



Government of Jammu & Kashmir
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, SONAMARG

Email: sdaofficial@yahoo.com

The Hon'ble National Green Tribunal
Principal Bench, New Delhi

Sub: News Item titled "Plastic Pollution poses threat to Kashmir's Great Lakes trek" appearing in the Rising Kashmir dated 09-08-2024.

Sir/Madam,

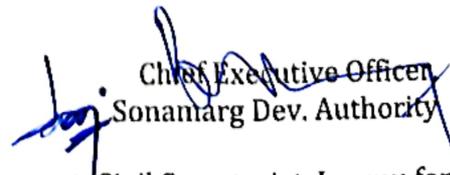
With reference to the notice issued by the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, New Delhi, regarding plastic pollution posing a threat to the Kashmir Great Lakes, this Authority as a respondent No. 8, respectfully submits the following response:

1. **Ban on Single-Use Plastic:** Multiple public notices and advisories have been issued to all stakeholders, including tourists, hoteliers, vendors, and local residents, strictly prohibiting the use of single-use plastic in the Sonamarg area.
2. **Manual Sanitation and Waste Disposal:** All sanitation activities in the Sonamarg estate are carried out manually. Collected waste is scientifically treated and disposed of at the Sarbal Solid Waste Management Plant, which has been fully operational since 2023.
3. **Regular Clean-Up Drives and Awareness Campaigns:** Regular clean-up drives and 'No Polythene' campaigns are organized in collaboration with line departments, NGOs, and local volunteers to raise awareness about the harmful impacts of plastic pollution and to promote sustainable tourism."
4. **Waste Management at Trekking Routes and Camps:** The Great Lakes namely Vishansar, Kishansar, Gadsar, Gangbal, etc are located in rugged terrain at high altitudes, approximately 7 to 8 hours of trekking distance from tourist destination Sonamarg, making daily sanitation practically unfeasible. Despite the logistical challenges this Authority in collaboration with the Tourism Department and local volunteers conducts special sanitation drives every year.
 - Collected waste from these treks is manually transported back to Sonamarg and then to the Sarbal waste management facility for scientific disposal.
 - Waste bins have been installed at key public points, including base camps at Shutkadi, Thajiwas, and Lashpathri routes to facilitate proper waste collection.

This Authority is fully committed to the protection and preservation of the environment and natural heritage of the region and has taken continuous and effective measures to ensure strict compliance with the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Further, Sonamarg Development Authority, staff and field teams remain vigilant, especially during peak tourist seasons, to prevent any littering or unauthorized use of plastic.

Yours faithfully

No!-CEO/SDA/2025/656-57
DA :- 24-5-2025


Chief Executive Officer
Sonamarg Dev. Authority

Copy to the:

1. Commissioner Secretary to Govt. Tourism Department, Civil Secretariat, Jammu for favour of information.