

The Nanda Devi Biodiversity Conservation and Ecotourism Declaration

Gram Sabha Lata, Chamoli, Uttaranchal
October 14, 2001

Today on the 14th of October, 2001 in the courtyard of the temple of our revered Nanda Devi, we the people's representatives, social workers and citizens of the Niti Valley, after profound deliberations on biodiversity conservation and tourism, while confirming our commitment to community based management processes, dedicate ourselves to the following:

1. That we, in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the World Tourism Organisation's Manila Declaration 1997 on the Social Impact of Tourism will lay the foundation for community based tourism development in our region.
2. That in our region we will develop a tourism industry free from monopolies and will ensure equity in the tourism business.
3. With the cessation of all forms of exploitation like the exploitation of porters and child labour in the tourism industry, we will ensure a positive impact of tourism on the biodiversity of our region and the enhancement of the quality of life of the local community.
4. That in any tourism related enterprise we will give preference to our unemployed youth and underprivileged families; we will also ensure equal opportunities for disabled persons with special provisions to avail such opportunities.
5. That we will ensure the involvement and consent of the women of our region at all levels of decision making while developing and implementing conservation and tourism plans.
6. While developing appropriate institutions for the management of community based conservation and eco tourism in our area we will ensure that tourism will have no negative impact on the biodiversity and culture of our region, and that any anti-social or anti-national activities will have no scope to operate in our region.
7. We will regulate and ensure quality services and safety for tourists and by developing our own marketing network will eliminate the middlemen and endeavour to reduce the travel costs of the tourist
8. While developing the tourism infrastructure in our region we will take care of the special needs of senior citizens and disabled persons.

9. As proud citizens of the land of the Chipko Movement we in the name of Gaura Devi will establish a centre for socio-culture and biodiversity, for the conservation and propagation of our unique culture.
10. We will ensure the exchange and sharing of experiences with communities of other regions to develop eco tourism in accordance with the Manila Declaration of 1997 in those regions.
11. Acknowledging the spirit of Agenda 21 of the Earth Summit, Rio 1992, the Manila Declaration on the Social Impact of Tourism 1997 and the International Year of the Mountains and Eco Tourism, 2002, we will strive for biodiversity conservation and an equitable economic development within the framework of the Constitution of the Republic of India.
12. Today on October 14, 2001, in front of our revered Nanda Devi, and drawing inspiration from Chipko's radiant history we dedicate ourselves to the transformation of our region into a global centre for peace, prosperity and biodiversity conservation.