



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sri Lanka's Tourism Revival: Big Five Tours & Expeditions Leading the Way
Seagrass restoration initiative supports the destination's sustainable tourism plans and contributes to the country's recovery from the edge of economic collapse

August 6, 2024, Stuart, FL – [Big Five Tours & Expeditions](#) (Big Five), a distinguished member of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and leader in sustainable and adventure travel today announced [new programs](#) in Sri Lanka aimed at supporting the country's emergence from the brink of economic collapse. Through initiatives that blend ecological restoration with immersive cultural experiences, Big Five is leading the way to help drive the country's tourism sector forward building on the decades long track record of operating in the region.

Big Five is proud to support Sri Lanka's seagrass restoration project in Kalpitiya. This initiative allows guests to engage directly in environmental conservation in remote communities by re-planting seagrass, which is crucial for maintaining healthy marine ecosystems. Each square meter (approx. 10.5 square feet) of seagrass planted can produce 10 liters (approx. 2.5 gallons) of oxygen daily through photosynthesis, act as a natural filter and protect shorelines from erosion during storms. This seasonal hands-on experience not only benefits the environment, but also provides a unique and rewarding experience for visitors traveling to Sri Lanka from October to March (though Big Five contributes to this initiative year-round through its Sri Lanka programs).

Sri Lanka's tourism sector is a vital component of its economy. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) Economic Impact Report 2023, tourism contributed 12.6% to Sri Lanka's GDP in 2019. Despite the setbacks caused by the pandemic, this figure has rebounded to just over 9% in 2023, demonstrating the resilience and potential of the tourism industry in driving economic recovery.

"Sri Lanka is a case study in the power of tourism. I had the pleasure of meeting the Sri Lankan ambassador to the United States. His story and the commitment to socially responsible tourism is a model for others to follow," said Ashish Sanghrajka. "We spoke at length about where Sri Lanka was, just a few years ago, vs. today, and the progress made. Through our track record of 50+ years at Big Five, I have always believed the magic number in terms of tourism as a percentage of GDP is 10. At that level, there are direct correlations to stability, economically and politically and Sri Lanka is proof of it."

In addition to Big Five's environmental efforts in Sri Lanka's remote communities, the company is also dedicated to showcasing Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage through exclusive local experiences like Manja music and Balangoda Batik Art:

- **Manja – The Music of the Kaffir:** Programs offer an intimate look into the musical traditions of the Sri Lanka Kaffirs, a community of African descent Sri Lankans, located in Puttalam. Guests can enjoy the vibrant Manja music, preserved since the colonial period, away from the typical

tourist paths.

- **Batik Art – Balangoda Hill Country:** Big Five also provides travelers exclusive access to the ancient craft of block print and Batik making in Balangoda. This region is not only historically significant for the discovery of the first modern Homo sapien remains but is also home to artisans who have preserved these traditional art techniques for centuries.

[Click here](#) for the company's Sri Lanka itineraries and for more information on Big Five's sustainable tourism initiatives and their commitment to the destinations they operate in, please visit www.bigfive.com.

Images:

- [Manja Music](#)
- [Balangoda Batiks](#)
- [Seagrass Restoration](#)

(Image Credit: Big Five Tours & Expeditions)

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About Big Five Tours & Expeditions

Founded in Kenya in 1973 by the late Mahen Sanghrajka, Big Five Tours & Expeditions is renowned for customized, luxury adventure travel to 44 destinations worldwide. Big Five has been recognized by the travel industry for its sustainable tourism commitment and recently gained regional member designation to the WTTC allowing the brand to further expand its impact on a global scale by supporting SMEs around the world. For more information about Big Five's customized journeys, visit bigfive.com.