

**Press Information Bureau
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Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.**

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World Environment Day Celebrations: Three-Day Campaign for Blue Flag Certification of One Blue Flag Beach in 13 Coastal States/UTs Kickstarted

Society of Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has embarked upon a programme for Blue flag certification of one Blue Flag beach in each of the 13 coastal States /UTs under the World Bank-assisted Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project (ICZMP).

SICOM conceived an integrated coastal management scheme named BEAMS (Beach Management Services). The main objective of BEAMS programme is to reduce pollutants, promote sustainable development and strive for high standards in the areas of (i) environmental management (ii) environmental education (iii) bathing water quality (iv) safety & security services scientifically. A “Clean” beach is the primary indicator of coastal environmental quality, management and economic health of beach tourism. However, coastal regions in India are highly susceptible to litter and other pollution.

A team of SICOM carried out extensive field research work to assess gaps with regard to Blue Flag requirements, in consultation with local authorities and stakeholders in the 13 nominated pilot beaches. These 13 beaches include - Shivrajpur (Dwarka) Gujarat, Ghoghla (Diu) Daman & Diu, Bhogve (Sindhudurg) Maharashtra, Miramar (Panjim) Goa, Padubidri (Udupi) Karnataka, Kappad (Kozhikode) Kerala, Emerald (Karaikal) Puducherry, Mahabalipuram Tamil Nadu, Rushikonda (Vishakhapatnam), Andhra Pradesh, Chandrabhaga (Puri) Odissa, Tajpur (Purbi Midnapur) West Bengal, Radhanagar (Havlock) Andaman Nicobar and Bangaram, Lakshdweep.

With “I AM SAVING MY BEACH” (Intensive Beach Cleaning & Environment Education) campaign, MoEFCC has kickstarted the journey towards certifying these beaches for Eco-label at par with Blue Flag beaches in the world. This campaign was undertaken by team of SICOM-MoEFCC at these beaches concurrently for an extensive cleaning & environment education drive, coinciding with the World Environment Day celebrations.

Hundreds of volunteers joined these drives, coming from local communities, fishermen society, school children, scouts, and officials from Coast Guard, Navy, officials from tourism, environment & forest departments, offices of District Collectors, Gram Panchayat, as well as municipalities and cleaned their respective beaches with tools, equipment made of environment friendly materials and collected, segregated and recycled tons of littered garbage (majority of which was plastic) in these beaches. The team of SICOM also conducted sessions on environment education on topics such as (i) Coasts, their importance in bio- diversity & our responsibilities (ii) Environmental Ecosystems & their importance in our life and (iii) Pollution - how it happens & its ill-effects on bio-diversity.

I#AM#SAVING#MY#BEACH is a national level campaign that will be undertaken periodically in these nominated pilot beaches for “Blue Flag” certification journey.



Logo of “I am Saving My Beach” campaign

“BLUE FLAG” has very stringent 33 criteria to be complied based on which a beach is certified and permitted to hoist their flag in these beaches. The moment a “BLUE FLAG” is hoisted in a beach, the mention is made in the global headquarters of Foundation for Environment Education (FEE) in Copenhagen, Denmark and thereby on the World Tourism Map. FEE-nominated representatives will conduct regular monitoring & audits for compliance and thus, concerted efforts are required to qualify for Blue Flag Certification.

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