Early Warning System

ADB-58177-001

Integrated Ecotourism and Sustainable Agri-Based Livelihood Development in Meghalaya Project

Quick Facts

Countries	India
Specific Location	Pynursla-Pongtung, Mawsynram, Umden, Resubelpara, Shillong, East Jaintia Hills Circuit; Meghalaya
Financial Institutions	Asian Development Bank (ADB)
Status	Approved
Bank Risk Rating	B
Voting Date	2025-11-26
Borrower	Government of India
Sectors	Agriculture and Forestry, Climate and Environment, Industry and Trade
Investment Type(s)	Advisory Services, Loan
Investment Amount (USD)	$ 78.00 million
Loan Amount (USD)	$ 77.00 million
Project Cost (USD)	$ 96.25 million

Project Description

As stated by the ADB, the project is aligned with the following impact: propel green growth by promoting ecotourism and climate-resilient agriculture, protecting Meghalaya's natural resources, and expanding forest cover. The project will have the following outcomes: nature-based climate-resilient community livelihoods improved, and environmental sustainability enhanced.

The project will adopt a cluster-based approach, focusing on six key tourism clusters with significant natural and cultural attributes. The project will integrate nature-based ecotourism with sustainable land management, including forest and natural farming, to achieve more impactful and lasting outcomes.

The project will diversify economic opportunities for about 8,500 direct local beneficiaries. The project's major components include (i) building 12 naturebased ecotourism visitor facilities, serving as interpretation centers and demonstration areas for traditional crafts and skills, and marketplaces for local crafts and agricultural products, with utilities, solar lighting, landscaping, and trail upgrades; these will benefit 1,500 tourism entrepreneurs; (ii) restoring 25,000 hectares (ha) of community forests via performance-based payment for ecosystem services (PES) for 3,500 beneficiaries; (iii) supporting 3,400 farmers to adopt climate-smart practices and rehabilitate 1,700 ha of degraded and fallow land, along with 170 drip irrigation systems and 28 processing and post-harvest infrastructure facilities; (iv) strengthening 170 agriculture integrated village cooperative societies (IVCSs) and 14 tourism cooperative societies; and (v) establishing operation and maintenance (O&M) public–private partnerships (PPPs) for six visitor centers and providing advisory support.

The project will have three outputs:

Output 1: Nature-based tourism infrastructure and services developed. The project will support the development of climate- and disaster-resilient public infrastructure and services in six tourism clusters. It will create enabling conditions for the private sector to invest in nature-based tourism operations in these clusters. Infrastructure investments will include (i) constructing 12 nature-based ecotourism visitor facilities that will serve as interpretation centers, and display and demonstration areas for traditional crafts and skills, and marketplaces for local crafts and agricultural products; (ii) constructing public utilities, including water supply and sanitation, waste management, solar-powered lighting, landscaping, and streetscaping of public areas; and (iii) upgrading hiking trails with signage. The services will include developing (i) a digital platform for tourism-related information dissemination, (ii) tourism itinerary and destination promotion digital and printed material, and (iii) training in hospitality management and services targeting women. Developing nature-based tourism infrastructure supports climate resilience, environmental sustainability, and inclusive growth by diversifying livelihoods.

Output 2: Sustainable forest and land management enhanced. This will strengthen sustainable forest management and promote the adoption of climate-smart and sustainable farming practices by providing incentives to communities. Landowners with forest land plots will be paid to improve forest management practices through a PES mechanism. The PES mechanism—known as Grassroots level Response towards Ecosystem Enhancement and Nurturing (GREEN) Meghalaya—was operated in Meghalaya by MBMA from 2022 to 2024. This mechanism helped in conserving forest cover of 54,000 ha through a participatory approach. The project aims to implement conservation efforts across an additional 25,000 ha of community land in 13 blocks, converting them into sustainably managed forest areas. This will be achieved through implementation of a performance-based PES mechanism benefiting 3,500 landowners, each owning 1 ha or more of forest land.25 Key activities include (i) assessing and valuing the ecosystem services for sustainable management of forest lands; (ii) establishing block-level scientific forest management plans; (iii) implementing an expanded PES scheme; (iv) developing financing options to enhance the sustainability of the PES mechanism by expanding the financing sources (e.g., through revenues from tourism fees or from carbon markets and biodiversity credits or similar innovative revenue sources); and (v) strengthening monitoring,

Early Warning System Project Analysis

The ADB categorized the project E&S risks as follows:

Environment - B
Involuntary Resettlement - C
Indigenous Peoples - B

Investment Description

- Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Contact Information

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ADB has a two-stage appeals process for requesters who believe that ADB has denied their request for information in violation of its Access to Information Policy. You can learn more about filing an appeal at: https://www.adb.org/site/disclosure/appeals

ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM OF ADB

The Accountability Mechanism is an independent complaint mechanism and fact-finding body for people who believe they are likely to be, or have been, adversely affected by an Asian Development Bank-financed project. If you submit a complaint to the Accountability Mechanism, they may investigate to assess whether the Asian Development Bank is following its own policies and procedures for preventing harm to people or the environment. You can learn more about the Accountability Mechanism and how to file a complaint at: http://www.adb.org/site/accountability-mechanism/main.

Bank Documents

- Draft Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework
- Draft Involuntary Resettlement Due Diligence Report
- Gender Assessment and Action Plan
- Initial Environmental Examination
- Loan Agreement (Ordinary Operations) for Loan 4699-IND: Integrated Ecotourism and Sustainable Agri-B
- Procurement Plan
- Project Administration Manual
- Project Agreement for Loan 4699-IND: Integrated Ecotourism and Sustainable Agri-Based Livelihood Dev
- Report and Recommendation of the President
- Seven Locations under Tourism Development Component Draft Indigenous Peoples Plan
- Technical Assistance Report

Media

- ADB Approves $77 Million Loan to Boost Ecotourism, Resilient Livelihoods in Meghalaya, India