



# NEWSLETTER

## SUSTAINABLE CATCHMENT FOREST MANAGEMENT (SCATFORM) PROJECT



### MESSAGE FROM CEO & PD

Continuing with our efforts to share about the various components of SCATFORM Project through our newsletter, we are sharing the components, subcomponents and activities done towards ECOTOURISM section of the project in this issue. This issue of the newsletter is going to present to the readers about Community based Ecotourism an alternate livelihood generation and conservation and various component of the project. Overall, new ecotourism destinations will be developed and eco parks will be upgraded under the ecotourism section of the project. Basic eco-friendly infrastructures, capacity building, enterprises will be developed to promote and develop ecotourism which will enhance the footfall of nature lover in the country and across the world.

Community based Ecotourism in the state will also contribute to local economy, strengthen the livelihood of community people, which will overall reduce dependency on forest resources, prevent migration in search of jobs, all together playing an important role in conservation and management of the forest.

I hope you will like this issue and appreciate the work the project is undertaking. Your feedback and suggestions on things related to project and about this newsletter are always welcome. Please do write to us.

**Dr. Avinash M Kanfode, IFS**  
Chief Executive Officer & Project Director



## ECOTOURISM component in the project

In the earlier newsletters, various components of SCATFORM project were briefly described. In this bulletin, Community based Ecotourism component will be described in detail and the progress made by the project so far in the ecotourism component will be shared.

Ecotourism has been defined as a form of nature-based tourism. Tripura Forest Department (TFD) has recognized the interrelationship of nature conservation and ecotourism for livelihood generation. The various activities and components of the project certainly have spatial components associated with it in term of conservation, livelihood generation and excelling of local economy.

It is assumed that sustainably accessing of ecosystem services in the context of ecotourism will generate numerous income sources to local community, reduce dependency on forest in term of jhum cultivation and migration in search of job and community stakeholders will act as a prime factor for the conservation and management of forest resources. Therefore in SCATFORM community based ecotourism is considered as one of the main components for environment conservation and livelihood generation.

Under the Ecotourism Component various activities are planned to be carried out. These activities in brief are:

### 1. Ecotourism Development Organisation (EDO)

EDO is playing a vital role for effectively execution and management of ecotourism components under the project. Hence under TFD the Tripura Parks and Gardens Society will act as an EDO and playing a major role in the execution, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of each component under the Ecotourism. Moreover overall establishment of community based ecotourism and up gradation of Eco parks, marketing and promotion of ecotourism of Tripura at national and international platform.

### 2. Setting of Ecotourism Development Fund

Guidelines have developed for the utilisation of ecotourism development fund for the establishment of EDO and the development of enterprises. The fund will be used for initial expenses for establishment of EDO and development of community based enterprises, which will help the local stakeholders to establish various enterprises at destination level viz. setting up of accommodating units like campsites, homestays, water based activities, different types of adventure sports activities and cafeteria, souvenirs outlets etc.

### 3. Promotion and Marketing of ecotourism

An exclusive website for Tripura ecotourism will be designed and developed. This website will act as the gateway to ecotourism of Tripura and will have provision for online booking. The website design and development



bidding documents have been prepared and this activity will be outsourced to an experienced web developer.

Besides a part of promoting ecotourism features of Tripura, quality publications showcasing the ecotourism features of the state will be prepared and published in this activity, viz. Handbook of Birds of Tripura, Visitors Guidebook on Biodiversity & Culture of Tripura, Promotional and marketing materials like brochures, booklets, pamphlets, banners, etc. are designing and printing by highlighting the ecotourism features, products and packages of Tripura for various source markets. The handbook on hornbill and handbook of elephant have been designed and developed.

#### 4. Review and redrafting of Tripura Ecotourism Policy

The existing ecotourism policy of Tripura is more than a decade old. It is timely and appropriate to review and revise the ecotourism policy of Tripura. The revision of ecotourism policy will be undertaken in a participatory and consultative method through public hearings at regional and state level.

#### 5. Upgradation of Eco Parks

Eco parks are flagship ecotourism initiative of TFD and they have expanded in numbers and popularity. These parks offer excellent opportunities for outdoor-based environment learning for diverse visitor types especially for student groups. Under the project total three eco parks will be upgraded interms of infrastructure development and up

gradation, development of program and activities, staffing & capacity building. Eco parks have been identified for up gradation and infrastructure development.

#### 6. Development of New Ecotourism Destination

Under the SCATFORM Project, three new ecotourism destinations will be developed in Tripura. New ecotourism sites have been identified through scoping study. For each destination a group of 10 villages in the adjoining area will be taken up for ecotourism development. At the cluster level an integrated ecotourism development plan will be prepared through active community participation. The project will adopt a Community Based Eco-Tourism (CBET) approach wherein local community institutions like EDC/JFMC/SHG etc. will act as the implementing units.

The EDO will act, as the Technical Support Unit and the project activities, also explore possibilities of involving private sector under PPP mode and convergence with other government departments and schemes for the destination development. At destination following activities is envisaged:

##### a) Scoping study

The scoping study has been conducted in the pre identified sites of the state. The potential sites have been selected on the basis of various criteria and indicators. The key criteria were the nature value of the site, inherited culture and heritage strengthen of the site, risk of forest degradation,



heritage strengthen of the site, risk of forest degradation, existing activities, livelihood potential and accessibility of the sites. Further evaluation of various indicators as per the criteria was done through meetings, workshop, transect walks, discussions with key stakeholders of each of the potential sites. Most potential ecotourism destinations have been identified for further implementation and establishment of community based ecotourism.

#### b) Ecotourism Resource Mapping

In the final identified sites, Ecotourism resource mapping exercise, and micro planning/ business planning at destination level will be carry out.

#### c) Feasibility study

A feasibility study on establishment of ecotourism on PPP Mode will be conducted. Bidding document of feasibility study has been prepared and this feasibility study will be outsourced to an experienced agency.

#### d) Ecotourism centre establishment and accommodating facility development

Ecotourism centres and eco-friendly accommodating units

will be set up at the destination level to promote community based ecotourism.

#### e) Workshops

Workshops on community based ecotourism and livelihood enhancement were conducted at existing and potential sites. Tripura University professionals, Ecotourism Expert of SCATFOTM and Experts of Tourism Department sensitize stakeholders on the potential of community based ecotourism in term of conservation, enhancement of livelihood of local community, overall ecotourism development at destination level by adopting of eco-friendly infrastructure and activities.

#### f) Capacity Building

Community stakeholder at destination level will be empowered by providing product based quality trainings, exposure visits etc. Assistance will be provided to the trained community stakeholders for development of ecotourism based enterprises.



#### YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE NEWSLETTER

We request and encourage you to share your experiences under the Project. You can highlight activities and achievements of the Joint Forest Management Committee. We can also consider inspiring stories of individuals who are doing good work which needs to be shared with other people in the state. This will provide recognition to individuals and provide opportunities for other people to learn from the experiences. You can share your experiences with our field personnel / JFMC.

*You can also write to us at : [tripurajica@gmail.com](mailto:tripurajica@gmail.com)*

CEO & PD, Tripura SCATFORM Project, Prakriti Bhawan, Gandhigram, West Tripura 799012

Print & Design : Pegasus # 9954926020