

## **Dedicated devpt board to boost ecotourism in state**

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Lucknow: Revamping the system for promotion of eco-tourism destinations in Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath government is set to establish the UP Ecotourism Development board.

The key objective of the initiative is to promote the state's rich legacy of forests and wetlands to increase tourist footfall while creating jobs for those living around the natural heritage. A draft proposal to synchronise functioning of the two stake-holder departments – tourism and forest – is under consideration.

“The mandate of the board is to create ecotourism infrastructure under expert supervision in popular areas without disturbing the natural ecosystem of the forest property by attracting public, private and corporate social responsibility fund investment,” said principal secretary, UP Tourism, Mukesh Meshram.

The board will take decisions in a democratic way through its general body that will have two dozen officials and stake-holders such as heads of water resources, public works, rural development, tribal development, finance, urban development, information and public relations, tourism and culture departments.

The general body will be chaired by minister in charge of environment, forest and climate change department while his colleague from state tourism department will co-chair it. Two field officials nominated by principal chief conservator of forests and tourism department will be part of this group. The board shall also have an executive committee which will be chaired by a chief executive officer who along with his team ensure successful conduct of the activities of the board as per the approved set up.