



## BLUE FLAG BEACH - GEOGRAPHY

**NEWS:** *In January 2025, Kappad Beach in Kozhikode and Chal Beach in Kannur, both located in Kerala, received the prestigious **Blue Flag certification** from the **Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)**, Denmark.*

### WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

- a. This certification recognizes these beaches for meeting high international standards related to **environmental management, water quality, eco-friendly practices, tourist safety, and sustainability**.
- b. The certification is a significant achievement for Kerala, highlighting its focus on **environmental conservation and sustainable tourism**.

### India's First Blue Flag Beach: Chandrabhaga Beach (Odisha)

1. India's **first** Blue Flag certified beach was **Chandrabhaga Beach**, located in **Odisha**.
  - a. This certification set a **precedent** for other Indian beaches, encouraging them to adopt **eco-friendly practices and responsible tourism**.

Kerala's recent achievement with **Kappad** and **Chal** beaches follows this example.

### What is Blue Flag Certification?

1. **Global Recognition:** The **Blue Flag** is an eco-label given to beaches, marinas, and boating operators that meet **33 strict criteria** set by FEE. The criteria focus on four main areas:
  1. **Water Quality:** Ensuring that the water at the beach meets environmental standards.
  2. **Environmental Education and Information:** Educating the public about sustainability and environmental issues.
  3. **Environmental Management:** Implementing practices to protect the environment, manage waste, and conserve resources.
  4. **Safety and Services:** Making sure the beaches are safe, clean, and provide necessary amenities for tourists.

### Benefits to Kerala's Tourism

1. **Global Appeal:** The Blue Flag certification increases Kerala's attractiveness to **eco-conscious travelers** who care about sustainability.
  - a. It also highlights Kerala's commitment to **Responsible Tourism (RT)**, where eco-friendly initiatives at **Kappad** and **Chal** beaches set examples of how tourism and environmental conservation can go hand in hand.
2. These beaches now serve as **models** for other tourist destinations, showing how to create a balance between **tourism and environmental protection**.

### Sustainable Practices at Kappad and Chal Beaches

1. **Eco-friendly Practices:** Both beaches have implemented practices to protect the environment, including:



- a. Maintaining a **clean environment**.
  - b. Using **renewable energy** sources.
  - c. Encouraging **waste segregation**.
  - d. Protecting the **local ecosystem**.
2. **Infrastructure**: The beaches have installed eco-friendly features such as:
- a. **Solar-powered lights**.
  - b. **Water conservation systems**.
3. **Safety Measures**: The beaches also focus on **tourist safety**, providing:
- a. **Lifeguards**.
  - b. **First-aid services**.
  - c. **Emergency response plans**.



## Kerala's Commitment to Sustainable Tourism

1. Kerala has been a strong supporter of **eco-tourism**, and the Blue Flag certification reinforces its reputation as a state that prioritizes protecting its **natural resources**.
2. This certification is seen as a major step for Kerala toward becoming a **global leader in sustainable tourism** while preserving the beauty of its beaches and landscapes.

## About the Blue Flag Program

1. **Established**: The Blue Flag program began in **1985** in **France**. Its goal is to promote **sustainable development** in coastal areas and inland waterways.



2. **Expansion:** The program expanded internationally in **2001**, and now includes beaches, marinas, and sustainable tourism boats in over **40 countries**.
3. The certification helps protect the **natural beauty** of beaches and educates visitors about the importance of **sustainability** and **environmental responsibility**.

## Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)

- It was awarded a globally recognized eco-label - the Blue Flag certification.
- FEE ensures that the high standards of Blue Flag certification are consistently maintained worldwide.
- A series of strict environmental, educational, safety, and access criteria must be met and maintained to receive this prestigious award.
- Blue Flag's mission is to promote sustainability in tourism through environmental education, environmental protection, and other sustainable development practices.
- It promotes environmental education and sustainable management of beaches, ports, and vessel operators worldwide.

**Source:** <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/kappd-chal-beaches-get-global-blue-flag-certification/article69081536.ece>

