

# Orissa Post

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## Master plan being chalked out for Chilika lake

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, August 18:** A master plan is being chalked out to put the world-famous Chilika lake and its catchment area under the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project (ICZM) and promote responsible tourism with a sustainable approach.

The ICZM, a central government initiative, is aimed at protecting the lives and livelihood of coastal communities besides helping them to conserve natural marine and coastal resources.

The objective of the master plan is to enhance visitors' experience, develop community based eco-tourism, ensure

environmental sustainability and see that growth is based on a sustainable market positioning maintaining nature's balance.

The work of preparing the master plan has been awarded to IPE Global Private Limited following an international competitive bidding process. Chilika Development Authority (CDA) chief Ajit Patnaik said IPE Global have submitted the inception report based on their preliminary analysis.

The IPE Global, in collaboration with CDA Monday organised a workshop to facilitate interaction with all stakeholders to collect inputs to finetune the strategy for the development of the mas-

ter plan.

Culture and tourism minister Ashok Chandra Panda, who inaugurated the workshop, said the proposed master plan would provide many opportunities in tourism sector and increase the footfall.

Panda suggested that unexplored areas in the Chilika lake and its catchment areas be developed and island hopping be emphasised in the master plan. The tourism minister also suggested that the rich culture and art of four districts over which the Chilika lake is spread be included and highlighted in the master plan and that steps be initiated to protect the livelihood of the local

community.

Tourism secretary Aravind Padhee stressed on environment planning, steps to provide sustained livelihood to local community and on quality usage of the infrastructure in the master plan.

CDA chief executive A K Patnaik said the proposed master plan would show how all stakeholders could work together to achieve long-term visions for responsible and sustainable tourism. The sustainable development approach to be adopted would ensure that the natural, cultural and other resources of tourism are conserved for continuous use in future, while bringing benefits to the present society.

The IPE Global recommended the setting up of eco lodges of star categories, resorts and heritage hotels, open art and craft villages, craft and souvenir shops at tourist sites, as well as sports facilities, camping grounds and other temporary accommodation facilities for tourism.

The consultancy company has also envisaged the launch of cruise boats, house boats, open air theatres and laser shows, as well as the setting up of health farms, wellness spas and wayside public amenities at tourist site, along with an amusement park, aquarium, aqua park and beach and water sports, hot balloon rides to woo the tourists.