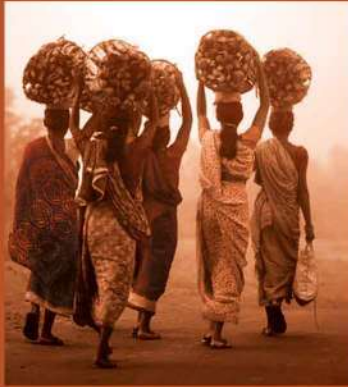




# Annual Report

## 2018-19

### Community Managed Nature Tourism in Odisha



Forest and Environment Department  
Government of Odisha





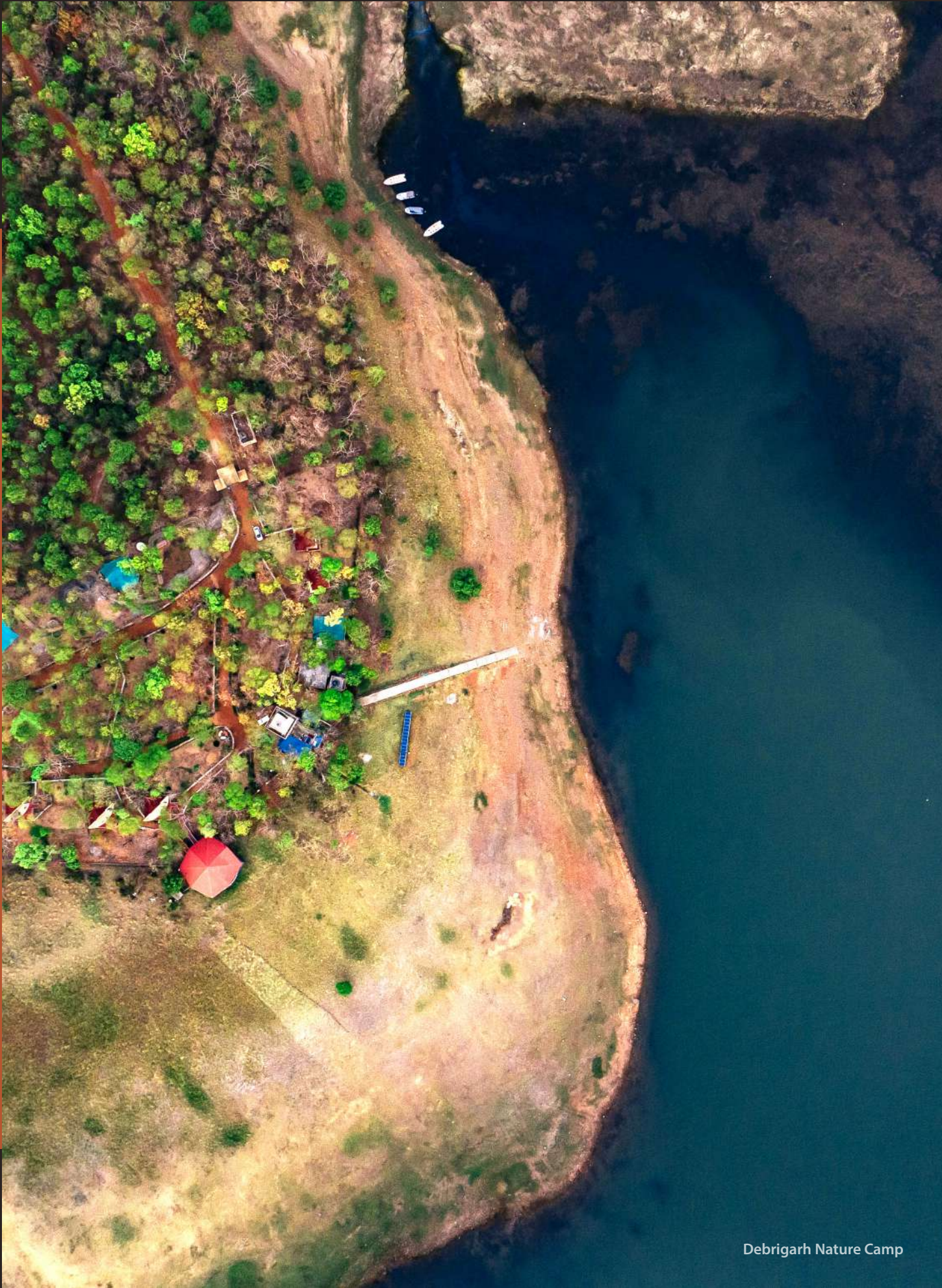




# Annual Report

## 2018-19





Debrigarh Nature Camp





**Naveen Patnaik**  
Chief Minister, Odisha

**B**eaches, mountains, wildlife and exquisite culture- Odisha is a world unique in itself. With 39% of Forest cover and 480 Kilometers long sandy beach, Odisha holds some of the fascinating ecosystems of the World. Some of the most beautiful landscapes of Eastern Ghats are well evident here.

During the last three years we have turned forty different landscapes of Odisha into successful Ecotourism destinations and have taken concrete steps to involve forest dependent communities in its management through "Community Managed Nature Tourism". Communities manage the Ecotourism hotspots offering visitors a unique experience.

I am glad that the Annual Report 2018-19 of "Ecotour Odisha" is being released by Forest & Environment Department. I believe Odisha is fast growing as a leading State in forest and wildlife management and a model in conservation through Ecotourism.

**Naveen Patnaik**









## **Shri Bikram Keshari Arukha**

Hon'ble Minister,  
Forest and Environment,  
Parliamentary Affairs, Odisha



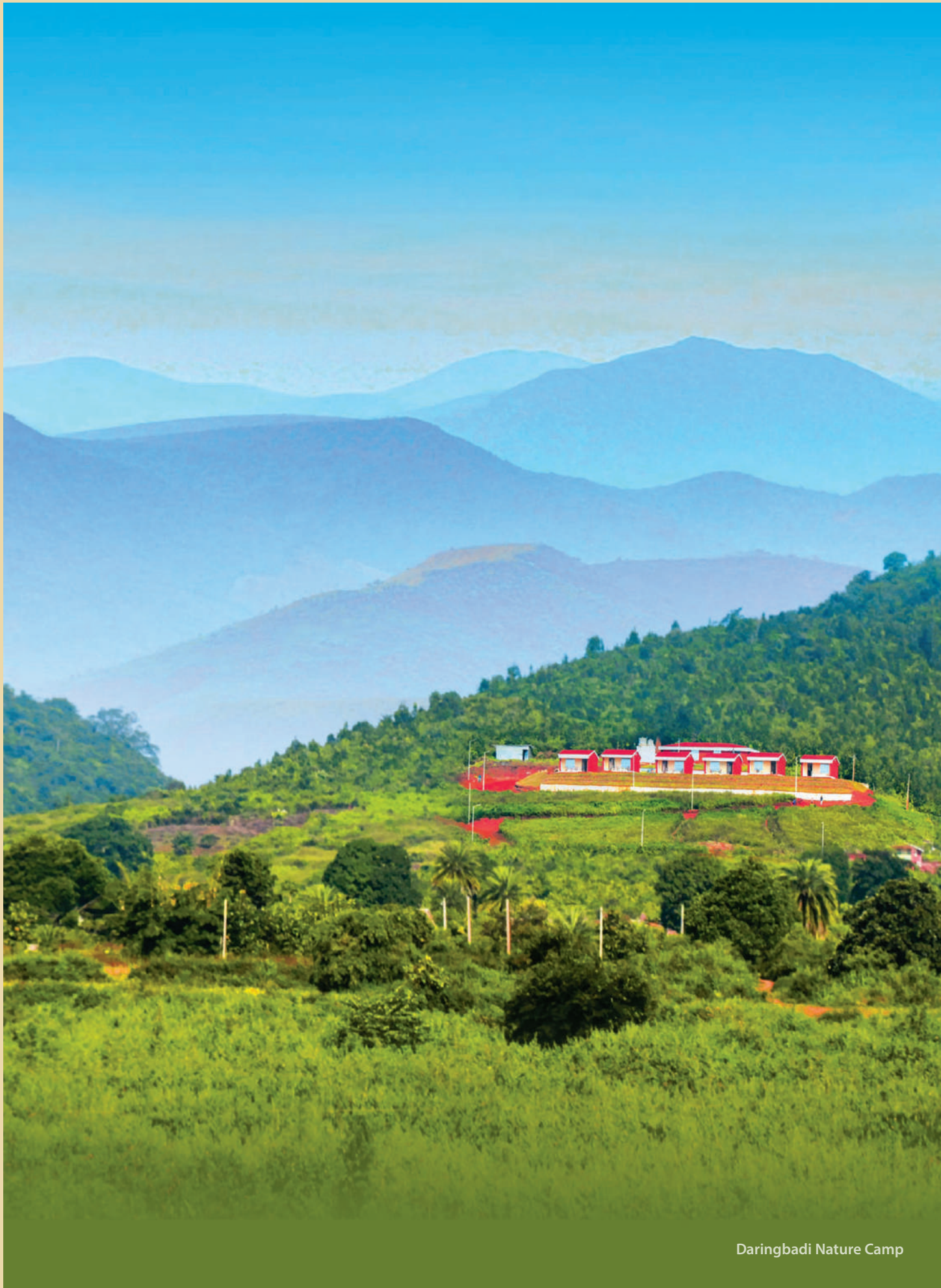
**O**disha is a state of rivers, wetlands, waterfalls, lakes, lush green forests and mangroves that shelters a wide range of flora & fauna. A day with the beautiful people of our land is worth for a life time.

I am happy to present the Annual Report 2018-19 of "Ecotour Odisha", a document providing an insight on Ecotourism in Odisha. Ecotourism has assumed much significance in recent years in our State. To ensure that Ecotourism fulfills its promise, policy makers, promoters and participants should make sure that all tourism activities have minimal environmental impact that such move is welcomed by local communities and that it promotes stable and equitable economic development. During the year 2016, Forest & Environment Department, launched a five year scheme (2016-17 to 2020-21) on Community Managed Nature Tourism. Ecotourism in due course of time has become an effective way to provide alternative livelihood to forest dependent communities, who are increasingly involving themselves in Ecotourism activities and because of team work, use of technology, transparency and commitment, some of the Ecotourism destinations have been transformed into suitable model of conservation by earning more than 1 Crore revenue last financial year, without disturbing a single flora or fauna of the landscape. I am also glad to know that last year more than 20,000 visitors from different parts of India and outside have stayed in our Nature Camps.

I am sure, Nature Tourism will attract more tourist footfalls to Odisha and will bring greater prosperity to our people in the years to come.

**Bikram Keshari Arukha**





Daringbadi Nature Camp





**Shri Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, IAS**  
Additional Chief Secretary to Government

Forest & Environment Department  
Government of Odisha



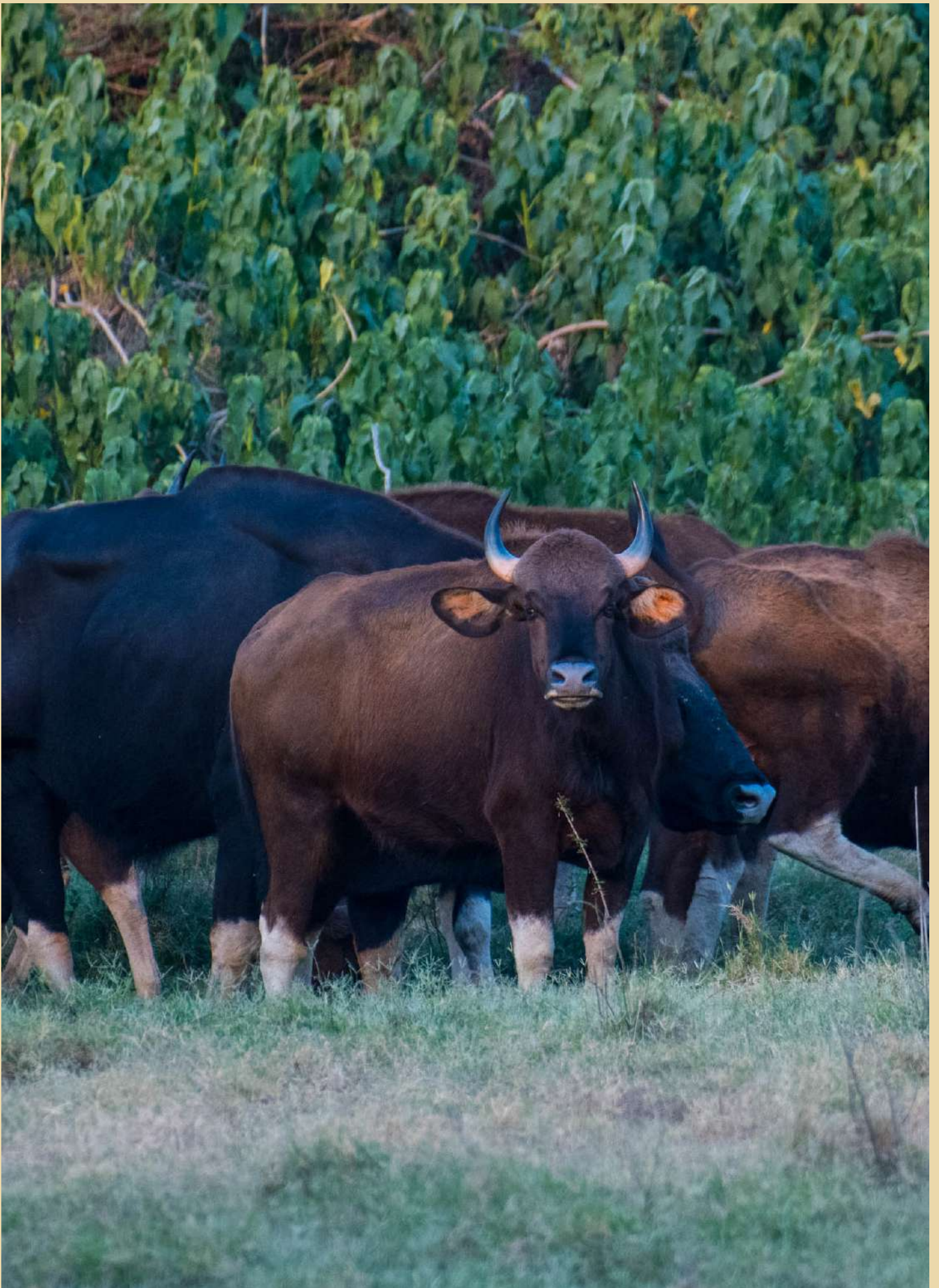
Odisha is a mosaic of nineteen Wildlife Sanctuaries, one National Park and two Tiger Reserves. It boasts of a significant population of Irrawaddy Dolphins which is highest recorded inland population in the world. Odisha is the only state in the world to have Melanistic Tigers and is also the largest wintering ground for birds in Asia. Odisha has all the three varieties of crocodiles and also takes the pride in being the largest mass nesting site for Olive Ridelys in the world. It is the only state in India to record drastic increase in forest cover in recent years including Mangrove forests.

Of the total population of Odisha, around 83 percent live in the villages and their role in conserving the natural resources of State is pivotal. In the year 2016, we initiated "Community Managed Nature Tourism" model of Ecotourism in which Villagers are the stakeholders. Forty Nature Camps with all modern amenities are dotted in different landscapes of the State reflecting different flavors of nature.

The Annual Report 2018-19 of "Ecotour Odisha" portrays all details of our initiatives & achievements. I am confident that in future years, Odisha will emerge as a leader with Ecotourism as an engine of growth with greater efforts on Forest & Wildlife Conservation through Community participation.

**Suresh Chandra Mahapatra**









**Dr. Ajay Kumar Mahapatra, IFS**

PCCF (WL) & CWLW,  
Government of Odisha

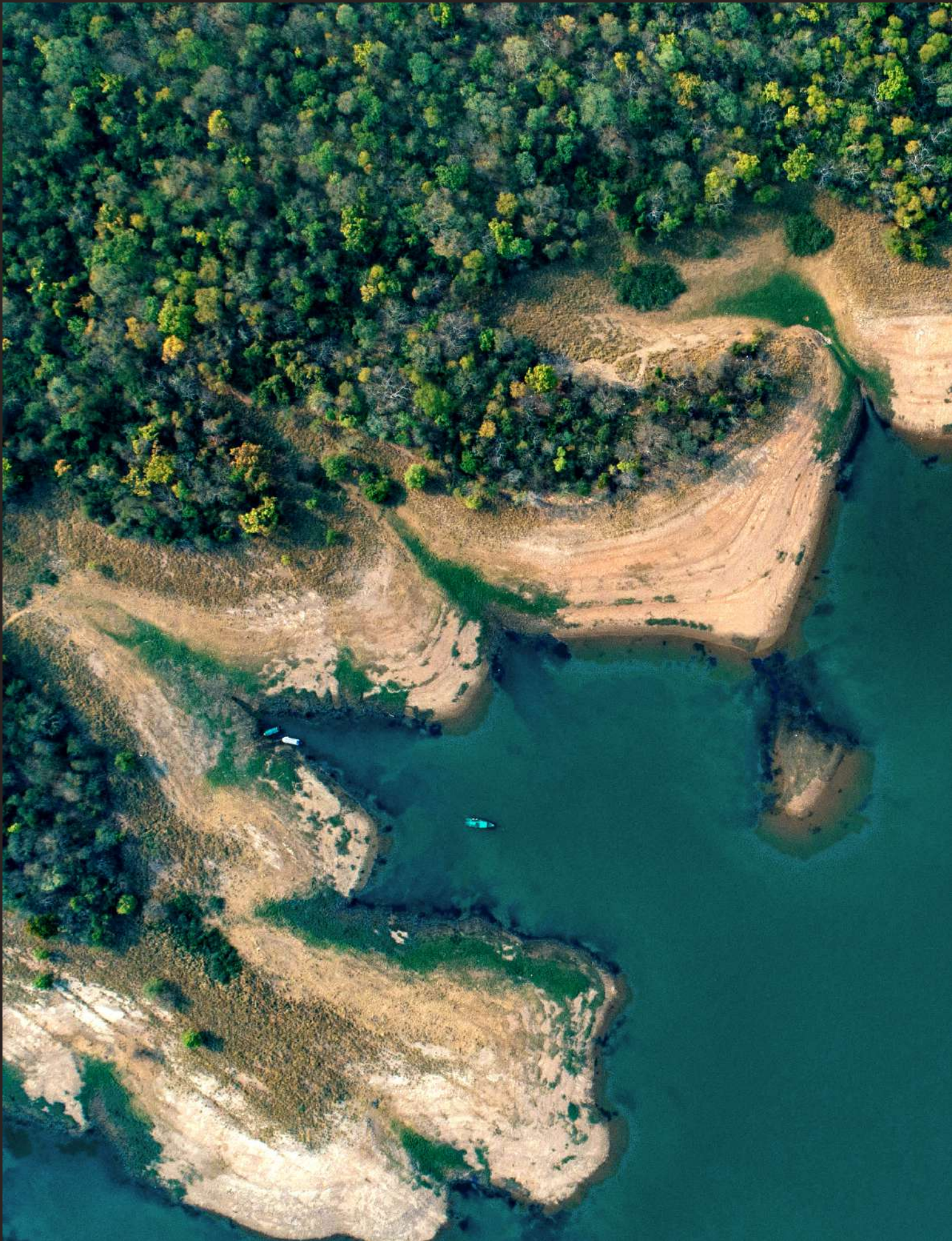
Odisha is rich in its floral & faunal biodiversity. To protect the wildlife and its habitat a network of protected areas have been constituted with focus on endangered and threatened species. The state has many natural wetlands, vast stretches of forested hills and valleys interspersed with human habitations. The state is blessed with unique assemblage of wildlife habitats spread over three bio-geographic zones. We share a great tradition of environmental conservation and have realized the greater role of people in preserving our natural heritage.

For involving local community in conservation of its rich biodiversity and to generate livelihood for forest dwellers, the model of "Community Managed Nature Tourism" has been adopted. Proper accommodations with ancillary facilities have been created at different locations which are managed by the forest dependent communities. Ecotourism has become an effective alternative livelihood option for them. Communities as partners in Nature conservation managing these Ecotourism destinations in Odisha has received accolade from visitors.

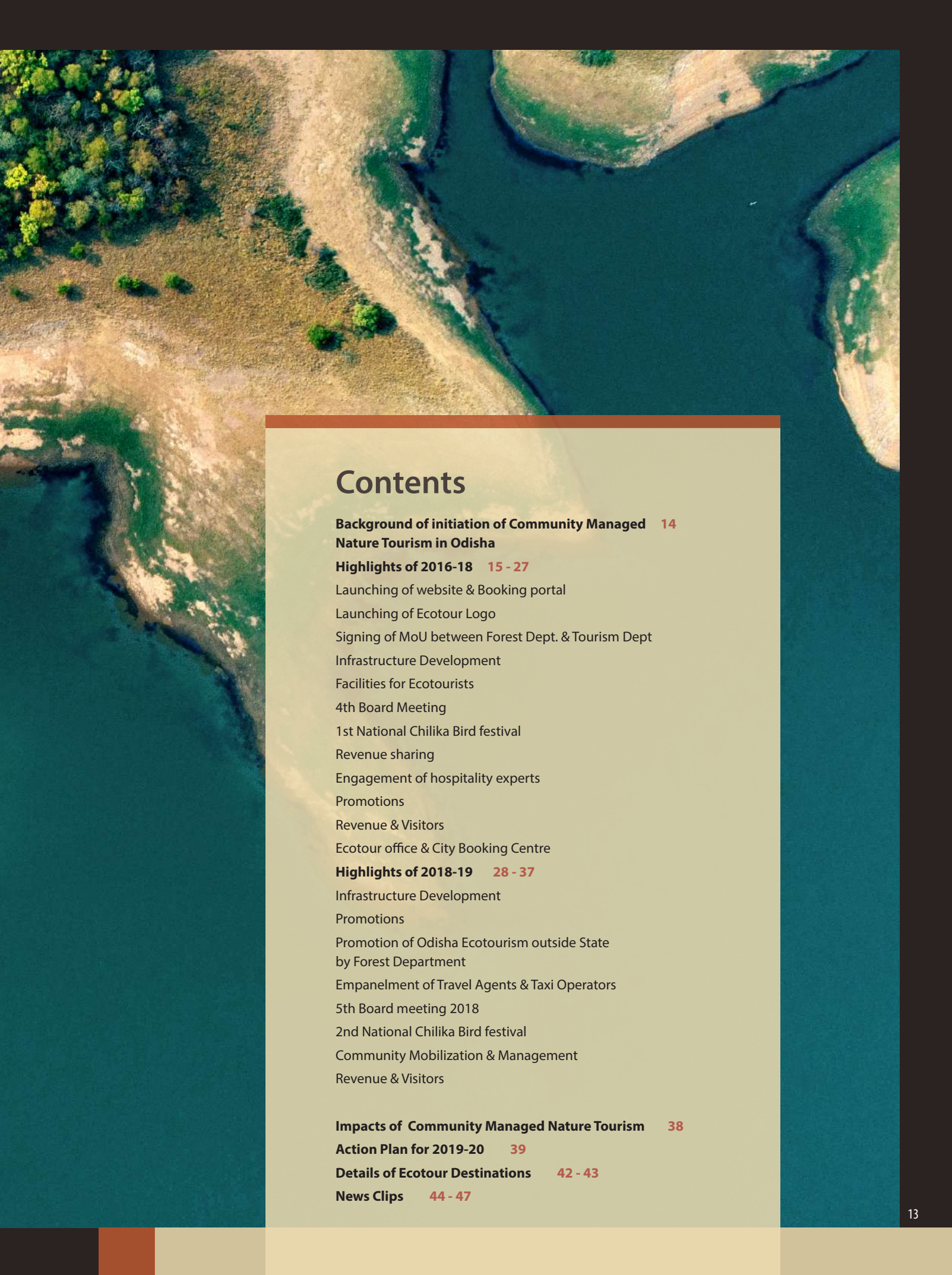
I am happy that the details of work done in Ecotourism front has been presented in the Annual Report 2018-19, for wider publicity and information of stakeholders.

**Ajay Kumar Mahapatra**









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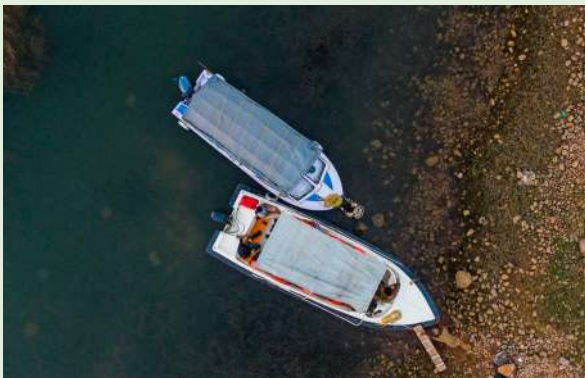


## BACKGROUND OF INITIATION OF **COMMUNITY MANAGED** NATURE TOURISM IN ODISHA



With 39% forest cover & 480 KM Coastline, Odisha favours some of the important ecosystems of the world. Some of the beautiful landscapes of Eastern Ghats are displayed here. Of the total population of Odisha, around 83 percent live in the villages and their role in conserving the natural resources of State is crucial. It is during the year 2016, Forest & Environment Department, Government of Odisha prioritizing the need of getting support of forest dependent communities for forest & wildlife conservation initiated "Community Managed Nature Tourism" in Odisha. A five year scheme (2016-17 to 2020-21) was approved by Government for development of Ecotourism with budgetary allocation of Rs. 56 Crore. Forest dependent communities were made stakeholders in Ecotourism projects and major share of revenue generated from the Ecotourism projects is

given to them. 600 trained local community members are now managing 40 nature tourism destinations (285 rooms, 613 capacity) all over the State & earning their livelihood. It has been an alternative income for them as they earlier used to rely on forest for their survival by poaching, smuggling, fishing, collecting honey, firewood, etc. Indirectly, 5 to 6 villages per Ecotourism project are now earning their livelihood by providing daily requirements to the Ecotourism projects (i.e. by selling vegetables, handmade articles, different food items, milk, non-veg products, travel facilities etc). From Ecotourism during 2015-16, State earned revenue of Rs.47 Lakh with 1900 visitors which leaped to Rs.1.5 Cr with 9300 visitors in 2016-17. During 2018-19 revenue realisation was Rs.5.6 Crore with 20,000 visitors.







# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2016-18

## Launching of Website & Booking portal

Online booking portal for Ecotourism destinations “[www.ecotourodisha.com](http://www.ecotourodisha.com)” was launched by Hon’ble CM of Odisha on 21st March 2016 on the occasion of World Forestry Day. The Website covers details of all Ecotour destinations, importance of landscape, vegetation and wildlife, travel plans, route map etc and all other basic information useful for tourists. Videos & photographs of all destinations have been displayed in the portal for popularising the destinations.



[www.ecotourodisha.com](http://www.ecotourodisha.com)

## Launching of Ecotour Logo

Hon’ble Chief Minister of Odisha inaugurated the Logo of Odisha Ecotourism on the occasion of Wildlife Week 2017.





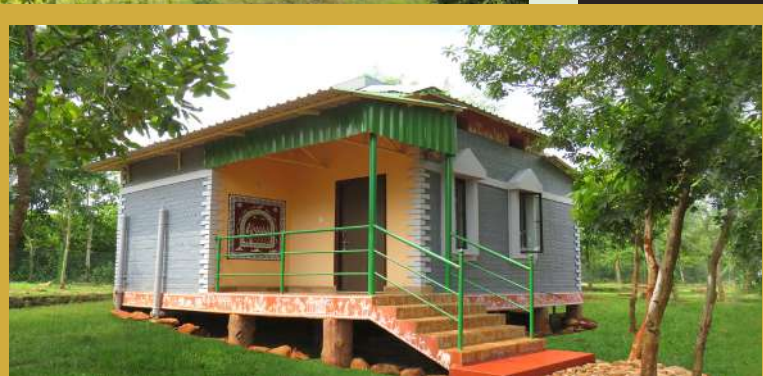


## Signing of MoU between Forest Dept & Tourism Dept

For wide publicity of Ecotourism Destinations in Odisha, an MoU was signed between F & E Dept and Dept of Tourism on 30th March 2017 in which Tourism Dept is to promote and advertise the Ecotourism destinations of Odisha in India & abroad.

## Infrastructure

At the beginning of the scheme 14 Ecotourism destinations were functioning in state in a very rudimentary stage. Between 2016 to 2018, Ecotourism infrastructure at 40 destinations ( tents and cottages) with night stay facilities have been created with all modern amenities. To manage these destinations Eco Tourism Groups (ETG) have been created enrolling local villagers from VSS/EDCs. Training of ETG members on Services & hospitality is under progress.





## Facilities for Ecotourists

Boating facilities have been created in different Ecotourism destinations like Bhitarkanika, Debrigarh, Nuanai, Bichitrapur, Satkosia, Chilika etc. For safety of tourists Decks & Floating Jetties have been constructed and life saving jackets have been made available for all ecotourists. Other activities like Cycling, Birding, Sports, Trekking, Farm land visits, Cultural programmes etc. by local communities is being introduced in all destinations. Ecoguides (one person acquainted with local trees, herbs , birds, animals etc. from the community) are present in all Nature Camps. Display of wildlife movies, library facilities along with Sovenir shops, watch towers for sighting wild animals have also been developed in all destinations.















#### **4th Board Meeting 2017**

4th meeting of Odisha Ecotourism Board was held under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary , Odisha on dtd. 20.12.2016 . The decisions taken in the meeting included transfer of OTDC infrastructures which are not in use to Forest Department for its use for Ecotourism purpose. Tourism Department was given the responsibility for promotion of Ecotourism destinations and erection of Signage's. The other decisions were development of new sites with Budget provision, engagement of hospitality experts in Nature Camps etc.





## 1st National Chilika Bird Festival

1st National Chilika Bird Festival was organised at Mangalajodi on 28th January 2018 by F & E Dept in collaboration with Department of Tourism. The occasion was graced by Shri Ashok Chandra Panda, Hon'ble Minister of Tourism, Shri Rajendra Kumar Sahoo, Hon'ble MLA Khurda, Shri Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, IAS, Addl. Chief Secretary to Government. F & E Dept, Ms. Mona Sharma, Commissioner-cum-Secretary Tourism, Shri S. Nanda, IAS, CEO Chilika, public representatives of the landscape, officials of OTDC, CDA etc. Around 200 photographers, birders, wildlifers participated in the festival.



୧ମ ଜାତୀୟ ଚିଲିକା ପକ୍ଷୀ ମହୋତ୍ସବ

# 1<sup>ST</sup> National Chilika Bird Festival

Mangalajodi, Odisha

27th - 28th January 2018

Scenic • serene • soulful  
The Soul of Incredible India





## Revenue Sharing

Forest & Environment Dept, Government of Odisha has notified the standard revenue sharing mechanism of Ecotourism destinations, as below (excluding 10% which is available for OFDC Ltd. and for margin of Tour Operators) :

Components	% Share	
ETG Wage Salary (Online release to respective Community accounts)	35 %	Shared by Management Committee of the Community towards wages
Recurring Expenses (Online release to Community account)	25 %	For day to day expenses & management of Nature Camps. ( Fooding of visitors, fuel, electricity etc.)
Infrastructure Development (Online release to Community account)	10 %	Major maintenance, Improvement in infrastructures etc.
EDC Share (Online release to Community account)	10 %	For developmental works in local villages
Corpus Fund (with PCCF WL for salary of Hospitality Experts engaged in Nature camps etc)	10%	Salary of Hospitality Experts engaged in different Ecotourism Destinations
Government Revenue	10 %	Revenue share to Government
Total :	100 %	







## Engagement of Hospitality Experts:

12 Nos of hospitality experts or "Site Managers" with experience in hotel management and training in hospitality sector have been engaged since 2017 in different Ecotourism destinations to train the villagers on management of Nature Camps.

**Ecotour ODISHA**  
Luxury Nature-Camps that offers absolute comfort and beaches, Rivers, Lakes, Lagoons, Hill stations and Forests teeming with Elephants, Sloth, Chitra, Tiger, Langurs, Sambar, Dolphins, turtles, Red-Coral, Magpies and more than 300 species of birds.

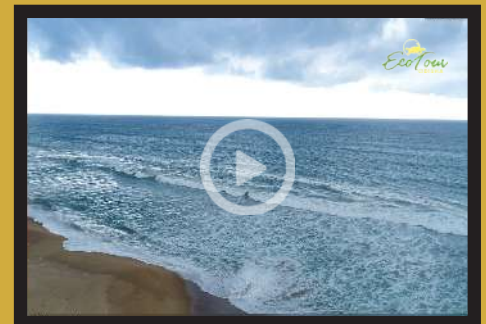
**YOUR HOLIDAY AWAITS YOU**

Large tracts of grasslands on the foothills of undulating hills with herds of graceful Spotted Deer, Blue or Black Bucks grazing & roaming. Magpies, langurs on sandbars, Dolphins and Hamrogo or Sambar tigers and more. Odisha provides refuge to a variety of animals and birds that wild travelers fly across the world to see.

For Booking: [www.ecotourodisha.com](http://www.ecotourodisha.com)

## Promotions

Videos (20 Mins, 7 Mins, 5 Mins, 2 Mins, 30 Sec etc.) on different protected areas of Odisha i.e. Similipal, Debrigarh, Satkosia, Chilika and other destinations have been prepared by Forest Dept and advertised in Odisha & outside. Leaflets & brochures on Ecotour Odisha have also been distributed in large scale for wide publicity of Ecotourism. Signages on National Highways & State Highways have been installed all over state.









VISIT CERRILLO











### Revenue & Visitors

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Revenue	47 Lakh	1.5 Cr.	5.6 Cr.
Visitors	1,900	9,300	20,000



### Ecotour office

The Ecotour office and City Booking Centre is at O/O PCCF (WL), Odisha, Prakruti Bhawan, Plot no 1459, Bhubaneswar 751007.

DCF Ecotourism and two Managers are functioning in the Ecotour office.

Tel : +91 (0)674-2602257/2549553/2549558

Email : [contact@ecotourodisha.com](mailto:contact@ecotourodisha.com) / [support@ecotourodisha.com](mailto:support@ecotourodisha.com)



## Highlights of 2018-19



### Infrastructure Development

Strengthening of existing infrastructures created during previous years and creation of new infrastructures has been the prime focus this year beside adding different activities to Nature Camps like Cycling, Boating (Boats & Jetties), Jungle Safaris etc. Major thrust was also given on training of village communities managing those Nature Camps by IHM, BBSR & IITM, BBSR in hospitality sector and certificate has also been awarded to them by the institutions. 8 new rooms have been added in Debrigarh Nature Camp adjoining Hirakud Lake and Jungle Safari with 4 Safari vehicles was initiated for the visitors. Khandadhar Nature Camp with 10 number of cottages facing Khandadhar Water fall was opened for visitors during this year. Deras & Godibari Nature Camps with 16 rooms in Chandaka Elephant Sanctuary adjoining

Bhubaneswar City was also opened for nature lovers with all activities like Cycling, Trekking, Birding etc.

The other major attraction has been opening of Mangalajodi Nature Camp in Chilika with 12 rooms on hill slope overlooking Chilika lake. Rajhans Nature Camp also started in Chilika with 10 numbers of air conditioned tents on Rajhans Island within Chilika Lagoon. Amenities for day visitors to Mangalajodi i.e. watch tower, sitouts, cafeteria, toilets etc. has been created. Some major improvements have been made in Nandankanan Zoological Park - 66 hector of Kanjia Lake is being deweeded (work under process) and boating has been introduced for visitors. Vulture conservation breeding centre of Nandankanan started functioning since Dec-2018. The construction work of toy train is under progress. Additional area has been added to herbivore safari of the park.



Kanjia Lake Before



After





## Reviving Bharatpur-Chandaka Landscape

Bharatpur Jungle Safari at Chandaka with 9 numbers of 12 seated open Jeeps started for the visitors this year. 20 Sq.km area has been developed for Bharatpur Jungal Safari. 28 km of road is for safari which moves through meadows and deep forests. Special focus is given for enrichment of wildlife habitat inside the Safari area and process for introduction of herbivores is under progress. A new entry gate at Bharatpur has also been created. Facility for boating at Deras will be open this year.



## Promotions

Ecotour website [www.ecotourodisha.com](http://www.ecotourodisha.com) was embedded in the website of Odisha Tourism website [www.odishatourism.gov.in](http://www.odishatourism.gov.in) for better promotion of ecotourism destinations & increasing booking of Nature Camps. Social media promotion of tourism & ecotourism destinations of Odisha has started since 2018 by Tourism Department on regular basis in Face book, Twitter, Instagram etc. Photography Trail was organised by Forest Dept and Tourism Dept in which 30 wildlife photographers from all

over India participated and visited all important wildlife areas of Odisha. The trail was scheduled from 25th Feb 2019 to 3rd March 2019 covering Bhitarkanika, Chandaka, Chilika, Debrigarh & Satkosia. The photographers were given an opportunity to stay in the Nature Camps in those places. Interactive session was scheduled with local community managing Ecotourism destinations for sharing the relevance & objectives of the project with them.







### Promotion of Odisha Ecotourism outside State by Forest Dept

OFDC has organised workshops on Odisha Ecotourism in different parts of India. On Dt.23.6.18. Workshop with Tour Operators of Odisha was organised at Bhubaneswar being attended by Sri. Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, IAS, Addl. Chief Secretary to Government F & E Dept, Sri. Jitendra Kumar, IFS, MD. OFDC, officers of Forest Dept, Tourism Dept, OFDC, OTDC etc. On Dt.9.7.18 Workshop on Odisha Ecotourism was organised at Kolkata with all tour & travel operators of West Bengal as majority of tourists & Ecotourists coming to Odisha are from West Bengal. The event was attended by Sri. Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, IAS, Addl. Chief Secretary to Government F & E Dept, Sri. Rajib Kumar, IFS, MD. OFDC, Director Tourism, officers of OFDC, OTDC etc. On Dt. 24.10.18 Workshop on Odisha Ecotourism was organised at Delhi with members of IATO (Indian Association of Travel & Tour Operators, India). The event was attended by Sri. Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, IAS, Addl. Chief Secretary to Government F & E Dept, Sri. Rajib Kumar, IFS (MD. OFDC), Director Tourism etc.







## Empanellment of Travel Agents & Taxi Operators

From January 2019 online registration for Travel Agents & Taxi Operators are made available in [www.ecotourodisha.com](http://www.ecotourodisha.com) with 8 % instant commission at the time of booking. Provision to book for up to 3 destinations through Package Tour Booking option has been provided for increasing the involvement of travel agents.















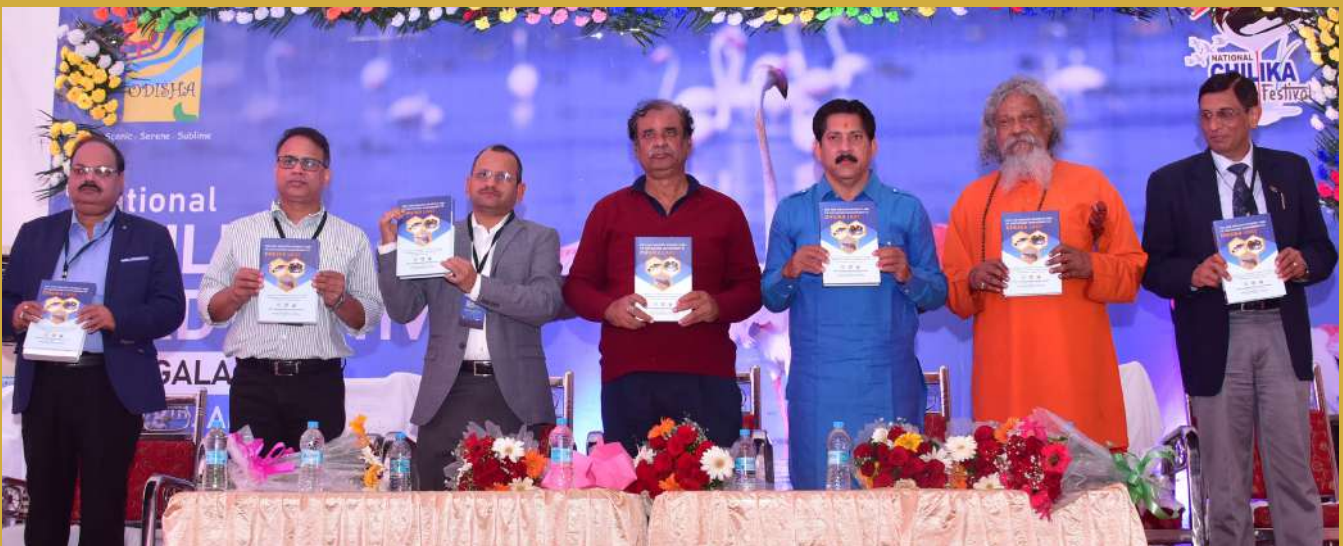
### **5th Board Meeting 2018**

5th meeting of Odisha Ecotourism Board was held under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Odisha on 22.11.2018 . The decisions taken in the meeting are on celebration of National Bird Festival, organization of workshop with Tour Operators of other State, creation of land bank around the Ecotourism destinations created by Forest Dept. to encourage private investment in State. The other decisions are wide audio visual publicity by Tourism Dept., linking of Ecotourism website with Tourism website and organizing day tours to Bhitarkanika, Mangalajodi, Nandankanan, Chilika, Chandaka etc. from Bhubaneswar for popularising those destinations jointly by Tourism & Forest Dept.



## 2nd National Chilika Bird Festival

2nd National Chilika Bird Festival was organised at Mangalajodi on 27th-28th January 2019 followed by visit to Bhitarkanika on 3rd day of festival. Fest attracted tourist, bird watchers, wildlife photographers, painters and researchers. Around 500 participants from odisha and outside participated. The occasion was graced by Shri Ashok Chandra Panda, Hon'ble Minister of Tourism, Shri Prasanna Patasani Hon'ble MP, Bhubaneswar, Shri Rajendra Kumar Sahoo, Hon'ble MLA, Khurda, Shri Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, IAS, Addl. Chief Secretary to Government F & E Dept, Shri Vishal Kumar Dev, IAS, Secretary Tourism, Dr. Sandeep Tripathi, IFS, PCCF (WL), officials of OTDC, CDA etc.







## Community Mobilization & Management

Till 2019 around 600 community members have been enrolled for management of Nature Camps all over the state. Indirectly, 5 to 6 villages per Ecotourism project are now earning their livelihood by providing daily requirements to the Ecotourism projects (i.e. by selling vegetables, handmade articles, different food items, milk, non-veg products, travel facilities etc). Eco Development Committees/ Vana Sanrakshyana Samities have been formed in all the villages and a core management committee (one person from each family)

named as "Ecotourism Group (ETG)" has been created for all destinations for managing the Nature Camps. All the community members have been trained on hospitality & Ecotourism services by Government. institutions and they play different roles in management of Nature Camps ie. Housekeeping, accounting, store, reception, service, cooking, cleaning etc. A Standard Operating Procedure has been formulated and being followed in all Nature Camps for proper management, cleanliness of the Camps sustainably.







### Revenue & Visitors

	2018-19	Remarks
Revenue	5.56 Cr	Visitors to Ecotour destinations in Odisha were from different parts of India and outside. Ecotour Odisha website has been visited by more than 10 Lakh visitors from India and also from different countries of world.
Visitors	20,000	







## Impacts of Community Managed Nature Tourism

Following are the positive impacts seen in the landscapes with Ecotourism destinations:

- Provides livelihood support to the forest dependent communities.
- Employment to rural women & tribal communities in wildlife areas who were earlier dependent on poaching & anti forestry activities for their living. 60% of the community members engaged in all the 40 Ecotourism destinations are rural women.
- Zero forest fire and poaching in those landscapes where communities are engaged in Ecotourism activities.
- Ecotourists are engaged in different activities like trekking, birding, boating, cycling, farm land visit, cultural programmes by locals, safari, watching wildlife movies in Nature Camps, canopy walk etc. to provide the visitor holistic experience on forest, culture & traditions of the local communities. Eco guides, boatman etc. employed in Ecotourism destinations are all trained.
- The Ecotourism destinations have been developed covering different landscapes of the State ie. forests, hill stations, lakes, rivers, beaches, lagoon etc. which also provides basic knowledge to the tourists about natural ecosystems.
- As Ecotourism destinations are providing job opportunities for the local communities, they themselves are conserving & protecting Nature and also maintaining cleanliness of the landscape.
- Communities are also running programmes like “Poacher Turned Protectors”, “Know Your Birds” etc. in different destinations.
- The model “Community Managed Nature Tourism” adopted by Odisha Government. is unique in the Country as forest dependent communities are utilizing 80% share of the State revenue, out of which 35% is utilised towards their wages.
- One of the 40 Ecotourism destinations in Odisha is “Satkosia Sands Resort & Nature Camp” at Badmul in Satkosia Tiger Reserve (started since 2016), managed by 28 villagers. The destination has earned 1.03 Crore during the financial year 2018-19, highest ever income recorded by any community managed project within 1 year.





### Action Plan for 2019-20

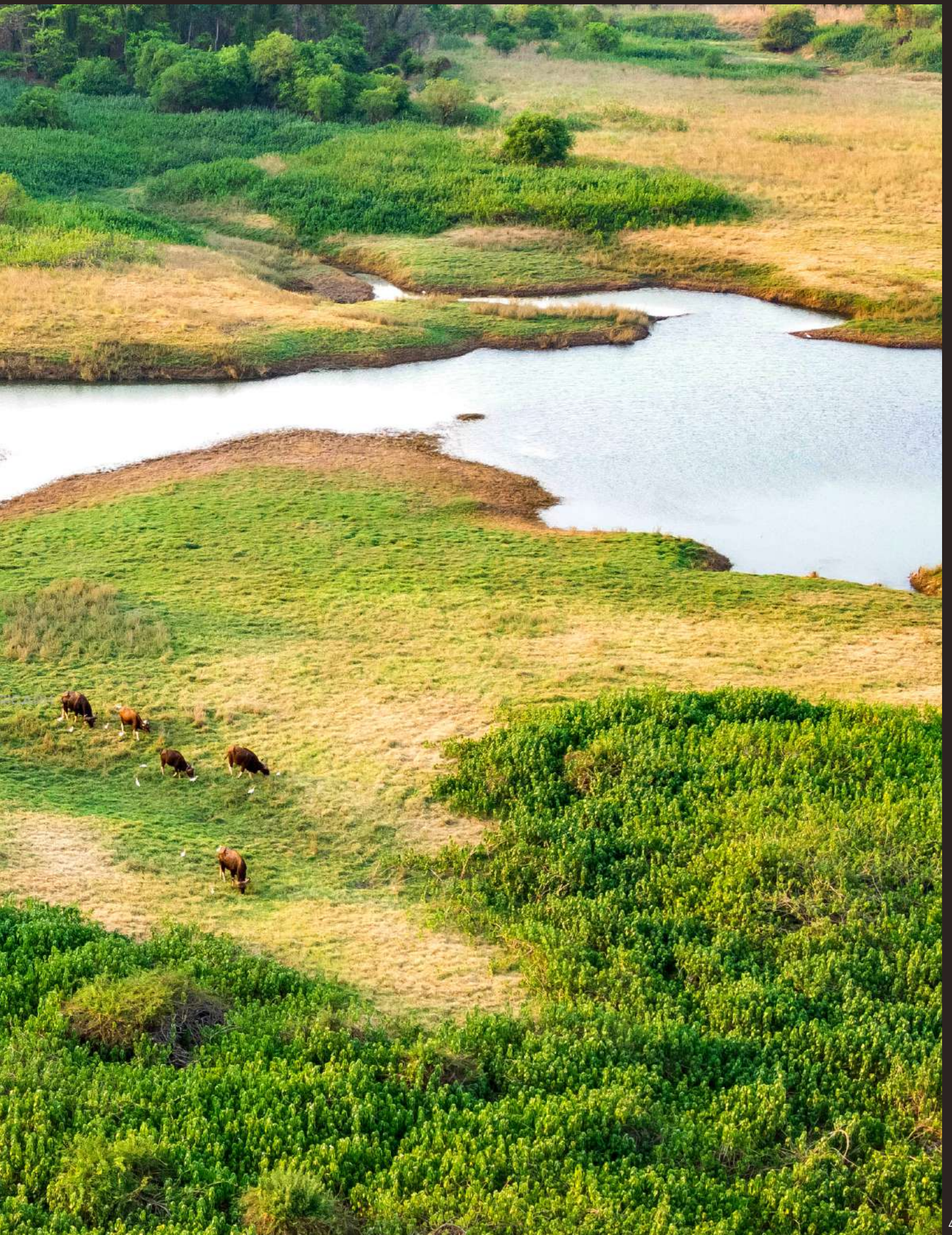
- Opening of Barehipani, Chandipur and Nrusinghnath Nature Camps. Ecotourism infrastructure at Pine forest of Koraput, Patora Dam of Nuapada etc.
- Up scaling of Ecotourism activities in State as approved in Important Transformational Action Points for 5T Governance in Odisha.
- Engagement of professionals at top level for managing Community Managed Nature Tourism Projects in order to attract high end Ecotourists to Odisha as approved in important Transformational Action Points for 5T Governance in Odisha.
- Reviving Bharatpur-Chandaka Landscape by continuing habitat enrichment ( going on since last 2 years) and reintroduction of wild animal for making Chandaka a potential wildlife habitat near the capital city.
- Action on the proposed Ecotourism projects suggested by public representatives of State.
- Creation of way side facilities for day tourists in different landscapes and forest areas.













INFORMATION OF ECOTOURISM NATURE CAMPS									
District	Forest Division	Destination	Nature Camps	Type of Rooms	No. of Rooms	Capacity	Revenue During 2016-17	Revenue During 2017-18	Revenue During 2018-19
Mayurbhanj	Rirangpur Forest Division	Similipal Nature Camps	Jamuani	AC-9 Non AC-5	14	30	1388158	2569962	3904304
	Karanjia Forest Division		Kumari	AC-8 Non AC-6	14	28	1465606	2896150	3729933
			Gurguria	All Non AC	6	12	730665	1306202	1424798
	STR Baripada		Ramatirtha	AC-8 Non AC-2	10	44	622610	1541666	1705680
			<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>AC-25 NON AC-19</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>4207039</b>	<b>8313980</b>	<b>10764715</b>
Nayagarh	Mahanadi Wild Life Division	Badmul	Sands Resort	AC-7, NonAC-9	16	32	1935570	5879711	10099139
Kendrapada	Rajnagar Wildlife Division	Bhitarkanika Nature Camps	Dangamal	AC-13, Non AC-3	16	37	2182149	3655703	7124931
			Habilikati	Non AC	5	14	529880	1003712	1332735
			Gupti	AC-6	6	12	304592	706268	566736
			<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>No of AC- 19 No of Non AC-8</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>3016621</b>	<b>5365683</b>	<b>9024402</b>
Angul	Satkosia Wildlife Division	Satkosia Nature Camps	Tikarpada	Non AC	10	20	1373144	1797631	2319550
			Chotkei	Non AC	10	20	1129955	2311668	2008702
			Baghamunda	Non AC	5	10	108915	654381	599468
			Tarava	Non AC	10	20	357783	393038	450185
			Purunakote	Non AC	3	6	209870	82836	112912
			Baliput	Site close			96054	106929	0
			<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>AC-0 NON AC- 38</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>3275721</b>	<b>5346483</b>	<b>5490817</b>
Sambalpur	Hirakud Wildlife Division	Debrigarh Nature Camp	Debrigarh	All AC	13	28	1812658	2574591	4988027
Kandhamal	Baliguda Forest Division	Daringbadi Nature Camp	Daringbadi	All non AC	10	20	0	1441080	3217223
Puri	Chilika Wildlife Division	Chilika Nature Camps	Rajhans	All AC	10	20	0	496154	1857630
			Berhampura	All AC	8	16	318723	616977	645755
			Manglajodi	All AC	12	24	0	0	277772
			<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>AC-30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>318723</b>	<b>1113131</b>	<b>2781157</b>
		Puri Wildlife Division	Nuanai Nature Camp	Nuanai	All AC	10	20	60968	1046870
Balasore	Balasore Wildlife Division	Rissia Nature Camp	Rissia	All non AC	9	18	443420	968348	1384362



Kandhamal	Phulbani Forest Division	Phulbani Nature Camp	Manadasaru	AC-2, Non AC-3	5	10	0	313091	742134
			Phulbani nature Camp	All AC	5	10	0	69662	116820
			<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>AC- 7, Non AC-3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>382753</b>	<b>858954</b>
Sundergarh	Bonai Forest Division	Khandadhar Nature Camp	Khandadhar	All AC	10	20	0	0	738086
Balasore	Balasore Wildlife Division	Bichitrapur Nature Camp	Bichitrapur	All AC	4	8	0	112958	675336
Khordha	Chandaka Wildlife Division	Chandaka Nature Camp	Deras	All AC	8	16	0	0	642574
			Chandka-Godibari	All AC	8	16	186660	42658	387181
			<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>AC- 16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>642574</b>
Sundergarh	Sundergarh Forest Division	Sarafgarh Nature Camp	Sarafgarh	All AC	4	8	0	0	364621
Keonjhar	Keonjhar Forest Division	Sanghagara Nature Camp Sanghagara	Sanghagara	All AC	6	18	0	114734	607579
Kandhamal	Baliguda Forest Division	Belghar Nature Camp	Belghar	All non AC	5	10	0	198987	400433
Ganjam	Ghumsur-(N) Forest Division	Giant Squirrel Black Buck Naturte Camps	Giant Squirrel	All AC	3	6	0	132009	373824
			Bhanajanagar Dam	All AC	4	8	0	182172	217687
			Saluapali	All AC	5	10	36150	51607	103992
			Chermeria	AC-1, Non AC-1	2	4	21089	27576	25311
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>AC 13 Non AC-1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>57239</b>	<b>261355</b>	<b>346990</b>		
Cuttack	Athagarh Forest Divison	Ansupa Nature Camp	Ansupa	All AC	5	10	154240	254181	292050
Nayagarh	Nayagarh Forest Division	Sidhamula Nature Camp	Sidhamula	All AC	3	6	79530	170127	157766
Cuttack	Cuttack Forest Division	Mahavinayak Nature Camp	Mahavinayak	All non AC	3	6	84947	159157	120705
Jajpur		Olasuni Nature Camp	Olasuni	All non AC	3	6	14461	42504	20427
Dhenkanal	Dhenkanal Forest Division	Saptasajya Nature Camp	Saptasajya	All AC	2	4	60250	92750	58410
Khordha	Khordha Forest Division	Barbera Nature Camp (New)	Barbera	All non AC	3	6	0	0	
			<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>285</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>1,57,08,047</b>	<b>3,40,14,050</b>	<b>5,56,74,420</b>



# Odisha Local

At a time when conservation has become a daunting task for the forest department, nature tourism has arrived as a boon in the state. **Riyan Ramanath** explores how this new phenomenon has inspired forest dwellers to preserve nature and enhance their income



Everybody loves nature. It is beautiful and makes for great photographs. But do we ever think about the efforts that go into preserving the bounty of forest resources, the regulations that ensure that wildlife can roam free in the wilderness and the methods with which it is possible to let nature run wild? For generations, forest resources have been exploited. Humans have cut into the free space that animals were originally destined to have. Any forest department now faces a challenge of gigantic proportions. It has to tinker with several experiments to effectively save the forest and wildlife.

At this juncture, something that has begun to give dividends is the rise of forest personnel is not keeping people from enjoying nature, but engaging local communities in what is aptly called 'nature tourism' (to visit forest and wildlife). With nature tourism, the forest department has now the hearts of those living near forests and made them realize that it belongs to them first.

**Conservation formula**  
The formula is simple — develop community-managed nature tourism hubs in per-

missible areas of forests, engage people in the process and help them see out a living. This has, in fact, brought dissenting villagers closer to department officials.

There are as many as 40 nature tourism hubs in the state, all run by local communities. These sites have been offering visitors rich experience of close interactions with nature, local food, nature trails, folk culture and on top of close and personal knowledge of nature conservation. Around 1,000 villagers are now reaping direct and indirect benefits from these facilities.

Conservation has brought economic returns for the people. It has also helped reduce dependence on forests, thus bringing in social change among the locals. We have planned the effort in such a manner that tourists get the feel of the entire landscape. They are accompanied by trained eco-guides," said additional chief secretary (forests) Suresh Chandra Mahapatra.

"Because of conservation through communities, we have been able to increase our shared population from just one in 2015 to seven now. We have been able to remove

## NATURE BECKONS

The nature camps are gaining in popularity among foreigners (top left). A lion right strikes a pose at the zoo (bottom). A visitor is welcomed (below) at site of the eco-tourism camps



illegal grown sheries in the Chilika lagoon, giving more space to rare Irrawaddy dolphins for breeding. We have also ensured that wildlife nature tourism hubs are plastic free," Mahapatra added.

Officials said the revenue mapped up through nature tourism activities has shot up from Rs 7 lakh in 2015 to Rs 2.50 crore in 2017. It is expected to touch the Rs 6 crore mark in 2018. Nearly 90 per cent of revenue generated through this goes to the village community directly as their wages, the department says. "The nature camps are self-sustaining. Only a mere 10 per cent of revenue goes to government exchequer," an officer said.

The significant aspect is that the state government has capped the number of tourists who can visit a site on a given day. In all the 40 nature tourism camps, not more than 400 people can stay in the facilities.

**Earning & protecting**  
Munjalata Behera, a 30-year-

The locals, mostly tribals, are engaged in forest of services at the nature camps — as cooks, guides, attendants — and at times also work up as entertainers



**FOOTFALL**  
The number of visitors to the state's nature camps are steadily increasing

2015	2017	2018
9,959	13,785	14,200

(1st Nov (expected) to reach 20,000)

old community member who works at the Sankoski Sundk resort in the Mahanadi wildlife division, has earned Rs 60,000 in 2017-18.

"My husband had been the only earner in the family. Now I am able to support him as well as get to contribute money towards my children's education," she said.

The story of Arjun Nayak, a widow who earned enough from the nature camps to fund her daughter's wedding, is similar.

Laxmidhar Majhi, who used to migrate to other

states for a livelihood, got engaged in a cultural programme organized at one of the camps to entertain visitors. "I was passionate about cultural activities and dreams from childhood but never got an opportunity to sing folk songs and perform folk dances now. I am earning and supporting my family," he said.

Kuna Biswal, who used to travel intermittently to Andhra Pradesh in search of work, has become the head cook at the nature camp at Bindul.

Villagers, 80 per cent of whom are from tribal communities, had previously been collecting firewood and other non-timber forest products from the core areas of the forests. Conservation would have suffered had this continued in the long run. With nature tourism coming up, they have shifted their attention from using forest resources to helping the forest department in conservation.

**How the camps are run**

All ecotourism destinations are managed by local community members with one core group at each centre. This is designated as the Eco-Tourism Group, which comprises selected villagers. Each site is also supervised by a site manager who has to have a degree, along with experience in hotel and hospitality management. Rural youths found fit are also employed as eco-guides.

### VISITORS' PARADISE

**BHITARKANHA NATIONAL PARK:** It is the second largest mangrove ecosystem in India, the only marine sanctuary in the state, and one of the largest heronries in India. Hundreds of saltwater crocodiles (some as long as 23 feet) can be seen basking in mangrove creeks. It is also a paradise of birds.

Nature tourism sites: Dhangmal, Habanikhati and Gual



**SIMILIPAL TIGER RESERVE:** It is a national park, biosphere reserve, elephant reserve and tiger sanctuary, with thick presence of sambar, boar, spotted deer, and leopards.

Nature tourism sites: Kuntur, Jamuni, Gurupali, Bamiritha, and Borebaga

**DEBRIGARH SANCTUARY:** Located on the banks of Hindub reservoir, it is the largest artificial lake in Asia. It is known for animal sightings.

Nature tourism sites: Debrigarh Nature Camp and Borebaga

**SATKOSHA TIGER RESERVE:** At the heart of the tiger reserve is the 22-km-long Satkosha gorge, one of the largest and deepest gorges in Asia. Mugger crocodiles and Indian skimmers basking on the sandbars is a common sight.

Nature tourism sites: Sandur, Bostul, Bakrapada, Chhetika, Bakhananda and Tarara

**CHILIKA:** This is the largest wetland ground for migratory birds in the Indian subcontinent. A biodiversity hotspot, it is Asia's largest brackish water lagoon with beautiful islands, and is the only place for Irrawaddy dolphins in India.

Nature tourism sites: Mangalpur, Dighans and Bantapur

**CHANDIPUR:** Here sea water recedes by up to 5 km twice a day during low tide. This extreme natural phenomenon has enriched the biodiversity of aquatic animals in the area.

Nature tourism sites: Chandipur nature camp

**CHANDARA SANCTUARY:** It is the only elephant sanctuary in India which is close to a state capital.

Nature tourism sites: Denis and Godhan

### INTERVIEW

The growing trend of nature tourism is slowly changing people's approach to conservation of wildlife and forests. **Suresh Chandra Mahapatra**, additional chief secretary, forest and environment department, talks to **Riyan Ramanath** about its scope and future



## 'Hope to convert every tourist into future custodian of forests'

■ **On involving communities**  
The nature tourism department aims to protect and preserve wildlife and its habitats by empowering and encouraging communities dependent on forests. Establishing the concept and essence of nature tourism require time and support. In fact, the forest cover has increased by 85.5 per cent in the past two years. In remote areas, nature tourism has helped us provide employment to tribals and rural women, who are also trained to manage the nature camps. It is their main source of livelihood.

■ **On nature tourism being an integral part of conservation**  
The forest department alone

can't conserve nature without involving local communities. The major share of the income from nature camps goes to these communities.

■ **On realizing the goal so far as conservation is concerned**  
We are strategically relocating villages from the protected areas. This will be beneficial for both people and wildlife in the long run. We have been able to create more breeding space for species peculiar to the state like the Irrawaddy dolphins in Chilika Lake and gharials in Satkosha. We have also undertaken various development works for enhancing the livelihood of communities dependent on forests.

■ **On exploiting the forest landscape for nature tourism**  
Nature tourism is about providing holistic experience to visitors. It allows them to learn about forests and realize the benefits of conservation. In Odisha, villages are the stakeholders of nature tourism. The number of visitors to such destination is fixed as per carrying capacity of that place.

■ **On involving reformed poachers in tourism activities**  
A large number of poachers at Chilika, Satkosha and other areas have been employed through nature tourism in Odisha.

■ **On nature tourism of Odisha versus other states**  
Our aim is to convert every tourist into future custodian of our forests. We have developed good quality tourist infrastructure and facilities in all our nature camps. These have facilities for different activities like trekking, watching, trekking, boating, jungle safari, sports, etc.

■ **On tapping the tourism potential in the buffer zones**  
We have developed community-managed destinations in and around Chilika, Bhitarkantha National Park, Similipal Tiger Reserve, Satkosha Tiger Reserve, Chandika Sanctuary, Daringbichhagan in Phulbani district, Khondabar and Sangraha wa-

terfalls and as sea beaches.

■ **On the future plans**  
Our aim is to make community-managed nature tourism in Odisha a unique model in the country and we want Odisha to be the 'eco-tourism hub' of the world.

■ **On having tourists more around in animal zones and view them from a close distance like in Kanha**  
There is a huge scope for having sustainable nature tourism in our state. Debrigarh nature camp, Dhangmal in Bhitarkantha, Edlaha in Chilika provide excellent wildlife viewing from the camp itself without disturbing them.



# Satkosia eco-tourism earning hits ₹1 crore mark

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@Bhubaneswar

IN a first, Satkosia Sands Resort and Nature Camp at Badmul in Nayagarh district has generated a whopping ₹ one crore this year proving that community-run eco-tourism can be a success.

Situated on the banks of Mahanadi river in the heart of Satkosia Tiger Reserve, the eco-tourism project, run by villagers of Muduligadia, has scripted a story of its own in socio-economic reforms and forest protection with this feat.

This success story also speaks of the rich potential which Odisha has in nature tourism. The State is a part of Eastern Ghats with Chhotanagpur Plateau on the west and rivers, lagoon, mountains, valleys and dense forests sheltering many wild animals - from melanistic tigers



Members of Maa Satabhauni who manage eco-tourism camp | EXPRESS

to migratory birds like Flamingos and skimmers.

The project was started in 2016 by Forest Department under an initiative 'Community Managed Nature Tourism in Odisha' with an objective to strengthen forest and wildlife conservation by providing alternative livelihood to communities of tiger reserve dependent

on forests.

An Eco Development Committee - Maa Satabhauni - was formed to manage the project which has 16 tents and cottages on Mahanadi banks facing Satkosia Gorge.

In the last three years, the income of the project increased from ₹31 lakh to ₹60 lakh and this year, it reached ₹ one crore

with 3,000 tourists, including foreigners from countries like France, Britain and Germany, visiting the nature camp.

Since its inception, the nature camp has earned a total revenue of ₹2 crore. As many as 28 locals from nearby villages are managing the camp and most of them are women. As per policy decision, 90 pc of the income generated goes to the community. It commenced with 16 tents and cottages on the bank of river Mahanadi facing Satkosia Gorge which is an important habitat for both Gharial and Mugger.

The camp site was earlier used by illegal sand miners for lifting sand. But since the project started, villagers are protecting the river bank and adjoining forest. The nature camp also provides sports, birding, boating, cycling, canopy walk, trekking and farmland visits.

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THURSDAY 28.03.2019

Odisha



Marches ahead

A SPACE MARKETING FEATURE

# State's eco-tourism going places



ANUP NAYAK

Odisha's growth story in the last couple of years would be incomplete without giving the State's booming eco-tourism a mention. From a fledgling industry to a burgeoning one, this new concept of tourism has witnessed a paradigm shift in the last few years.

With 39 per cent forest cover and a 400-km-long virgin beach, Odisha houses some of the most interesting ecosystems of the world. Densely forested hills, rolling uplands and valleys touching the Bay of Bengal, the State has many beautiful landscapes of Eastern Ghats in the country.

In 2015, eco-tourism in Odisha was at a nascent stage. The concept of community-managed nature tourism destinations was relatively new. There were only 14 nature camps to cater to those who sought

refuge in wilderness to escape from the hustle and bustle of the city life. The year saw a foothold of only 400 tourists at these camps.

The concept became an instant hit among nature lovers and visitors' foothold at the camps leaped to 2,000 in 2016. Heartened by the trend, the Forest department decided to start online bookings for the camps and accordingly, upgraded the infrastructure and amenities at these destinations. As of now, the number of nature camps of eco-tourism destinations in the State has been increased to 49. In 2018, a whopping 21,000 tourists, including 90 foreigners, visited these camps. Incredible it may sound, the online booking portal www.eco-odisha.com has garnered a massive 10 lakh views from around 196 countries across the globe this year.

The revenue generated from eco-tourism has also seen an upward trend. The State Government earned ₹45 lakh from the nature

camp in 2015. TRF data, a revenue of ₹1.75 crore has been generated from the eco-tourism industry and the figure is likely to touch ₹8 crore in 2019. This community-managed nature tourism has come as a boon for communities dependent on forests too. The nature camps have provided the tribals a means of livelihood support. The number of community members earning directly or indirectly from the nature camps was 110 in 2015. The figure rose to nearly 1,000, 50 per cent being women and 80 per cent from tribal communities, in 2018.

CEO of Mahanadi Wildlife Division and nodal officer of Odisha Eco-tourism Anshu Pragnyan Das informed that 90 per cent of the revenue generated goes to the village community directly as their wages, for recurring expenses of the nature camps and infrastructure development of these sites. The remaining 10 per cent of the income goes to the Government as revenue.

Apart from development of tribal communities, the nature camps have led to empowerment of rural women. Most of the community members engaged in the camps are women who are school dropouts but are good in accounting and managing funds with transparency, Das said.

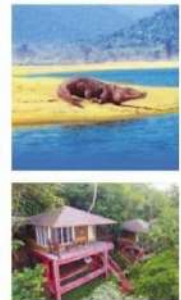
Thanks to the nature tourism, there has also been a significant decline in poaching cases and forest fires. Before the camps were set up, most of the tribals were dependent on poaching and anti-forestry activities. In 2015, the number of people booked for forest and wildlife offences was 57. The figure dropped to only 14 in 2018.

If there are any yardsticks to measure the State's growth story, eco-tourism is definitely the most evident one. The overwhelming success of the industry depicts the potential of inland Odisha which the Government is fervently promoting across the globe.



## Welcome to the wilderness

- Gurgula, Jamuni, Ramirtha, Sanehpali and Korneri nature camps in Simlipal Tiger Reserve
- Chandipur nature camp on the receding waters of Bay of Bengal
- Dangamal, Habelkhatai and Gupti nature camps inside Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary
- Tented accommodation on the banks of Mahanadi river at Tikarpada, Badmul and cottages at Chhetal, Baghamunda and Purunakote within Satkosia Tiger Reserve
- Debagish nature camp in Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary near Hirakud Dam
- Deringibadi-Belghar in Kandhamal district
- Rahans, Mangalajodi and Beihampura nature camps within Chilika, the largest backish water lagoon of Asia
- Blackbuck and Giant-Squirrel nature camps (tree houses) in Ganjam district



INDIAN EXPRESS Thu, 31 January 2019  
paper.newindianexpress.com/c/36273955





# Similipal earns Rs 1 crore from nature tourism projects

Riyan Ramanath V | TNN | Updated: Mar 3, 2019, 11:09 IST



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*Similipal Tiger Reserve*

BHUBANESWAR: The Similipal Tiger Reserve, the fourth largest reserve in India, has earned Rs 1 crore from the community-managed nature tourism projects this fiscal. The local tribal communities engaged in it took home 90% of the amount as wages, for managing and maintaining the camps, while 10% went to the government.

Similipal has four nature tourism sites located at Jamuani, Kumari, Gurguria and Ramtirtha. The project has been so named because it aims to motivate people to protect nature through tourism activity. These facilities developed by the forest department offer a natural ambience and local delicacies to tourists to spend the night in the forest. The visitors can also enjoy trekking and cycling.

Nodal officer (eco-tourism) Anshu Pragyan Das said tribal communities like Kolha, Bhumija, Saunti, Santal, Bhuyana and Bathudi have been engaged in nature tourism camps to provide hospitality to the tourists. "Around 400 locals benefit from these camps in Similipal alone," she said.

The Gurguria nature camp has generated Rs 14,00,783, Jamuani Rs 36,63,564, Kumari Rs 34,61,236 and Ramatirtha Rs 14,75,710. Altogether 9,000 tourists stayed at these facilities, apart from those who visit the forest during the day and return by evening.

Sisir Naik, president of ETG at Kumari and one of the beneficiaries, said it is like advocating forest protection and giving hospitality to tourists. "It is so satisfying. We are running the camps on our own and earning," he said.

Forest officials said villagers and forest department were at loggerheads before 2009 when Maoists had launched an attack at Chahala inside the reserve. Gradually, the forest department strategised to win the hearts of locals, who were engaged in the eco-tourism process. "This helped us control forest fire and poaching to a great extent. Many transformed hardcore poachers are now working as eco-guides," said an officer.

Similipal spread over 2,750 sq km boasts of 26 Royal Bengal Tigers in its core area out of the 40 in the state, according to the last census. It is the only sanctuary in the world to have melanistic tigers. Besides tourists from the country, visitors from Italy, Korea, Afghanistan and France have visited Similipal and stayed in the nature camps, officials said. This financial year the 40 nature tourism sites in the state have earned Rs 5.2 crore so far.



## Jungle safari starts in Bharatpur forest

By - TNN | Created: Mar 9, 2019, 18:25 IST |



To provide a scope for Bhubaneswar's adventure enthusiasts, the authorities have started a **jungle safari** in the **Bharatpur** forest on the city outskirts. Bharatpur Nature **Tourism** Destination in Lumbini Vihar has been developed to create public awareness by educating people to conserve nature and arrangements made for conducting jungle safari to safeguard the **ecosystem**.

Bijayashree Routray, minister, Forest and Environment, Odisha inaugurated Jungle Safari vehicles for the public so that they can experience the wilderness amid nature. Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, additional chief secretary, Forest and Environment Department, Sandeep Tripathi, principal chief conservator of forests and other dignitaries were present on this occasion. People can go on a trip into the jungle in the mornings and the afternoons.

Bharatpur forest in the south-eastern part of Chandaka-Damapara Wildlife Sanctuary, spread over an area of 20 sqkm, in the heart of the capital city, is rich in biodiversity. It is the abode of a large number of wild animals and this particular patch in the forest is known as the carbon sink. It is also called the green lungs of the city. It caters to the needs of the residents by supplying drinking water and by recharging the hydrological cycle. No other capital cities in the country have such forest facilities.





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