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# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN AGONDA

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# INCREDIBLE AGONDA

## SUPPORTING THE EXPANSION OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN AGONDA

PREPARED BY THE PRATT INSTITUTE GOA STUDIO >> SPRING 2013



# SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

*The following guide comes directly from the field work and workshops conducted in Agonda in the past three years. (\*2010, 2011, 2012) They identify tourism as a major industry projected to continue growing in the years to come. By formulating a Business Plan for Sustainable Tourism, Agondan residents can guide development that ensures a positive experience for local peoples, businesses, and the tourists themselves.*

## WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM?

*Sustainable tourism* is tourism attempting to make as low an impact on the environment and local culture as possible, while helping to generate future employment for local people. It is tourism that aspires to protect and sustain the world's natural and cultural resources, while ensuring tourism meets its potential as a tool for conservation and poverty alleviation.

*Agonda has traditionally been a fish and farming community but over the past ten years, tourism has generally outpaced these industries. It is now estimated that there are more residents employed in the hospitality and service sector than fishing and farming combined.*

## TOURISM IN AGONDA: TODAY

As a poster child for 'Incredible India,' Goa is promoted as a tourism destination. It is scenically situated between the Sahyadri Hills to the East and Arabian Sea to the West. With its coastal villages, paddy fields and hospitable people, it is seen as a place of happiness and celebration. Unfortunately, Goa is also a victim of its own popularity. Infrastructure has not kept up with rampant development and tourism has brought with it undesirable social and environmental ills. This awareness figures strongly in people's mind and has given cause for alarm.

Tourism plays a major part of not only the Goan economy, but also accounts for 15% of India's annual foreign exchange. Goa alone reaps Rs 1,500 Crores per year from Tourism and has 21 Lakh domestic and 3.8 Lakh international visitors per year (RPG 2021). However, according to RPG 2021 Sec. 3.8, there is no State Tourism Plan, policies, land use regulations, or strong Tourism Administration. Coupling this with numerous unethical operations and Goa's environmental degradation related to Tourism (RPG 2021), *it is essential that communities can control and develop Tourism on their own terms.*





# ACTION STEPS

*By tapping in to an abundance of natural and cultural resources, Agonda can begin to direct a rapidly growing tourism industry into a viable and sustainable direction, encouraging direct revenue into the community and preserving a significant way of life.*

**FORM** a Sustainable Tourism Management Organization  
Agonda as a Sustainable Destination can only come about if a mixed, representative group of residents, business owners, and local community members come together to form a regulatory agency, intended to **craft Sustainability Guidelines**, and usher Agonda into a Sustainable future.

**ESTABLISH** a tourism strategy that is publicly available, suited to its scale, that considers environmental, economic, social, cultural heritage, quality, health, and safety issues, and was developed with public participation.

**DEFINE** responsibilities for the management of environmental, economic, social, and cultural heritage issues within the organization.

**REACH OUT** to national and international organizations with the resources to help guide Agonda's Sustainable Tourism Strategy. These organizations include:

**The Global Sustainable Tourism Council:** [www.gstcouncil.org](http://www.gstcouncil.org)

**The International Centre For Responsible Tourism:** [www.icrtourism.org](http://www.icrtourism.org)

**CREATE A CATALOG** of key tourism assets and attractions including natural, historical, archaeological, religious, spiritual, and cultural sites. Make this catalog publicly available and begin to label these destinations within the village.

**BUILD** a system to conserve key natural, historical, archaeological, religious, spiritual, and cultural sites, including scenic, cultural, and wild landscapes through visitor management.

**ADAPT** a strategy that encourages visitors to volunteer or contribute to community development, cultural heritage, and biodiversity conservation.

**REFERENCE** the Panchayat's land-use requirements and guidelines when considering any additions to infrastructure in the tourism industry.



# ATTRACTIONS

*Agonda has the potential to capitalize on a growing tourism industry by encouraging the development and creation of sustainable tourist attractions that utilize the existing natural beauty, cultural heritage, and environment of the community.*

**ENCOURAGE** the expansion of economic benefits from tourism to traditional industries:

**AGRICULTURAL TOURISM** is a form of niche tourism that brings visitors to local farms for tours and activities.

Successful examples within Goa include **Sahakari Spice Farm**: [www.sahakarifarms.com](http://www.sahakarifarms.com)

**BECOME ADVOCATES** for the preservation of coastal resources by regulating boating and fishing tours that encourage traditional practices and include an element of education and awareness of a sensitive environment.

**EMBRACE** the concept of the fisherman as a tour guide and conservationist.

**REINVIGORATE** the production of traditional crafts by building educational programs open to both youth and tourists.

Classes in traditional pottery, weaving, textiles, dance, music and art help sustain the cultural heritage of a place from generation to generation.

**PROMOTE** the sale of goods made and manufactured in Agonda.

This includes the sale of Agondan Feni in local restaurants, Agondan made coconut oil in beach lined shops, and traditional clothing marketed to tourists and locals alike.

**CONSIDER** the creation of a central market for the sale of local goods.

**CREATE** a local steward program staffed by community docents to lead village tours.

Tourists can pick from an array of guided tours advertised to them in restaurants, shops, and beach accommodations.

Docent lead tours into the lush and underutilized Adondan interior help encourage and regulate movement throughout the whole of the village.

*Docent positions are ideal for women and youth seeking local career opportunities.*





# A CLEAR VISION

*With tourism slated to continue growing in the coming years, planning for sustainability requires developing a clear vision; easily accessible to the Agonda community and its visitors. Several early interventions can help steer tourism in a more sustainable direction.*

**DESIGNATE** roads and paths for pedestrian use.

ENSURING walk-ability in Agonda helps preserve the natural environment.

Additionally, designated walking paths help direct the flow of tourists through the village, avoiding locations and guiding tourists through unfamiliar terrain.

**IMPLEMENT** a system of signs intended to act as a form of way-finding within the village.

CLEAR SIGNS can mark paths, point to the location of tourist attractions, and provide important information as to the history and rules that govern a particular place.

**MAKE** information on Agonda easily accessible to tourists.

CONSIDER the creation of informational kiosks, or a visitor center.

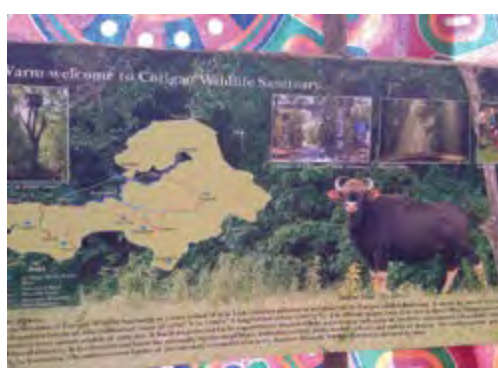
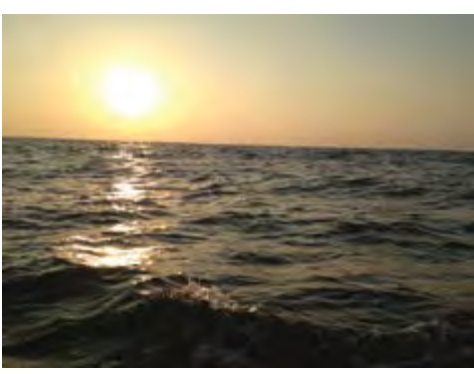
Informing visitors can increase cultural sensitivity, encourage a more respectful tourism experience, and bring revenue to advertised businesses.

**ENSURE ACCESS** by local residents to natural, historical, archaeological, religious, spiritual, and cultural sites.

MONITORING and SAFEGUARDING local resident access to community attractions is essential. This can be achieved through the implementation of visitation hours to sensitive locales and clearly designated expectations for visitors.







A large blue banner featuring two logos. On the left is the logo for "PROGRAMS for SUSTAINABLE PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT" with a colorful, abstract design. On the right is the "Pratt" logo in yellow text on a black background.





# LET'S WALK AGONDA

Namaskar! Hello Agonda Visitor and Friend!  
Let's Walk Agonda is a **collection of sustainable tourism activities and walking tours** prepared by Agondans in a series of participatory planning workshops. The activities attempt to **promote and preserve the beautiful environment and culture** of the village. We hope that you enjoy, experience and go beyond these suggestions in your stay and future visits.

Let's Walk Agonda is a collaboration with Agonda residents and urban planning graduate students at Pratt Institute based on a series of community participatory planning workshops in 2013.

"Sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of **all relevant stakeholders**, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a **continuous process** and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary."  
- **World Tourism Organization, 2004**

Purchase and enjoy locally-made coconut oil!



Try our local dish Fish Curry Rice!

"Explore and appreciate the natural beauty of Agonda without exploiting its natural resources and culture. Respect the laws of the land."  
- **Participatory Planning Workshop, 2013**



AGONDA BEACH, 2013

Agonda Beach was voted the #1 beach in all of India and #2 in all of Asia!  
- **Traveller's Choice 2013, TripAdvisor**



## Sunny Beach Walk

- 1 Take a boat trip with a local Fisherman
- 2 Enjoy a Fish, Curry and Rice at Madhu's Huts
- 3 Sip on a coffee, tea or drink at Jardim a Mar
- 4 Play a game of volleyball
- 5 Have dinner and drink at Simrose

## Fun and Shopping Walk

- 1 Visit the Cola Village fish market
- 2 Take a walk down the dirt road with stellar palm trees
- 3 Shop for fashions and other beach necessities
- 4 Freshen up with some natural coconut water
- 5 Buy some coconut oil at Fabiola's store
- 6 Rent a scooter and tour the village
- 7 Join "Friends of Agonda" at Palms Beach Resort

## Hiking and Architecture Walk

- 1 Tour the beautiful houses of Agonda
- 2 Hike alongside the river and views of the valley
- 3 Visit local crop and farm lands

## Abandoned Hotel Walk

- 1 Tour around more beautiful houses of Agonda
- 2 Hike in the forest
- 3 Visit the Abandoned Hotel

## Organic Walk

- 1 Have a fresh organic lunch at Blue Planet
- 2 Walk alongside beautiful paddy fields

## Exercise Walk

- 1 Play a game of cricket
- 2 Run next to beautiful farmlands

## Boat Trips

- 1 Wake up early for a fishing trip
- 2 Ride the waves to Butterfly and Honeymoon Beaches
- 3 Take a spooky nighttime trip to the river and bat palace
- 4 Dive off of boats into the deep ocean for a sunset swim
- 5 Swim and mingle with dolphins



THANK YOU!

The suggested activities in Let's Walk Agonda are meant to be used as guidelines on how to enjoy the village to the fullest. From delicious meals to secret hikes in the forests, Let's Walk Agonda intends to promote sustainable tourism practices among tourists and residents.

### IMPORTANT CONTACTS

OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT - +91-0832-2647357  
GOA OFFICE OF TOURISM - +91-0832-2438750  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, TOURIST OFFICE,  
PANJIM - +91-0832-223412

# LET'S WALK AGONDA!



1" = 500 meters (1, 640.42')  
1m = 3.28084'

Forest

St. Annes Church

Religious Places

Rural Medical Dispensary

Schools

Playgrounds

Panchayat Ghar

Agonda Beach Walk

Have a lobster dinner at Simrose

Support Local Businesses Walk

1 Cola Fish Market

2 Purchase locally-produced coconut oil

4 Rent a scooter

5 Join Friends of Agonda

Architecture and Hiking Walk

3 Experience the natural hiking trails

Abandoned Hotel Walk

3 Visit the abandoned hotel

Agricultural Walk

1 Have an organic lunch at Blue Planet

2 Walk alongside patty fields

Boat Trip

1 Go fishing with the local fishermen

2 Travel to Butterfly beach

Exercise Walk

1 Play cricket