



Nature-Positive Tourism: The Next Chapter for Wildlife Travel

Editor's Note

The conversation around sustainable tourism is evolving. Today, the global focus is shifting from simply reducing tourism's impact to ensuring that tourism actively contributes to the recovery of nature. This emerging concept of nature-positive tourism is rapidly becoming the benchmark for responsible wildlife travel.

Around the world, destinations are strengthening conservation efforts, improving visitor management, restoring habitats, and creating greater benefits for local communities. Travellers, too, are increasingly choosing experiences that protect wildlife and support authentic conservation initiatives rather than simply offering encounters with nature.

For India, this presents a significant opportunity. Our extraordinary biodiversity and protected landscapes position us to become a global leader in conservation-led tourism. Achieving this will require collaboration between governments, tourism businesses, communities, and travellers, underpinned by credible sustainability standards and measurable action.

At TOFT, we believe the future of wildlife tourism lies not only in protecting what we have, but in helping nature thrive. When tourism leaves destinations healthier than it found them, it becomes far more than an industry—it becomes a powerful force for conservation and lasting positive impact.

*By Deepika Chowdhry,
Director, TOFT India*



Nature isn't a destination; it's a
responsibility



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Forest Escapes Koyna, Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary

Nestled in Koynanagar, Forest Escapes Koyna is surrounded by the forested landscapes of the Western Ghats, with rolling hills, the Shivsagar Lake, and the adjoining Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary creating a rich natural setting. Located within one of India's most ecologically significant regions, the surrounding forests are home to Bengal tigers, Indian gaur, leopards, and a diverse range of birdlife.

Committed to responsible tourism, Forest Escapes Koyna has achieved TOFT's Outstanding Practice Eco PUG Rating, recognising its dedication to sustainable tourism. Through responsible practices it demonstrates how nature-based tourism can contribute to long-term conservation while offering meaningful experiences connected to the region's natural heritage.



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The Safari Lodge Kanha

Kanha Tiger Reserve

Set amidst the forests of Kanha Tiger Reserve, The Safari Lodge, Kanha is a boutique nature retreat where comfort is thoughtfully balanced with environmental responsibility. The lodge embraces sustainable practices that minimise its ecological footprint while offering guests an authentic experience of one of India's most celebrated wilderness destinations.

Commitment to responsible tourism extends beyond its operations through support for local schools, employment of over 80% local staff, sourcing from regional farmers and artisans, and community skills development. Congratulations to The Safari Lodge, Kanha on achieving TOFT's Quality Practice Eco PUG Rating, recognising its dedication to sustainable tourism and the conservation of Kanha's natural heritage.



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Chimur Tiger Resort

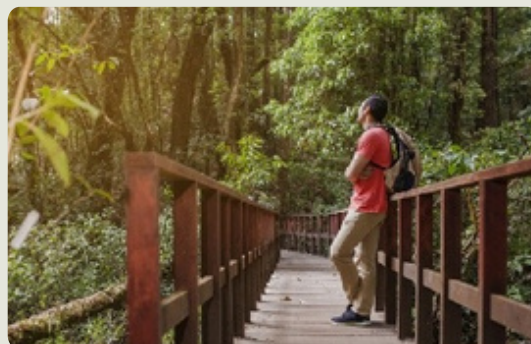
Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve

Bordering the wilderness of Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve, Chimur Tiger Resort is a family-owned nature retreat that blends comfort with an authentic forest experience. Located near the Kolara Gate and within easy reach of the reserve's core and buffer safari zones, the resort offers guests a peaceful setting to connect with the region's diverse wildlife and scenic landscapes.

Committed to advancing responsible tourism, Chimur Tiger Resort has achieved TOFT's Good Practice Eco PUG Rating, recognising its efforts to adopt more sustainable operational practices. This important milestone reflects the property's commitment to reducing its environmental impact while promoting nature-based tourism.



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EXPERT PERSPECTIVE

Realigning Wildlife Tourism in India: Success lives beyond the roar, in the silence you hold

By Manav Khanduja,
Co-Founder, Pugdundee Safaris

Over the past decade, particularly post COVID-19 pandemic, wildlife tourism in India has witnessed a remarkable surge. Destinations such as Jim Corbett National Park, Ranthambore National Park, and Bandhavgarh National Park have become almost mythical when it comes to public imagination with the promise of a tiger emerging through golden grass. Each year, the sector continues to grow in scale, ambition, and consequence. While this popularity has brought attention, revenue, and in some cases, stronger protection frameworks, the sector is at an inflection point where the very ecosystems it seeks to celebrate is threatened.

The Supreme Court of India's enforcement of carrying capacity norms was a critical and necessary intervention, an attempt to place ecological limits on an otherwise expanding industry. Yet, regulation alone cannot reshape intent. The direction of wildlife tourism as it continues to grow suggests a deeper misalignment between expectation and experience, growth and sustainability, presence and pressure.

At its best, wildlife tourism in India has been a powerful tool for conservation and community upliftment. Lodges employing local staff, growing and sourcing local produce, building sustainability into their design and operations and investing in conservation initiatives have created ecosystems where tourism directly benefits those who have grown up around the forest and coexist with wildlife. However, the rise of mass tourism threatens this balance. High footfall, low engagement models often bypass local communities, centralizing profits while externalizing ecological and social costs. The shift from eco-tourism to volume-driven tourism risks alienating the very stakeholders whose support is critical and proven for conservation success.

In the end, the question is not whether wildlife tourism in India will continue to grow. The question is how it will grow, and what it will leave behind.

To realign wildlife tourism is not to reduce its scale, but to refine its purpose. After all, in the forest, success is not only the roar you hear, but the silence you learn to hold.

Sustainability & Wildlife

Latest Updates

SATTE Marks a Milestone with Launch of the Exhibitions Industry's First-Ever Independent Economic Impact Report, Developed with EY



Informa Markets in India, organiser of SATTE (South Asia Travel and Tourism Exchange), today marked a defining milestone in the exhibition's 33-year journey with the launch of the first-ever independent Economic Impact Report for any exhibition, developed in partnership with EY. Unveiled at a special event at Le Méridien, New Delhi, the report independently measures SATTE's economic contribution while highlighting the exhibition's wider multiplier effect across India's travel and tourism ecosystem.

[Read More](#)

A Major Step Towards Mitigating Human-Wildlife Conflict

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Bhupender Yadav launched the National Human-Wildlife Conflict Portal, and the first edition of the publication Current Status of Human-Wildlife Conflict in India.



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Upcoming Events

9th September, Bengaluru



TOFT WILDLIFE & EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL SHOWCASE

- *Meet India's Pioneers in Nature-Based Experiential Travel.*
- *Award-Winning Lodges Trusted by TOFT.*

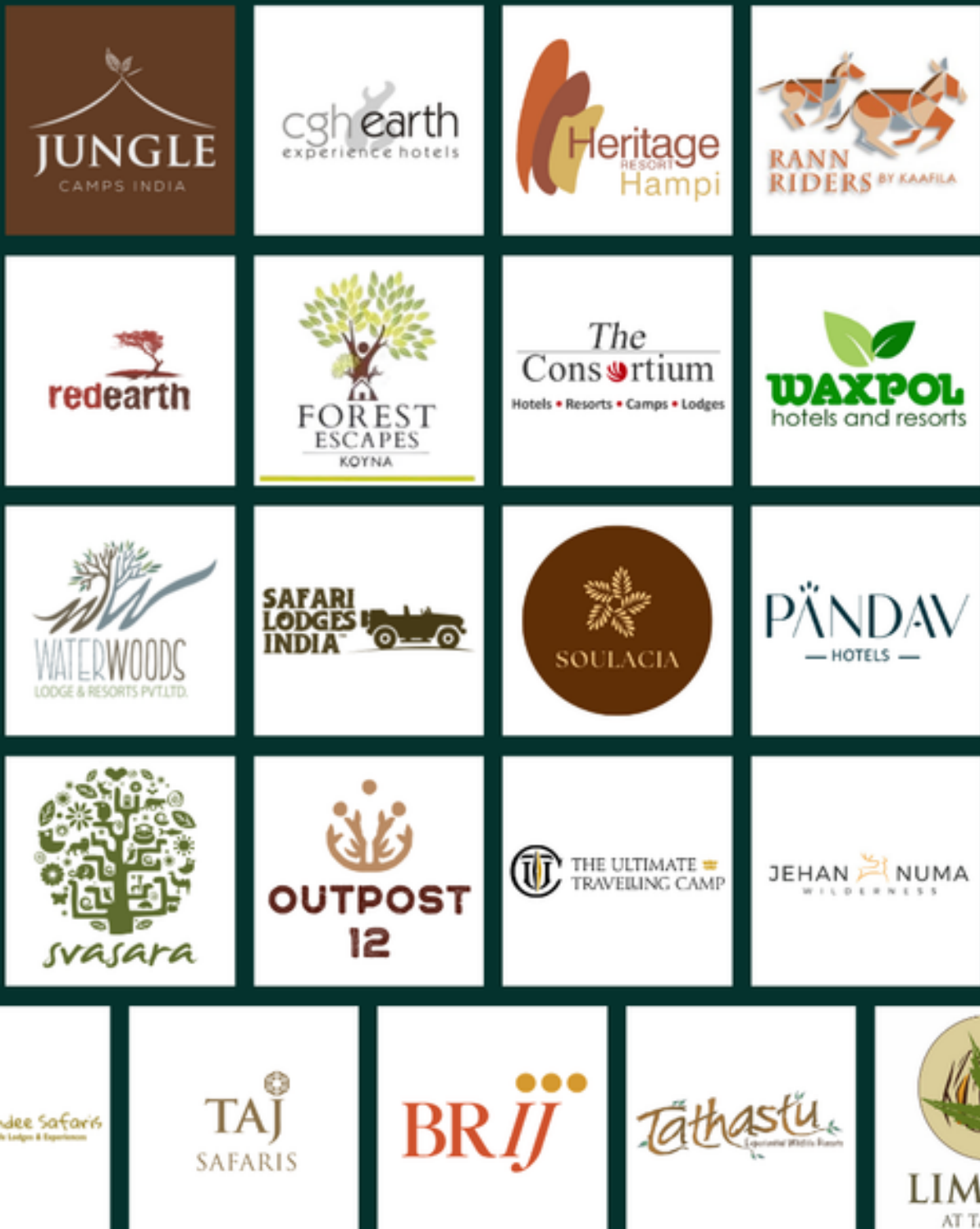
Date: 9 September 2026
Time: 10:00 AM – 5:30 PM
Venue: The Paul, Bengaluru

Attendance: By Invitation Only
(Exclusively for Tour Operators & Holiday Makers)

20 Top Nature & Wildlife Exhibitors
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FROM TOFT
TOFT Congratulates SYCOM



TOFT extends its heartfelt congratulations to SYCOM on the occasion of its 30th anniversary, celebrating three decades of commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

Over the years, TOFT and SYCOM have shared a long and valued association, united by a common vision of promoting responsible and sustainable practices across the tourism and environmental sectors. TOFT team were delighted to attend the anniversary celebrations and join industry colleagues, partners, and well-wishers in recognising this important milestone. The event reflected not only SYCOM's remarkable achievements over the past three decades but also the strong partnerships that have underpinned its journey.

TOFT congratulates the entire SYCOM team and looks forward to continuing its collaboration in advancing sustainability, responsible tourism, and nature-positive development in the years ahead.



14th December
2026



Pradhanmantri
Sangrahalaya (PMML),
New Delhi



TOFT AWARDS 2026

**Nature Positive Travel: Driving
Conservation, Empowering People**

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Apply for joining TOFT, Travelife certification, or PUG audit

For joining TOFT and PUG Certification – admin@toftindia.org

For Travelife Membership – toftigers@toftindia.org



TOFT works to promote responsible tourism that supports conservation, communities, and credible sustainability standards.



www.toftigers.org