
Empowering Sustainability: The Role of Authorized Users in Preserving Kutch Embroidery craft of Gujarat, India

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Abstract

The charm and heritage of traditional handicrafts from rural India have consistently enchanted art and craft enthusiasts. **Kutch Embroidery**, deeply rooted in the cultural heritage of the pastoral community, inherently embodies sustainable practices that have sustained the craft for generations. The women embodies a source of creative inspiration and are renowned globally for their centuries old embroidery skills.

Kutch embroidery, is a renowned traditional craft originates from the region of Gujarat, India is a form of handicraft which is a cultural expression of the communities of the Kutch, Gujarat. Every bold stitch, motifs and glass-piece ornamentation added to the craft reflects the rituals and folklore of the specific community and also serves as evidence to recognize the creator's or wearer's identity. With Kutch Embroidery, the stories of empowerment, the beauty of hand-embroidered creations, and the vibrant essence of rural communities unfold. Recognized as a Geographical Indication (GI) tagged product since 2007, Kutch embroidery holds a special place in the handicrafts of India, with its GI registration serving as a testament to its authenticity, cultural value, and unique craftsmanship

With reference to this craft, a survey was conducted by DPIIT IPR Chair, Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) among the authorized users of Kutch embroidery in order to assess its alignment with various SDGs. The survey with authorized users of Kutch Embroidery reveals the strengths as well as areas of improvement of Kutch Embroidery achieving sustainable development goals. Based on the survey it is noted that Kutch embroidery aligns strongly with the three pillars of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - economic, social and environmental sustainability. The financial independence promotes gender equality, another SDG, by empowering women socially and economically. Kutch embroidery also contributes to building sustainable communities, as it fosters local traditions and craftsmanship that can be passed down through generations, ensuring cultural preservation while providing livelihoods. In terms of environmental impact, the craft promotes responsible consumption and production, as the products are handcrafted, often using locally sourced materials and sustainable methods. Actively using upcycling methods in the crafting process reduces waste and gives new life to materials, supporting a zero-waste approach. These products are crafted through a highly sustainable production process and are purchased with a focus on 'slow

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fashion' values.

As Kutch embroidery progresses into the future, prioritizing sustainability is essential for preserving this cultural art form. Adopting eco-friendly practices and promoting community welfare are key to ensuring its continued existence. The authorized users have actively contributed to these goals through their involvement in the craft, which not only sustains their livelihoods but also enhances the overall well-being of their communities.

Kutch embroidery is more than just an artistic expression; it is a tool for social and economic development. Through its connection to SDGs, it demonstrates the power of traditional crafts in contributing to global goals of sustainability, economic empowerment, and cultural preservation. The ongoing engagement of authorized users ensures that Kutch embroidery remains a dynamic part of Gujarat's heritage while evolving to meet contemporary sustainability standards.

Keywords: Sustainability, Kutch Embroidery, Geographical Indications, India