SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM

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• Rural tourism has become increasingly popular - people seek out unique experiences outside large cities.
• This has increased post Covid!
• However, tourism development can have negative impacts on the environment and local communities
• Sustainable rural tourism – the way forward - to balance economic benefits with environmental and social empowerment.
Issues that this panel will consider:

• How can we promote sustainable tourism practices in rural areas

• The importance of preserving rural environments and cultures along with development.

• The role of community involvement and responsible practices.
Panellists

- Pelin Rodoplu – Inclusive and Sustainable Growth Portfolio Manager, UNDP
- Selda Susal – Chief Corporate Communications and Affairs Officer, Anadolu Efes
- Federica Bosco – Tourism Program Project Officer, Etifor
- Anna-Lena Wallin – Project Leader, Destination Järvsö
A 100% eco resort delivering experiences from the Indian village

Vision in 2006: to develop a model for sustainable living

Vision - 2022: to develop a sustainable model for integrated agriculture
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Why rural tourism?
• Farmer centric
• Farming has vagaries that make farmers economically vulnerable
• Tourism is a tool that can be an additional source of income for framers
• Demand from travellers too
Validity of the conventional approach to tourism

Vs

Approach to rural tourism
Conventional challenges Vs Rural Opportunity

Challenge: Infrastructure: Rural areas often lack the necessary infrastructure for tourism, such as proper roads, and connectivity.

Farmers voice: Do we want too many people? The bad roads will ensure that only the very interested visit. Farmers want travelers who can appreciate their way of life.
Challenge: Rural tourism can be highly seasonal, with demand for tourism products and services varying significantly throughout the year. This can make it difficult for businesses to maintain year-round operations.

Farmers voice: Does the rural tourism sector follow the ‘seasonality’ of the conventional tourism sector? Farms do not have an ‘off season’
Conventional challenges Vs Rural Opportunity

Challenge: Rural areas may have limited resources such as funds, human resources, technology, and skills, which can limit their ability to develop and promote rural tourism.

Farmers voice: Do we want rural tourism to develop into a big mass tourism sector??
Conventional challenges Vs Rural Opportunity

Challenge: Rural tourism can have a significant impact on the environment, such as deforestation, wildlife disturbance, and trash accumulation.

Farmers voice: Rural folks live in harmony with nature. These are problems with those with an urban mindset – not a rural mindset.
Conventional challenges Vs Rural Opportunity

Challenge: There is a need to balance the need for economic growth through tourism with preserving local culture and traditions.

Farmers voice: This is done best with rural tourism. Farmers live their local culture & traditions – it is already balanced.
Challenge: Rural tourism faces competition from mainstream tourism, which often attracts larger numbers of tourists and can offer more developed infrastructure and amenities.

Farmers voice: Farmers don’t care about this competition!
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