

MOUNTAINS LAKE & LIFE



VAITARNA HIGHLANDS

A place
where

life



knows
no bounds

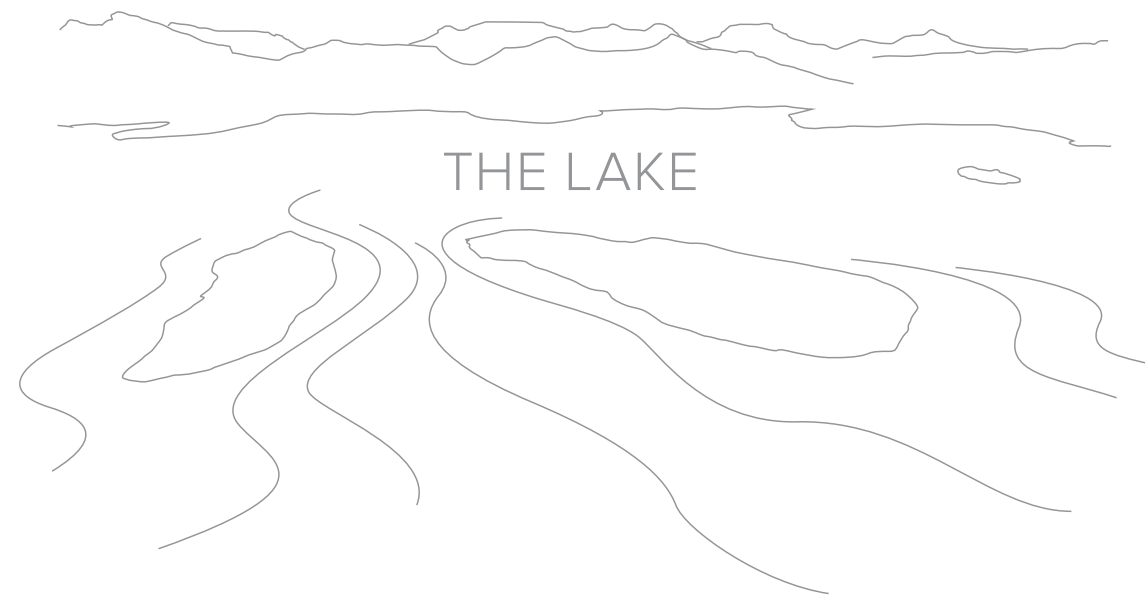
VAITARNA HIGHLANDS

Vast, surreal and greener than imagined, the land of Vaitarna Highlands is a sanctuary for life ever-known. Creating a beautiful mosaic of mountains, lake and life, this place is a siren call back to the basic beauty of nature. Here every action is taken with a bias towards the environment and delightful discoveries and pleasant surprises await you at every turn. If nature was a theatrical experience, we'd say we are reserving the front row seats for you.

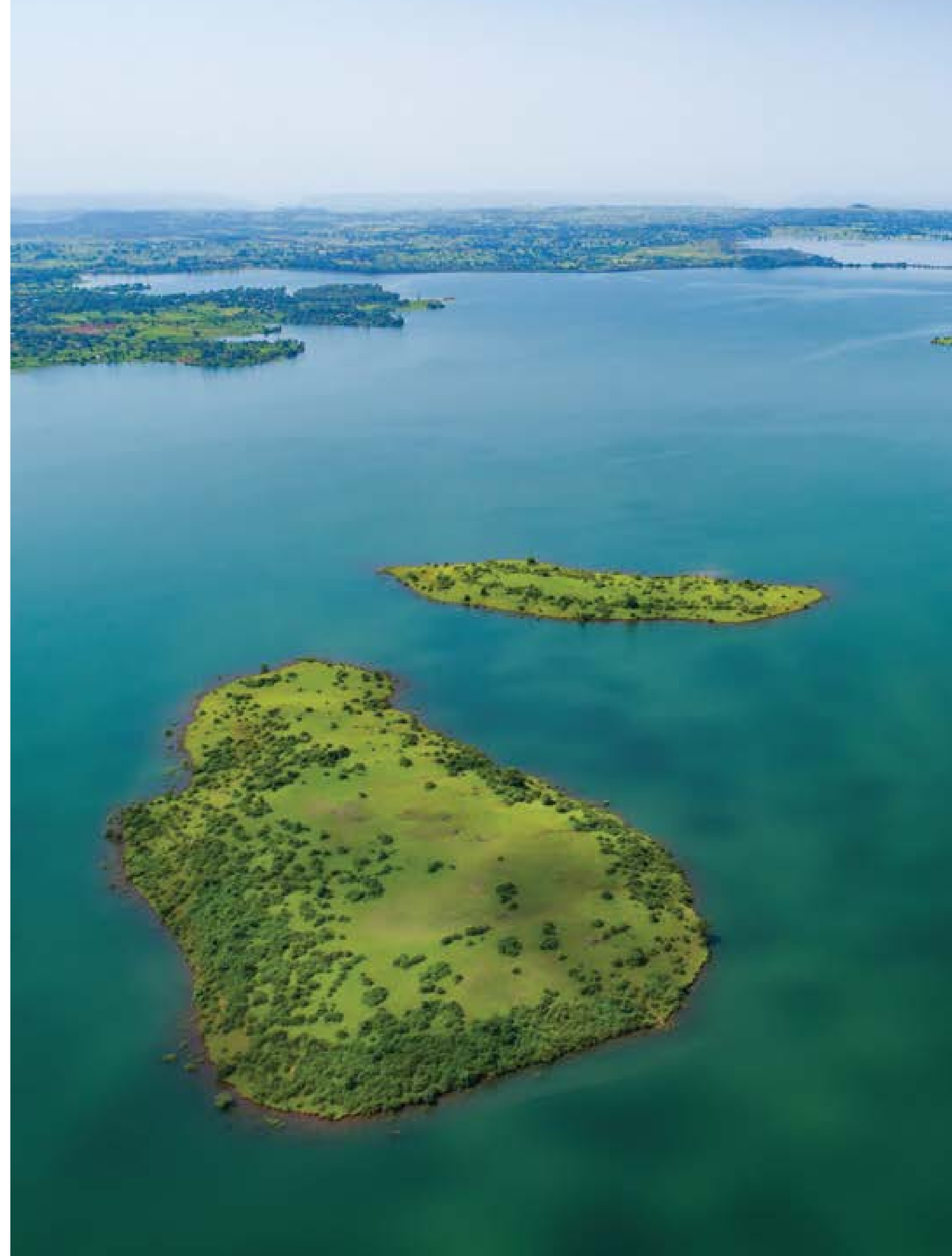




At Vaitarna Highlands, the most evident aspects are the vast and lucid lake – the mighty and revered mountains – and the innumerable life around it. Together, these elements of nature hint at invincible energy, reminding us who is really in charge.



Vaitarna Lake is a lovely lagoon with a vast extension of backwaters. It is a significant water resource that not only nourishes all forms of plants and animals but also provides drinking water to a majority of Mumbai region.





The glistening waters brim with life

Vaitarna Lake is blessed with abundant aquatic life. Majestic birds swoop about, diving into the water to fish. Even the soil at the basin is composed of disintegrated basalt which proves to be a fertile ground for growing cereals and pulses.



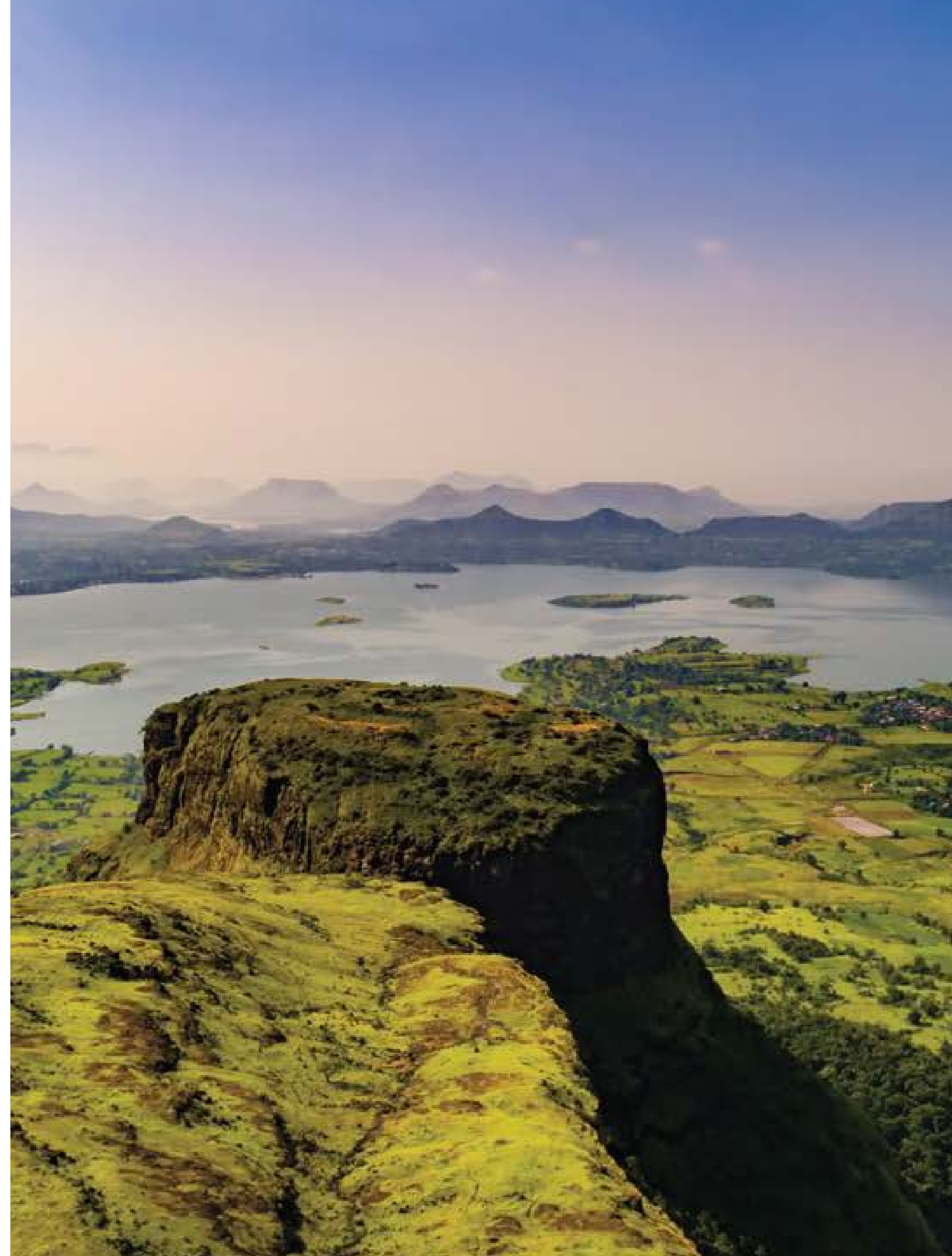


Hemmed by lush greenery on all sides, the stunning lake is a popular offbeat destination.



THE MOUNTAINS

One of the world's ten hottest biodiversity hotspots, these mountains are home to flowering plants, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, insects and bird species. On average, the mountains scale up to 1200m and have been protecting the western coast region of India since ages. This mountain range is important from the point of view of weather, environment, defence & tourism.





Discover
the magic of these
skyscraping peaks



**The
drum
mountain**
is nature's way
of giving
a landmark

Monsoon awakes the long-time sleeping mountains with beautiful flowers, waterfalls, water bodies, green valley and best natural scenery. Enjoy the surreal experience of walking among the clouds in the monsoons.

The whole area is a place of preference for solitude and art and has been patted down by the feet of thousands of visitors who have been visiting for centuries. The varying difficulty levels attract all types of adventurers who come to enjoy the sheer beauty of it all. Discover superlative views that keep changing with the weather evoking different moods.





The stunning views
will stop you in your tracks.

We owe it to the future generations to protect the natural heritage around.

Natives are not just humans but also the plants and animals that have been living and thriving around for years in this place. There is great diversity within them just as there is in the larger society. Their lives are inseparable from the natural world. They interact with each other, they interact with the environment and they also depend on each other. The better the ecosystem is maintained in all of their abundance and diversity, the better is the habitat for all life on this Earth, and the greater are the number of ecological choices for the future.

THE NATIVES



Close to Vaitarna Highlands, civilization has flourished in tiny pockets. Life here begins and ends every day in a rhythmic manner. There is innocence in their ways, their outlook towards life and their old-fashioned hospitality. Still far away from the modern world, these villages have strong cultural practices and are simply proud of their heritage.







At first interaction their kind nature and warm smiles make you feel welcomed. Being close-knit, people respect and love each other. The children also have very energetic and lively childhoods as they engage in outdoor activities and play with things that nature has gifted them.





Even without much access to modern amenities they find their happiness in community rituals and village activities.



Houses savour the rustic life

The village folks lead a simple lifestyle and the same can be seen in their approach to work and life. Their homes are made of bamboo, mud and thatched roofs and they extend to courtyards, cattle enclosures, and thatched kitchen areas. The walls and flooring are mostly painted with a mixture of dirt and cow dung.







Meals are slow-cooked on the chul. The flame is not too harsh and so the nutrients and moisture remain intact. Everything has a smoky flavour that naturally enhances the overall food experience.



Edible wild plants are relished as vegetables

Available free in the wild, these veggies are a part of their diet. All of these vegetables are cooked in a local style by using local spices and ingredients.





Food is simple and nourishing

They eat tasty authentic meals made of produce that is homegrown or sourced locally. Their staple food consists of rice, lentils and vegetables which have warm flavours and aromas and is savoured with bhakris straight off the fire.





Farming
is not just a job,
it's a way of life







They work hard in traditional ways, mainly by hand and take pride in their produce which they eat and sell.





Carrying the produce on their heads the village women go to the market to sell their produce.



A close-up photograph of a person's hands cupping water from a waterfall. The water is clear and cascading over dark, wet rocks. The person's skin is wet and glistening. The background is dark and out of focus, emphasizing the water and hands.

The water
here has
healing
properties



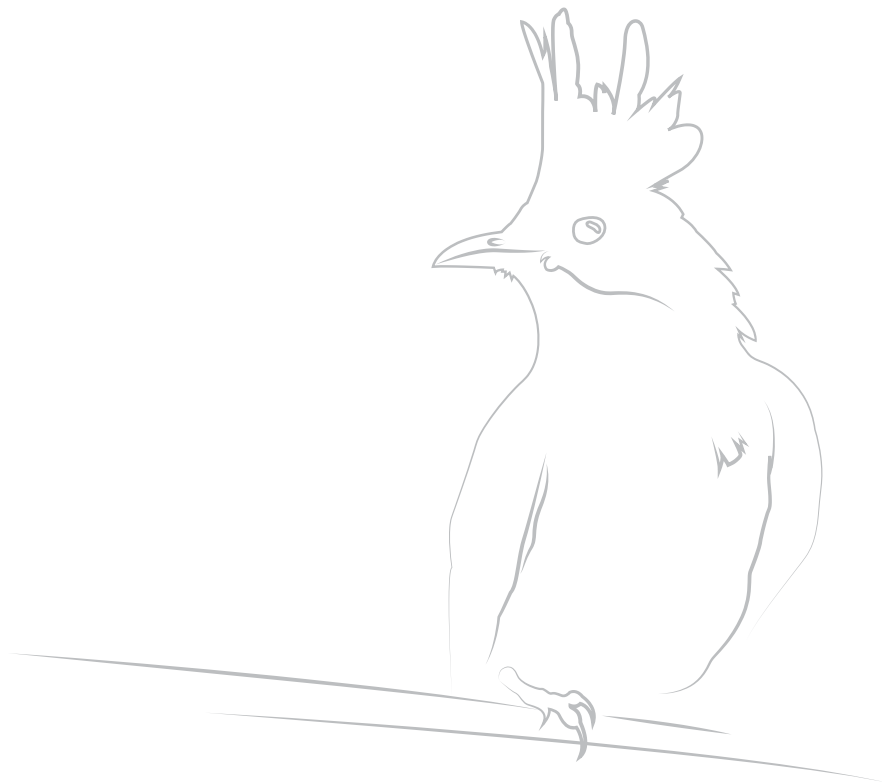
Nature

acts in ways unknown to man

The water flowing through the natural streams from the mountains is known to have medicinal properties.

It is known to cure Whooping Cough or Dangya Khokla which causes repeated coughing bouts.

FLORA AND FAUNA



Nowhere displays a better definition of the term 'Biodiversity' than the fertile lands of Vaitarna Highlands. Vaitarna boasts of its copious wildlife. The astounding variety of fauna that seeks refuge here flocks around the site not just at dusk and dawn but throughout the day.







Everyday nature thrives beyond the sight and sound of human intervention, sprouting, soaring and surviving.

These mighty wings have long-ruled the mountains

In the surrounding mountains, live the mighty Indian vultures, a critically endangered species. These birds are an important part of our food chain. They feed on animal carcasses, preventing the spread of deadly bacteria and fungus in the ground and water. The best way to spot their homes is to look for white colour hollows in the mountain. Interestingly, the white colour is nothing, but their excreta dropped at the entrance.





Ecosystem and the biodiversity it contains are the earth's life support system. The insects, bees, butterflies, trees and wildlife are all cohesive part of our being. No single life form can live in isolation. If we lose even one or two species from the food chain, the ecosystem can behave in radical ways.



All life depends on plants

Plants support the pollinators of our food crops, filter contaminants from water, and absorb carbon in the air. Without it, we wouldn't be able to survive.



Every species of plants and animals, however humble in appearance, is a masterpiece of evolution.





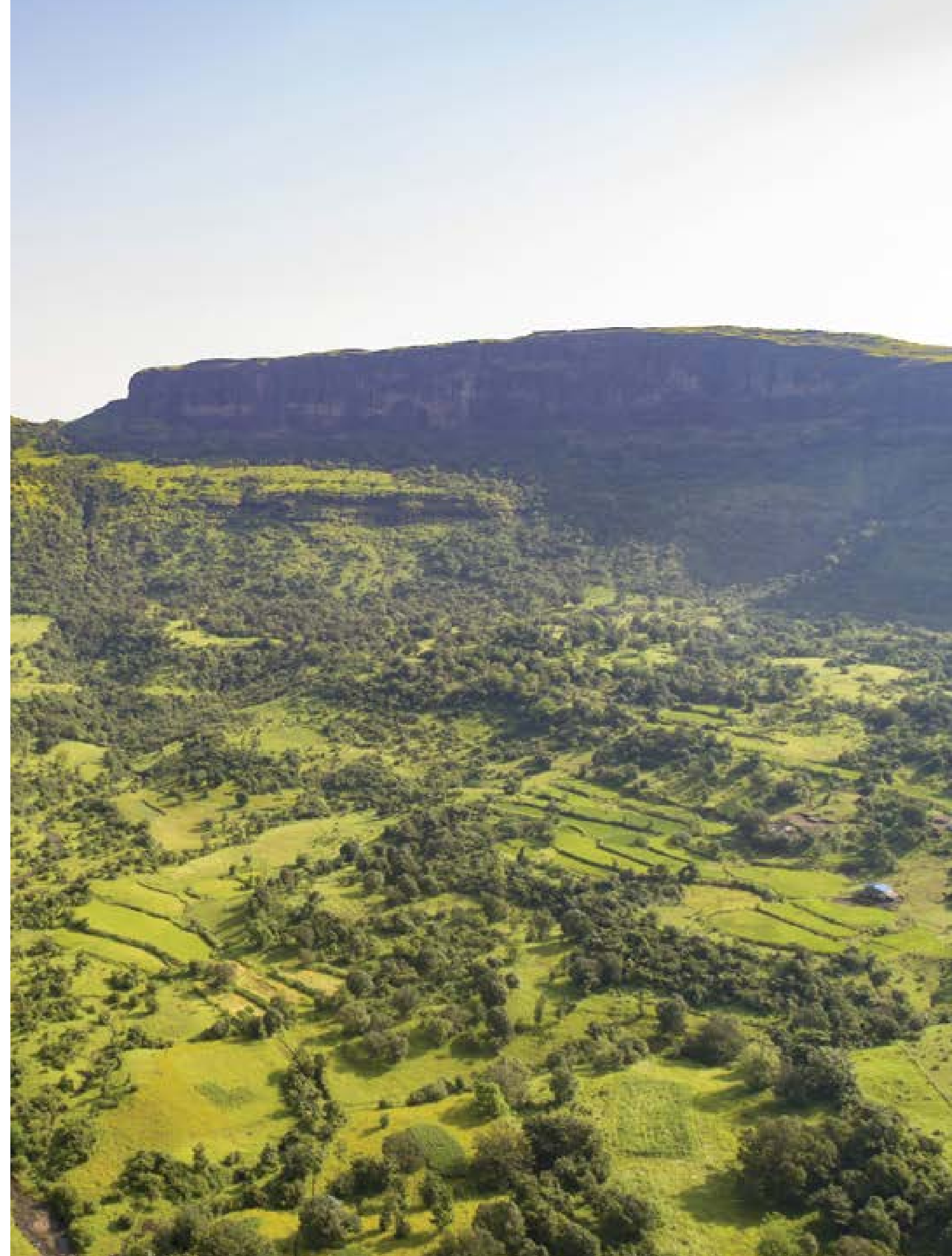
Nature puts up a light spectacle in the summers

Fireflies make summer magical. These bioluminescent beauties belong to the family of beetles and are intriguing bugs that light up at night. Numerous waterfalls and misty weather around Vaitarna Highlands is just what fireflies need. As it turns dark, one can spot fleeting flashes of individual fireflies that blink like fairy lights.

The fascinating story behind these twinkling insects is that it glints brightly to woo the lady fireflies. Each male firefly has its unique lighting pattern that is used to send mating signals. The females observe the lighting pattern and when they decide on a suitor they reciprocate the lighting pattern. Many researchers speculate that there are over 2000 lighting patterns, but a human eye might find it hard to tell the difference. However, what one can really witness is the phenomenon of hundreds of fireflies lighting up the forest for a tropical Christmas. Join the locals to experience the magic of nature by trekking to the region's peak point. The surreal experience is the primal pulse of nature at its best and rawest.



There are a lot of great things about living in a city, but access to nature isn't always one of them. As one gets buried with mundane activities of city life, people often forget who they are and where they belong. The true luxury of life is rooted in nature. Being in the beautiful and untainted setting that has the privilege of fresh air, pure water, natural greenery and abundant sunlight is the idea of luxury, we all need to align to.





Sometimes we don't realize the importance of something until we lose it

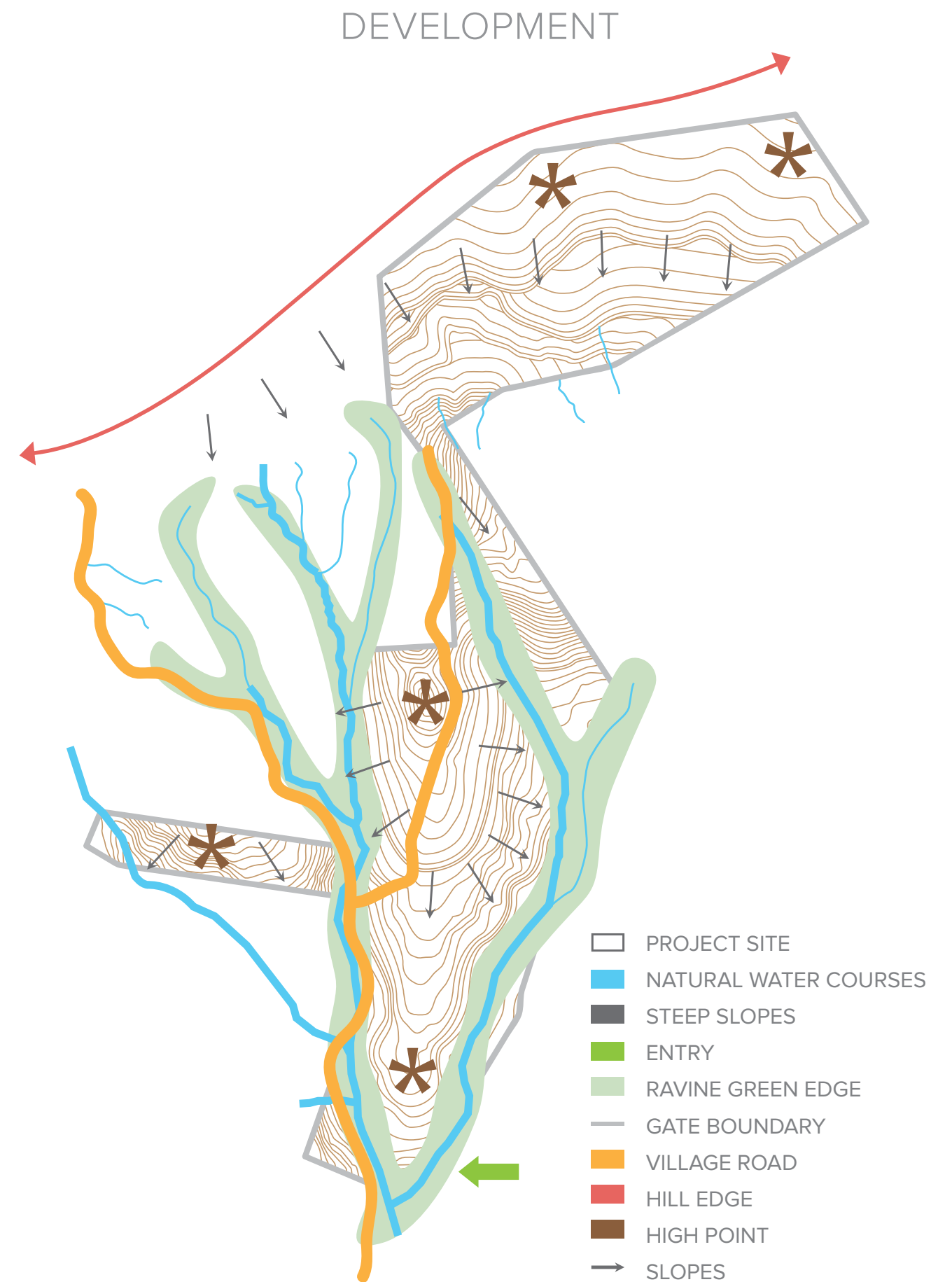
The locals have been using the land at Vaitarna Highlands since centuries. Slopes have been cultivated, grazed, pruned and set on fire for various purposes. We intend to create a healthy community here by recreating the natural ecosystem and taking back the land to its original state.

Setting out on
a journey
towards creating a
self-sustaining
lifestyle



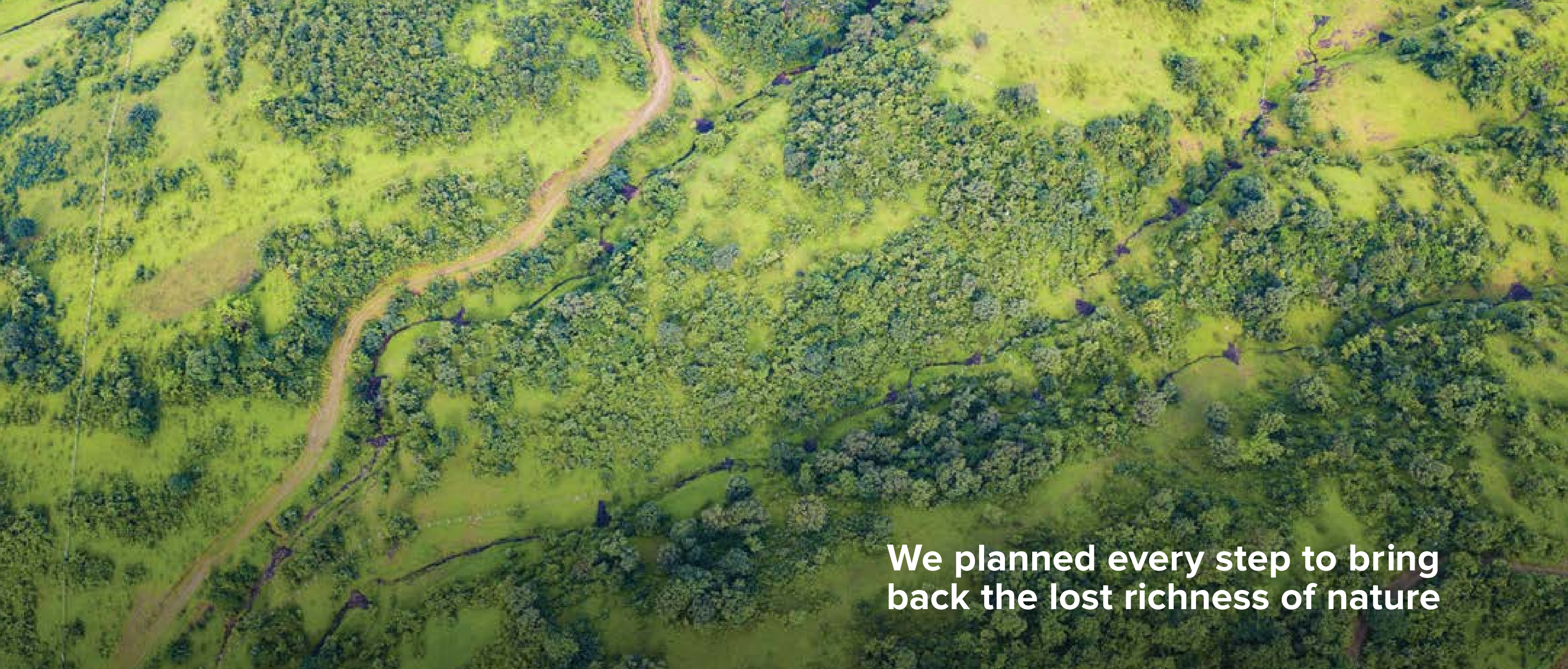
We started by putting the area into perspective

On initial investigation of the site, it was observed that the site is located on the south-facing slope with hills to the North and Vaitarna Lake to the south. The ridge lines start from Dahegaon to Kharoli and encircle the site in a crescent shape that only allows views of the Vaitarna Lake. The other interesting factor to this topography is the two watercourses passing through the site. The streams are carved by the action of water and play an important role in feeding Vaitarna Lake. The ravines along these watercourses nurture the ecologically sensitive patches of land with rich vegetation.





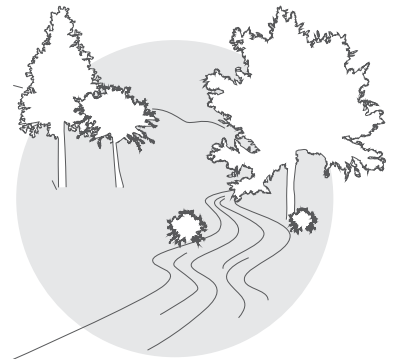
True sustainability
is about seeking balance
and seeing the connections



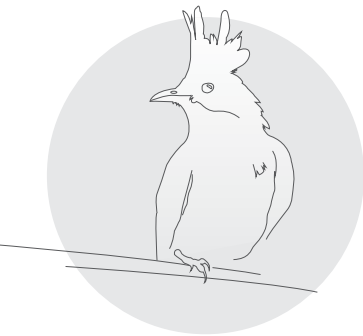
We planned every step to bring back the lost richness of nature



Planting Native Trees



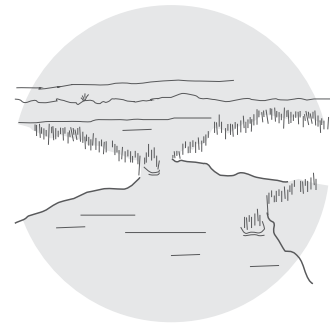
Creating Riparian Buffer



Attracting Birds & Animals




Slope Stabilization



Water Retention



Co-existence

An aerial photograph of a vast, lush green valley. The foreground is dominated by rolling hills covered in vibrant green grass and scattered trees. A network of small streams and paths winds through the landscape. In the middle ground, a large, calm lake stretches across the valley, reflecting the clear blue sky. In the background, a range of mountains with distinct peaks is visible under a bright, clear sky. The overall scene is one of natural beauty and tranquility.


Making the best of what nature has to offer

Vaitarna Highlands lies in the valley zone with a stream pattern of an inverted tree. The whole development is planned with the intent of not disturbing natural topography and features.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands planting a small green sapling into the soil. The person is wearing a grey t-shirt. The background is a blurred green forest. The text 'Painting the whole valley green' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Painting the whole valley green

We are planting new local trees and retaining existing trees wherever possible. Planting deciduous trees will provide shade to homes in summer and allow sunshine in winter. The 58% forest area on the site will help us retain rainwater and increase the groundwater.

A photograph of four squirrels perched on the branches of a tree. The squirrels have dark brown bodies and long, bushy tails with a lighter, reddish-brown tip. They are positioned at different heights and angles on the branches, some facing left and some right. The background is a dense, out-of-focus green forest, suggesting a healthy, restored ecosystem.

The success of
the restoration
can be measured with the
birds and animals that
flock here





Channelizing existing **streams** to nurture life

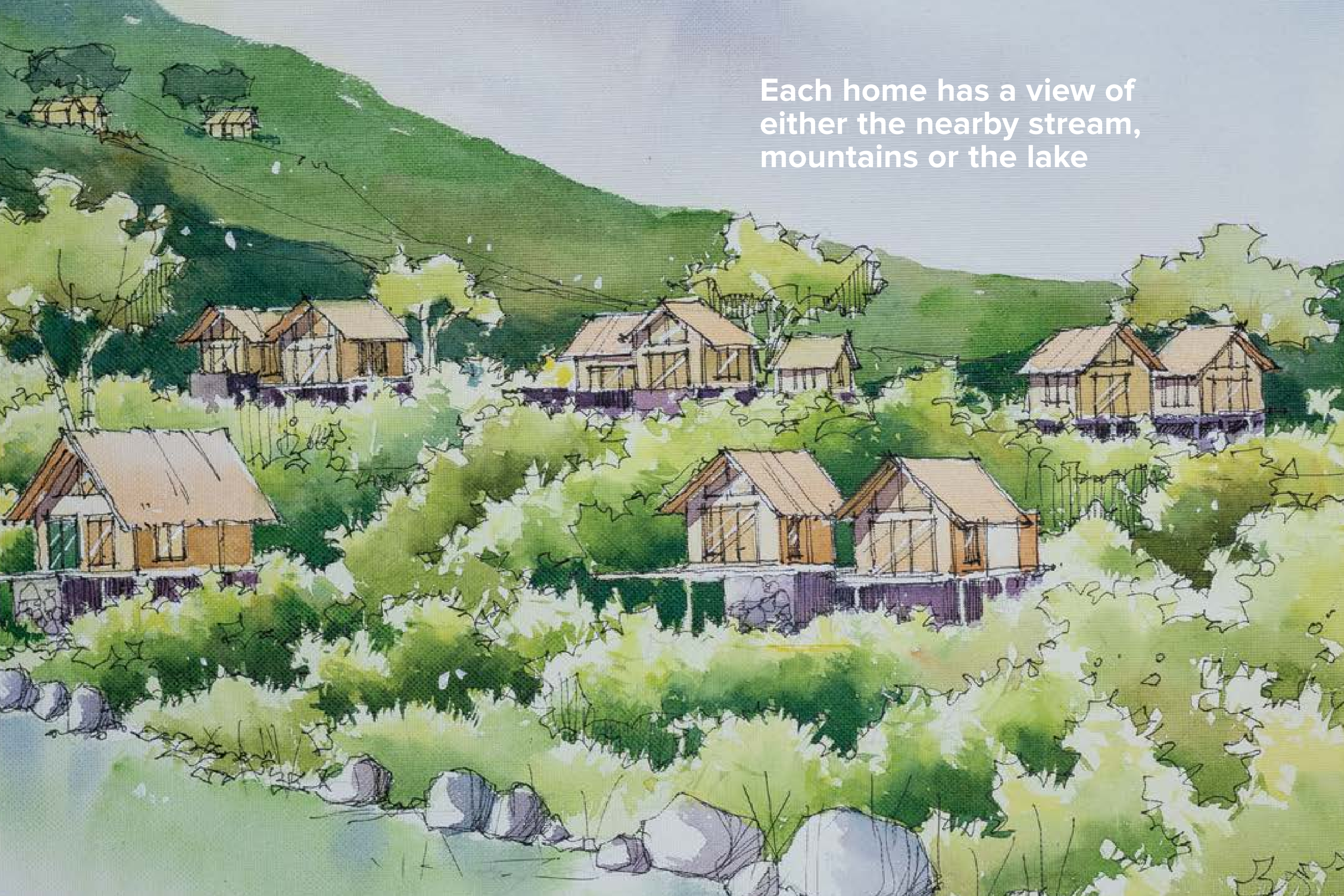
Streams are the life of the community and appropriate water management is essential. Managing stormwater, wastewater and potable water will help take care of water demands. Several bunds/check dams will minimize wastewater and create higher water-table and wetlands for nature to call home.



Making way the most natural way

There will be two types of roads here, the spine roads and secondary roads. The spine roads are planned to not disturb the natural topography of the site and the secondary roads will move aligned with the slopes orienting the homes towards the ravines or valleys.

Each home has a view of either the nearby stream, mountains or the lake





**Homes camouflage
with nature to create
a natural experience**



The Vineyard Homes
will be the first phase of
the development



The idea of adopting sustainable practices is to make sure that we replace what we have used up from nature to the best of our ability. It is a conscious choice we choose to make by changing how we do things and our homes become an active part of the cycle of life. Simple measures like using things from nature, reducing energy consumption have helped us a lot in reducing the carbon footprint. Our infrastructure is eco-sensitive with rainwater harvesting and planted gravel filtration plants for wastewater treatment. We have also laid down strict guidelines for our community that are consistent with sustainability.



Land use

- Each plot has 70% natural forest
- Trees form a natural compound
- Protect existing trees, slopes & streams
- Multiple check dams
- Recreate ecological landscape



Buildings

- Raised plinth on stilts to avoid disturbing the land
- Control on roof slopes and the material used
- A definite natural palette for materials
- Fragmented plan for a sense of openness



Practices

- Native Indigenous Plantation
- Rainwater Harvesting
- Soil Conservation
- Reed Bed System
- Vermiculture
- Renewable Energy

Nature

is a big, wonder-filled playground
waiting to engage, inspire and
entertain you



Go on
nature trails

to simply observe
nature at its best



Take a
refreshing



swim
in nature's own pool

Have an intimate contact
with nature as you go

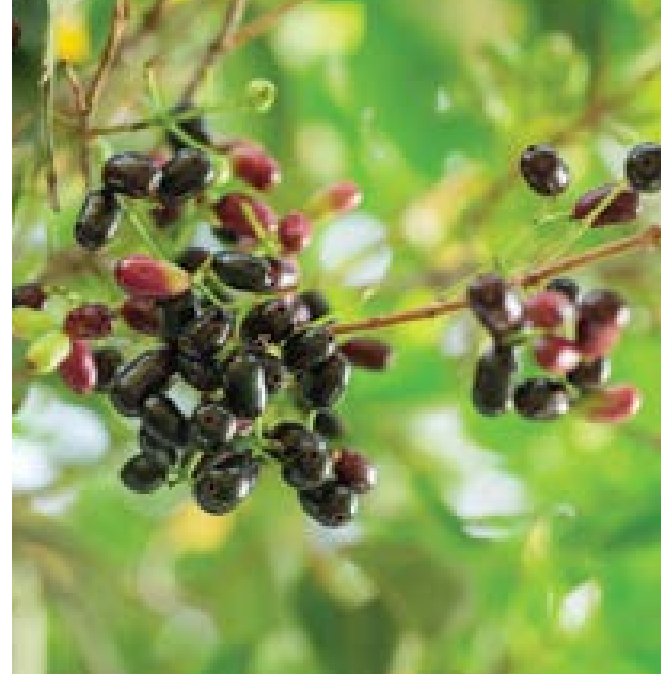
kayaking

on the lake





Discover your green
thumb as you try a hand at
**organic
farming**



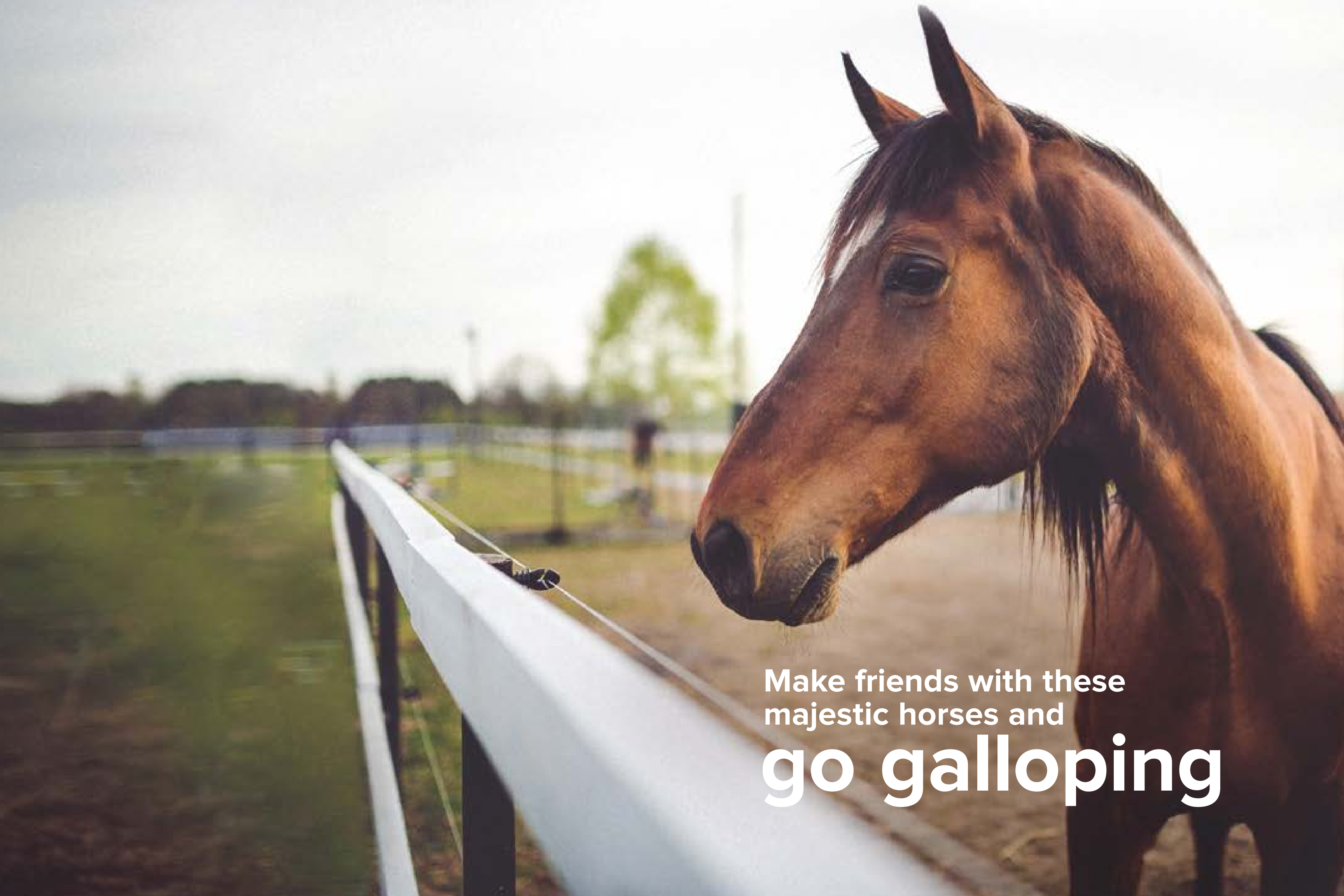
— Exercise and explore
the place on an
**eco-friendly
cycle**



Camp

under the stars
with all of nature
for company





Make friends with these
majestic horses and
go galloping

Practice
yoga
in the perfect
setting of nature





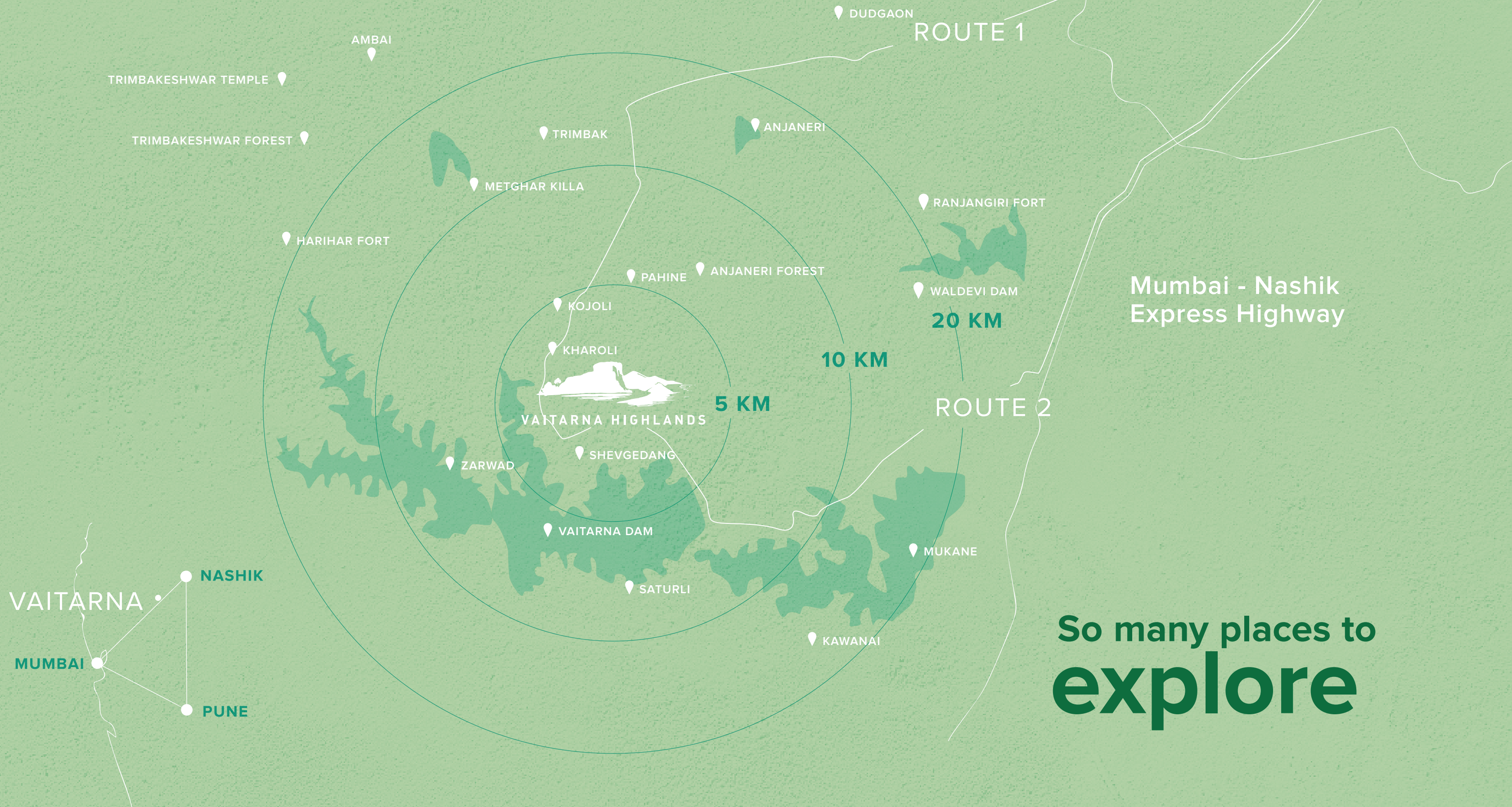
Enjoy the sight of
pretty wings fluttering
around at the
**Butterfly
Garden**



Trek

through scenic mountains
to experience
nature's wonders

Nashik, Maharashtra



Mumbai - Nashik Express Highway



So many places to explore

Come live a life **attuned to nature**

Vaitarna Highlands is built on the philosophy of being compassionate towards the planet we depend on. We want to eliminate the negatives of urbanisation and all our actions are borne out of our concern and commitment towards nature. It is all about reconnecting humanity to earth with something as simple as adopting a green lifestyle and in the process, building a community that understands the need of going back to the basics, where real luxury is in nature and nature is luxurious.





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