


# Chapter 7

## Is a Blue Flag Beach Sustainable?

### A Study of Padubidri Beach

**Partho Pratim Seal**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6867-8713>

*Manipal Academy of Higher Education, India*

#### **ABSTRACT**

*The Blue Flag program is run by an independent non-profit organization that assures tourists regarding the environmental quality of the beaches. The program is to encourage local administration and tourism stakeholders to continuously develop the environmental quality of the destination. A Blue Flag Beach Award scheme is adopted to manage beaches and attract tourism to be more responsive to the environment and the community. The study aims to analyze the Blue Flag beach of Padubidri and to what extent it contributes to the sustainable management of coastal resources and development of tourism. The study undertakes a netnographic approach to observe the reviews of tourists visiting the beach. The findings of the study do confirm that the Blue Flag certification program is perceived as having more tourism potential to attract tourists rather than sustainable tourism development.*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Coastal tourism considers the biotic and abiotic surroundings and considers turning the natural resource into a social and economic value. A beach is an interface between sea and land so it is a preferred zone for recreational activity where the beach is the main space and the focal point for maximum tourist attraction (Houston, 2013). The tourism sector gets a boost from beaches as they provide free,

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-5903-7.ch007

open public space with social recreational activities and is a source of profit. It is stated that user satisfaction leads to more willingness to pay and hence increases the economic value of the beach (Hoyos, et al, 2009). So the volume of users, per capita spending by tourists and satisfaction of the visitors' needs guarantee the economic production of the beach (Nelson et al., 2000). Other than coastal legislation beaches lacked any proper planning or development. The quality of the beach is usually known by its safety, accessibility, hygiene, services, and the infrastructure it provides. The concepts include sustainability, ecology, and impact assessment which take into consideration the environmental quality of the beaches which has become a norm. The values related to the environment will enhance the higher quality of the tourism sector which targets the segment of the population which has a higher income promoting the local economy which provides more respect to natural resources and the ecological values of the location (Capacci et al., 2015). The beach and coastal tourism had an impact on the environment and the changes in public opinion compelled the policymakers to use the coastal resources sustainably with the development of the municipalities where the same is located (Holden, 2016). In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the goal of developing tourism can no longer be by capitalizing on sea, sun and sand but rather by introducing elements which add value to the existence of resources which have developed as a supplementary source of economic growth. Introducing elements which add value to the economic growth of a destination. To add value to the coastal area is the ecolabel recognition and sustainability management which attracts special tourists to the location. Adopting some kind of ecolabel began in Europe in 1985 to provide economic, social and environmental benefits to a country which later spread globally (Font, 2002) and Blue Flag is best recognized (Blackman et al., 2014). The Blue Flag, ISO 14001, Eco-Management and Audit Schemes (EMAS) along with various other national accreditations are tools available to local agents for managing and testing the beaches for quality assurance parameters to promote tourism and attain sustainable goals (Nahman & Rigby, 2008). For knowing about tourism destinations, the role of social media has gained enormous significance and has almost been indispensable for the information and communication it provides to tourists. The social media sites have now transformed into web-based platforms which can interact, share and exchange ideas online (Javed et al., 2020). The information on these sites influences people's daily lives, including tourism, with travel decisions influenced by social media (Khan et al., 2022). Though it is widely acknowledged that Blue Flag accreditation provides significant importance to the tourism industry but the benefit obtained at the destination is scarce (Bucar et al., 2022). Considering it the chapter aims to understand the role of social media platforms in understanding how Blue Flag beaches are sustainable and promote tourism especially in developing countries like India. The main objective is to identify the various image components of the Blue Flag

14 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: [www.igi-global.com/chapter/is-a-blue-flag-beach-sustainable/352360](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/is-a-blue-flag-beach-sustainable/352360)

## Related Content

---

### How to Ensure Sustainable Development of Agribusiness in the Conditions of Trade Integration: Russian Approach

Vasily Erokhinand Anna Ivolga (2012). *International Journal of Sustainable Economies Management* (pp. 12-23).

[www.irma-international.org/article/ensure-sustainable-development-agribusiness-conditions/67109](http://www.irma-international.org/article/ensure-sustainable-development-agribusiness-conditions/67109)

### Bleisure Tourism and the Impact of Technology: The New Trends in Business Tourism

Paola Piccirillo (2025). *Smart Travel and Sustainable Innovations in Bleisure Tourism* (pp. 45-60).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/bleisure-tourism-and-the-impact-of-technology/358961](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/bleisure-tourism-and-the-impact-of-technology/358961)

### AI Governance for Sustainable Development: Lessons for Malaysia From the EU AI Act

Shu Ning Yap (2026). *Integrating Legal Compliance With Sustainable Development Goals* (pp. 327-354).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/ai-governance-for-sustainable-development/385111](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/ai-governance-for-sustainable-development/385111)

### Analysis of Harvesting Sustainability: A Study on the Indian Agrisector

Suchismita Satapathy (2022). *Research Anthology on Strategies for Achieving Agricultural Sustainability* (pp. 971-980).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/analysis-of-harvesting-sustainability/299295](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/analysis-of-harvesting-sustainability/299295)

### A Proposed Validation Method for a Benchmarking Methodology

Tudorica Bogdan George (2014). *International Journal of Sustainable Economies Management* (pp. 1-10).

[www.irma-international.org/article/a-proposed-validation-method-for-a-benchmarking-methodology/124933](http://www.irma-international.org/article/a-proposed-validation-method-for-a-benchmarking-methodology/124933)