

Design & Planning for sustainable VILLAGE TOURISM in SINDHUDURG District

By the staff & students of RSIEA under Government of Maharashtra's Konkan Gramin Partyatan Vikas Karyakram (Konkan Village Tourism Program) for the Department of Rural Development (RDD), Govt. of Maharashtra

The Konkan region of India is generally considered as ideal for eco-tourism because of its pristine natural environment coupled with its proximity to Mumbai and Goa. Biodiversity and a rich forest ecosystem extend along the length of the Western Ghats. White sand and blue water beaches, attractive waterfalls and characteristic ethnicity of the Konkan people, invites tourists to a rich and diverse experience.

The State Government declared Sindhudurg district as an ecotourism destination in 2006. In November 2015, a District and State Committee was formed to develop a detailed project report for promoting rural tourism in Konkan. The thrust of the programme is to promote home stay and other community activities through tourism which will upgrade the socio-economic conditions of the villages while preserving their natural and cultural heritage.

Is village tourism the right solution for Konkan? Will it be sustainable in the long run? Will it improve the socio-economic conditions of the poor? Or will it lead to destruction of its very unique ecosystem? Are the people of Sindhudurg ready to participate in tourism activities? What are the infrastructural requirements for making Sindhudurg a world-class tourism destination?

The Hon. Minister of State for Finance, Planning and Rural Development, Shri Deepak Kesarkar visited Rachana Sansad to discuss his vision on Village Tourism for Konkan on 23 January 2016. He discussed about the project in detail with the Chairman, Shri S.D. Chitnis, Vice Chairman, Prof. P.P. Amberkar, Prof. Roshni U. Yehuda, Head of Department RSIEA, Prof. Rajeev Taishete, Asst. Professor, Dr. Sunanda Chande, Education Director and Mr. Uday Chande, Governing Council Member. He also addressed the

students about his vision and invited them to be part of this unique opportunity to design and plan for sustainable village tourism.

To analyze the ground realities, Prof. Roshni Udyavar Yehuda, Prof. Rajeev Taishete and Mr. Srikrishna Bhagwat from RSIEA along with RSIEA Alumni and Associate Abhishek Mane in Sindhudurg made a reconnaissance visit to important tourism spots in Sindhudurg district along with officials from Zilla Parishad and Gram Panchayat to ascertain strategic features of the region. After several meetings and discussions with government officials from the Rural Development Department (RDD), twenty one villages in Sindhudurg district were shortlisted from 5 circuits viz. Vijaydurg, Savdav, Acchra, Parule and Amboli to be taken up for the Design Studio project of the semester.

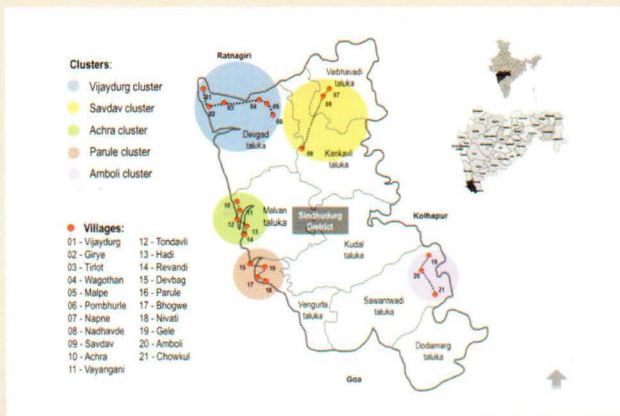
The process then began with the students framing goals for the project and defining the outcomes and deliverables. This was followed by a brainstorming session to formulate a design studio schedule such that they could propose the best solutions within the time constraints of the academic semester.



The design studio process for February through June 2016

February 2016	March 2016	April 2016	May 2016	June 2016
Introduction/Planing	Site Visit - base data collection (11 - 14 March)	Mid term report submission	Design - Village Ecological Planning.	Final Presentation Site visit 3 - Presentation to Finance, Planning and Rural Development Government officials and villagers (3 - 5 June 2016)
Data Collection discussion Collection (13 - 14 February)	Understanding and application Of Government Policies	Presentation on Data Analysis	House Details, Infrastructure & costing and Outcome	
Data Collection discussion	International case studies & tourism requirments	Meeting of students to discuss Mid- term report with Hon. Minister		
		Design		

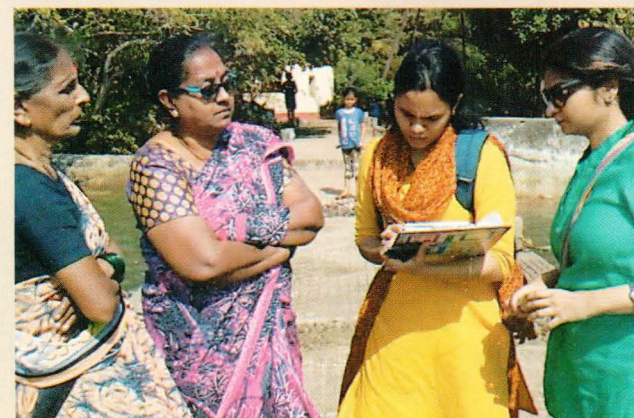
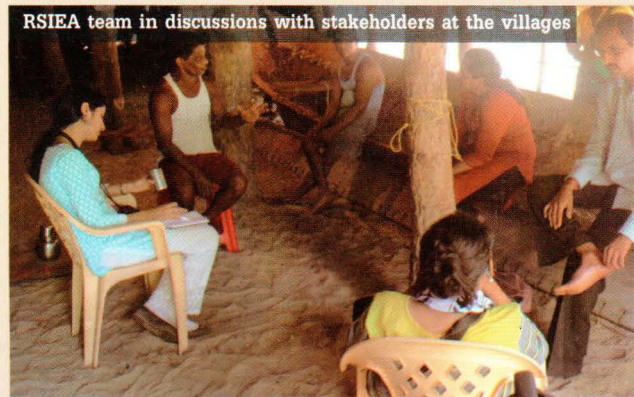
The team of 31 researchers and 10 experts from the Institute's Research and Design Cell conducted two survey visits in February and March 2016 supported by the office of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Sindhudurg Zilla Parishad. The students in groups of two visited the twenty one villages from 5 circuits.



Map highlighting the 5 circuits and villages

The study included resource and asset analysis, infrastructure survey, data collection of overall information of villages (water, waste, energy, biodiversity and demographics); mapping of the villages and interesting tourism spots, detailed study of tourism spots, studying existing vernacular housing patterns, documentation and measured drawings of existing houses, conducting random household surveys, interviews and focused group discussions with various village groups and understanding people's aspirations with photo and audio-visual documentation.

The villages covered in Savdav circuit were Savdav, Nadhavde and Napne, in Vijaydurg cluster - Pombhurle, Malpe, Vagothan, Vijaydurg, Girye and Tirlot, in Acchra cluster - Acchra, Vayangani, Tondavli, Hadi and Revandi, in Parule cluster - Devbag, Parule, Bhogwe and Nivati and in Amboli circuit - Amboli, Chowkul and Gele.





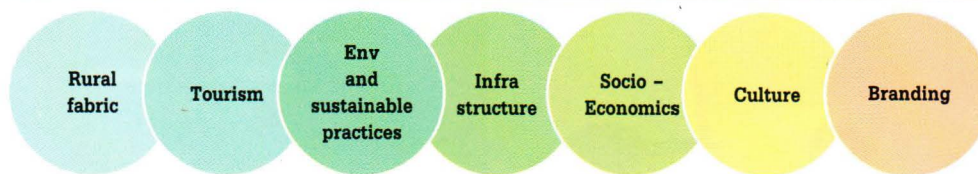
Simultaneously the team of researchers and experts analyzed various existing government policies to examine their existing and future application and researched national & international eco-tourism case studies and tourism requirements and standards.

The design brief evolved during the course of the project and holistically covered the aspects of Rural fabric, Tourism, Environmental & Sustainable practices, Infrastructure, Socio-economic activity, Culture and Branding.

Following the study and analysis, RSIEA submitted a mid-term report to the government. Hon. Minister after analyzing the mid-term reports visited Rachana Sansad to give his inputs and guide the students.



Mid-term meeting with Hon. Minister Shri Deepak Kesarkar with RSIEA faculty and students



Rural fabric <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Architectural style Community spaces Guidelines for built forms Local materials Retrofits / improvements 	Tourism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key attractions Circuits Activities Responsible tourism (threats) guidelines Infrastructure Marketing
Environment and sustainable practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy Renewable energy Waste management Water management Plantation Ecological planning 	Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity Roads Transportation modes Parking Homestays Tourist facilities Amenities Markets
Socio - Economics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment generation activities Cottage and agro industries Co-operative movement 	Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preservation of tradition Festivals Cuisine
Branding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing Network 	

The design brief for Sustainable Village Tourism project

Through numerous discussions and design studios over 16 sessions and 13 weeks, the team developed a plan for sustainable village tourism for each village and circuit. The faculty of 5 other subjects structured their teaching and assignments to add to the design studio project. For a practical understanding of Geographic Information System the students undertook network analysis and connectivity study on Gram++ software. They prepared meticulously to present their solutions to the government officials highlighting the key aspects, focusing on specific proposal and how it will benefit each village.



Prof. R. U. Yehuda



Prof. R. Taishete



Dr. S.R. Kashay



Prof. T. Akov



Dr. C. S. Lattoo



Prof. S. Gupta



Prof. P. Adhikari



Prof. C. Mehta



Prof. R. Rathod



Prof. M. Patankar



Mr. S. Bhagwat



Ar. Milind Kombli



Ar. G. Murkar,

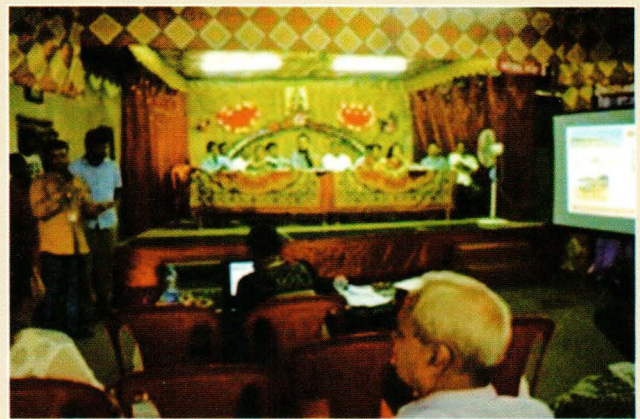


Ar. A. Mane



Guiding team of faculty and associates with Students

Guiding team of faculty and associates with students
The detailed design and circuit planning outcomes for sustainable village tourism for 21 villages in 5 selected clusters were presented for public opinion to Shri Shekhar Singh, CEO Sindhudurg District, State government officials, officials of Zilla Parishads and Villagers at all villages and designated cluster locations in Sindhudurg between 3 and 4 June 2016. The cluster presentation highlighted comparative data analysis for the clusters, overall village ecological planning including waste, water, energy, plantation, ecological threats, rural fabric including prototypes of village houses, home stays and public facilities, tourism including key attractions, circuit integration, activities and itinerary, infrastructure (existing and up gradation) for village and for tourism, socio-economic and cultural upliftment and benefits, Marketing and promotion plan amongst others. There was special focus on specific ideas for monsoon tourism which could be implemented at the earliest.



RSIEA students presenting to Shri Shekhar Singh, CEO Sindhudurg District and other State government officials at designated cluster locations at Vijaydurg and Achra

On 5 June 2016, a compilation on Sustainable Village Tourism in Sindhudurg for the 5 selected circles, was presented to the Honorable Minister of State (Finance, Planning and Rural Development) Government of Maharashtra, Shri Deepak Kesarkar, CEO Sindhudurg District Shri Shekhar Singh, officials of Zilla Parishads & other State government officials and a local gathering of about 1000 people at the Sharad Krishi Bhavan, Oras, Sindhudurg.

Other dignitaries at the event were Rachana Sansad Chairman Adv SD Chitnis Sansad, Ms. Leena Bansod, Chanda to Banda Project, Aamdhar Shri Vaibhav Naik, Zilla Parishad Adhyaksha (Z.P President) Shri Sangram Prabhugaokar, Upadhyaksha (Z.P Vice President) Shri Eknath Nadkarni, Uppar Zilladhikari (Additional Collector) Shri Ravindra Savalkar, Mukhyadhikari Shri RK Joshi, Nagar Adhyaksha (Municipal President) Shri Baban Salgaokar.

RSIEA team also gave an overview of the Homestay guidelines developed by them which could be utilized for the tourism project and presented a short documentary prepared by Ar. Bharati Marathe on the RSIEA Team project experience and journey.



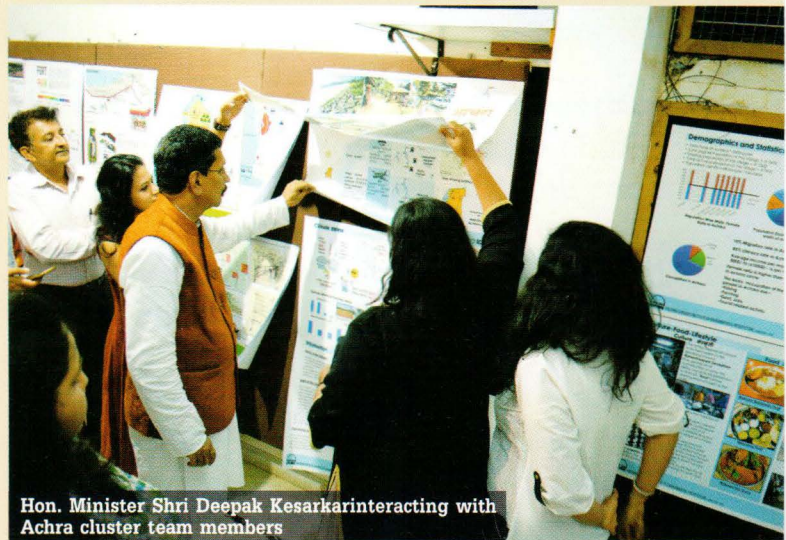
Presentation by team of Vijaydurg cluster at Sharad Krishi Bhavan, Oras, Sindhudurg

There was extensive local media coverage of this event as well as the project and articles were featured in Govan Varta Sindhudurg, Pudhari Sindhudurg, Sakal Sindhudurg, Tarun Bharat, Ratnagiri Times amongst various others.

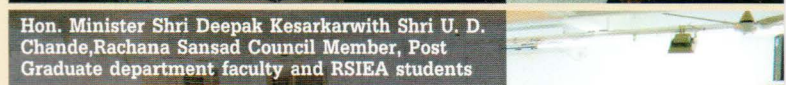
At the successful presentation of Sustainable Village Tourism Plan for Sindhudurg District, Rachana Sansad Chairman Adv SD Chitnis & the Governing Council Members felicitated RSIEA students and faculty on 17 June 2016. Hon. Minister Shri Deepak Kesarkar hosted an interaction and thanksgiving dinner for Rachana Sansad and RSIEA Team on 20 June 2016 at Rachana Sansad. His team was impressed with the details of design, the presentation and the sheets displayed



RSIEA students and faculty felicitated by Rachana Sansad Chairman Adv SD Chitnis & the Governing Council Members



Hon. Minister Shri Deepak Kesarkar interacting with Achra cluster team members



Hon. Minister Shri Deepak Kesarkar with Shri U. D. Chande, Rachana Sansad Council Member, Post Graduate department faculty and RSIEA students



Hon. Minister with Shri U. D. Chande, Rachana Sansad Council Member, Post Graduate department faculty and RSIEA students

