



## Mains Practice Question

**Q.** Discuss the potential impact of climate change on India's tourism industry and suggest ways to adapt to it. (150 words)

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### Approach

- Start your answer by discussing the impact of climate change on India's tourism sector.
- Suggest measures to adapt and mitigate challenges of climate change on tourism industry.
- Conclude accordingly.

### Introduction

- As India's tourism industry is on the path of growth by attracting domestic as well as international tourists. If we look at some recent data, the numbers highlight that the number of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India during 2021 increased to 10.56 million as compared to 10.04 million in 2019.
- Further, the share of India in international tourist arrivals in 2021 was 1.2%. India accounted for 5.0% of international tourist arrivals in Asia Pacific Region in 2021, with the rank of 7<sup>th</sup>.
- But the Climate can have some negative effects on the tourism industry, as tourists may be less likely to visit destinations that no longer have appealing weather or natural attractions.

### Body

Climate change is projected to have a significant impact on India's tourism sector, as it could potentially be affected by the uneven weather events like rising temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, the availability of water, and the timing of the monsoon season. These changes are expected to have a number of negative impacts on tourism in India like:

- **Reduced water availability:** The unavailability of water resource in popular tourist destinations, which could lead to water shortages for hotels and other tourist facilities and make it difficult for tourists to find places to swim or engage in other water-based activities.
- **Uneven weather events:** Changes in the timing of the monsoon season, which could affect the timing of peak tourist season in certain regions and make it more difficult for tourists to plan their trips.
- **Extreme weather events:** Rise in Increased frequency and severity of heat waves and other extreme weather events, which could make certain areas less comfortable or even hazardous for tourists, and lead to higher rates of illness and injury among tourists.
- **Harm to infrastructure:** Damage to infrastructure and other tourist attractions, such as beaches and coral reefs, due to sea level rise and increased storm activity.
- **Effects on flora and fauna:** Changes in the distribution of plant and animal species, which could affect the availability of ecotourism and wildlife-based tourism opportunities.
- **Increase the frequency of natural hazards:** The Uttarakhand Devastation where unprecedented destruction of the rainfall witnessed in Uttarakhand state was attributed due to unscientific developmental activities undertaken in recent decades contributing to very high level of loss of property and lives.

Therefore, the need of the hour is to adapt to the potential impacts of climate change on India's tourism industry, a number of potential strategies can be considered. Some potential measures include:

- **Sustainable tourism:** Developing sustainable tourism practices that reduce the industry's carbon footprint and minimize the impact of tourism activities on the environment.
- **Include new tourist places:** Diversifying the types of tourism offerings in India, such as promoting eco-tourism, cultural tourism, and other forms of sustainable tourism.
- **Research and development:** Investing in research and data collection to better understand the potential impacts of climate change on India's tourism industry and inform decision-making.
- **Promote innovative strategies:** Developing and implementing new and innovative adaptation and mitigation strategies that address the expected impacts of climate change on specific tourism destinations and sectors.
- **Include local community as a stakeholder in decision making:** Building resilience of the local communities and tourist infrastructure to the potential climatic changes.
- **Improving public health systems:** As public health infrastructure could help in mitigating the impact of climate change on health and reduce the risk of outbreaks of diseases that can discourage tourism.

Further there is the need for further research in this area, particularly in developing countries like India, to accurately predict the anticipated impacts of climate change and inform effective interventions.

## Conclusion

Climate change is a significant threat to the tourism industry in India, and it is important to consider ways to adapt to this threat. Promoting sustainable tourism practices and diversifying tourism offerings and destinations are two potential approaches that could help to mitigate the potential impacts of climate change on India's tourism industry.