Barker, U.S.A. / Kevin Gaston, U.K. / Sergio Emilio Montúfar Codoñer, Guatemala / Thomas Reinert, U.S.A. / Sibylle Schroer, Germany /**