

Tamil Nadu to streamline forest treks, camps to boost eco-tourism

TNN | Aug 16, 2021, 10.12 AM IST



CHENNAI: The state forest and tourism departments are to work hand-in-hand to promote eco-tourism. While the Tamil Nadu Wilderness Experiences Corporation, functioning under the forest department, has already identified five eco-tourism spots, the tourism department is likely to look at streamlining activities such as treks and camping in forest areas.

Though eco-tourism began in the state a decade ago, its potential remained untapped. Treks and camps are being organised on a small scale informally in hill stations. The tourism department is looking at cashing in on demand by streamlining things. A tourism department official said the idea is to generate revenue for the forest and tourism departments by promoting eco-tourism.

Forest land cannot be leased to private operators under environment protection laws. TN is trying to follow the examples of Karnataka and Kerala, where camping,

guided tours, jungle safaris and trekking are offered as part of eco-tourism packages.

Stakeholders in the tourism sector said despite demand, there aren't enough facilities for eco-tourism in the state. They point out that eco-tourism will not only attract domestic tourists, but also big-spending international travellers who will fly down if the infrastructure is good.

N Ravi, former manager with the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation, said TTDC was operating packages that involved eco-tourism aspects to Anamalai, Kolli Hills and Yercaud from Chennai 10 years back. "We even conducted trekking at Tirusulam hillock in the city along with the forest department. Interestingly, the traction was high among youngsters and senior citizens," he said. Moreover, when eco-tourism packages are offered by government departments in forest area, travellers safety and security is assured, he added.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/tamil-nadu-to-streamline-forest-treks-camps-to-boost-eco-tourism/articleshowprint/85360679.cms>