

**Oromia Regional State Tourism Sector Development Document
For consultative workshop**

By

Center for Development and Capacity Building (CDCB)

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Table of Content

	Page
I. Introduction	1
1.1 Background of Oromia Tourism Master Plan Study	3
1.2 Objectives of the review.....	4
II. Relevance of the Study.....	5
2.1 Wildlife and Ecotourism.....	5
2.2 Historical and Cultural Resources.....	8
2.3 Tourism Marketing.....	12
2.4 Human Resource and Institutional framework.....	13
2.5 Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure.....	14
III. Gaps of the Study	16
3.1 Wildlife and Ecotourism.....	16
3.2 Historical and Cultural Resources.....	17
3.3 Tourism Marketing.....	18
3.4 Manpower and institutional arrangement.....	19
3.5 Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure.....	20
IV. Ways forward	22
4.1 Wildlife and Ecotourism.....	22
4.2 Historical and Cultural Resources.....	25
4.3 Tourism Marketing.....	29
4.4 Human Resources and Institutional Frameworks.....	33
4.5 Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure.....	35
V. Recommendations from the Reviewers.....	38
VI. Conclusion.....	40
VII. Implementation Plan.....	41

I. Introduction

A comprehensive research entitled by “***The Economy of Oromia: a Perspective for Development***” was conducted in 1999 for Oromia considering wider economic sectors of the region. Detailed researches were conducted for almost all sectors with the aim to inform policy makers and to make informed policy with the ultimate goal to accelerate economic development of the region. Generally, these research documents outlined and documented resource base of the region for the entire economic and social sector, challenges and opportunities, and made workable recommendations and designed short, medium and long-run project proposals for development of sectors. These comprehensive researches consisted of about 150 studies on different sectors of the region were conducted by the time. Unfortunately, these research outputs and development proposals remained unused and had not been considered in development planning of the region.

Currently, the Center for Development and Capacity Building (CDCB) considered conducting comprehensive research communications of the research outputs as a best alternative before engaging in conducting new researches. Towards this end, CDCB had screened 45 study documents out of the 150 study documents taking into account their importance for immediate use and priorities of the region. The “***Oromia region tourism master plan study***” is among the 45 sector studies considered for the research outputs communications with Oromia regional state officials and representatives of the pertinent institutions in the region.

Therefore, this document is the review of the Oromia Region Tourism Master plan Study document prepared for Oromia Regional State’s Tourism Sector Development consultative workshop.

1.1 Background of the *Oromia Region Tourism Master Plan Study*

The Oromia tourism master plan study had covered five thematic areas of the sector each with separate volume and detailed studies were conducted under each theme. The five thematic areas covered are: Wildlife and Ecotourism, Historical and Cultural resources, Tourism Marketing, Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure, and Human Resources and Institutional Frameworks. Main report of the Tourism master plan study that compiles the five study documents and executive summary of the whole study was also prepared in addition to report on study of the separate thematic areas. These two documents, particularly the executive summary, are made available in a manner useful for high level communication.

The Master Plan document attempted to offer a most comprehensive approach and analysis for tourism development in Oromia. Additionally, it articulates a holistic approach to the management of the Regional tourism industry. It has sought to identify major challenges and issues which must be addressed in order to achieve the growth of the sector and conservation of the Region's natural and cultural resources. The Master Plan set out a roadmap for a resource-based tourism development approach in Oromia and includes recommendations on policy issues, strategic programs, priority areas of development and projects, and activities in a 10 year implementation framework (2000-2010). In this sense, it marks an important milestone for the systematic development of Oromia's tourism sector.

With the aim to communicate the research outputs on the ' Oromia tourism master plan study' to Oromia regional state and pertinent institutions in the region, CDCB formed a technical team to review the study that was conducted in 1999. The technical team thoroughly reviewed the five study reports in reference their relevance to the current situations. The persistence of challenges identified in the reports was also evaluated. Focus was also given to gaps of the studies that might undermine the rigorousness of the study was also identified. Apparently, the master plan was not consulted in an effort to develop the tourism sector of the region. However, it is likely that some of the tourism development proposals identified in the studies had been implemented in one or another way. Therefore, intensive consultation with knowledgeable experts about tourism developments in the region from Oromia Culture and Tourism bureau with ample experience was conducted to identify gaps between the proposed

plans in the studies and implemented plans. The review of study documents are followed by giving way forwards on how to utilize recommendation relevant to the current context and means of filling the gaps for the development of the tourism sector in the region.

1.2 Objectives of the review

General Objectives

The general objective of this review is to use the research output already produced and high regional importance to Oromia regional state officials and representatives of the pertinent institutions in the region. It will also help in improving the understanding of regional officials and experts on the role of research and various capacity building activities in addressing socio-economic problems and enhancing the utilization of unused potentials by creating the right institutions for sustainable development. It expected to be used by Oromia Regional State Tourism council to make evidence based/informed decisions regarding the development of the regions Tourism sector.

Specific objectives

The workshop could have the following specific objectives:

- To give evidence based recommendations for the regional Tourism council to make informed decisions on the development of the region's tourism sector.
- to create awareness of the regional government and executive bodies on challenges and development prospective in tourism sector,
- to assess the resource base and tourism potentials of the region and examine available opportunities for their development,
- to assist the regional government in identifying potential gaps in the performance of tourism development,
- to avail the tourism resources of the region that helps in the formulation of programs for the development of tourism in the region.
- to support the region's effort to have its own data base for planning, monitoring and evaluation of its development activities, by reconsidering the region's existing institutional setups in implementing their mandates.

- to draw lessons and general recommendations for changes in a pragmatic approach and making the necessary interventions to meet the expected outcomes with positive impact on the tourism sector of the region.

II. Relevance of the Study

This section presents the relevance of the study report and potential tourism resources identified by the report. The general evaluation of the reviewers team on the Oromia tourism master plan, prepared in 1999, suggested usefulness of the study results. The documents had important medium-term and long-term plans that could have lifted the region's tourism sector to a higher level had they been implemented. The report had very well addressed the relevance of tourism sector to the region's economic development. It had been indicated that Oromia has untapped tourism potential and the reviewers also have a belief that the region is miles away from exploiting the benefit from the sector. The relevance of the Oromia Tourism Master Plan to the current situation or its implementation will be discussed under the six thematic areas (Wildlife and Ecotourism, Historical and Cultural resources, Tourism Marketing, Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure, and Human Resources and Institutional Frameworks) as follows.

2.1 Wildlife and Ecotourism

The report had made an effort to document inventory of wildlife in the region across Protected Areas (PAs) - National Parks, Wildlife Reserve, Sanctuary, Controlled Hunting Areas and Community Based Wildlife Conservation Areas- of the region. There were 3 National Parks, 4 Wildlife Reserves and 4 Controlled Hunting Areas in Oromia when the Master Plan was prepared. It clearly showed the regional untapped potential as the home of both endemic and non endemic wildlife and birds as compared to other regions of the country. Its approach was very interesting as it follow a bottom up and agro ecological zones and detailed presentation of categories of wildlife and their touristic importance. It had also been indicated the existence of natural habitat for wildlife in all zones of the region for different types of birds and wildlife. The report rightly emphasized on purposes of PAs and biodiversity protection., though the important function of many protected areas is far from the only purpose explained. Economic role is an important consideration in the development of many protected areas. In particular, the economic

impact of tourism in protected areas is analyzed from the view point of its contribution to local community, regional and national economic development.

In addition to PAs, the study had also made assessments of other natural attractions of the Region including the Rift Valley Lakes, crater lakes, hot springs, mountains, scenic beauties, landscapes, natural caves, waterfalls, etc and their potential touristic values. It also assessed and proposed types of infrastructure, services and facilities required to develop these natural resources into tourism products and destinations.

The study has assessed the overall status of PAs- their conservation and management problems, legal issues, boundary problems, institutional and human power issues, and proposed some important legal and policy needs, institutional frameworks/arrangements, infrastructure, services and facilities required to tape them into tourism destinations.

The report had emphasized that the protected areas in the region face significant challenges ranging from human-wildlife conflicts, human encroachment, lack of species or resource audits (which actually makes it difficult to ascertain the extent, for instance, to which species are threatened and the level of intervention required), poaching of both flora and fauna (e.g. charcoal harvesting, firewood etc), lack of appropriate infrastructure such as access roads necessary to enhance both accessibility for visitors and more importantly to better manage such areas. Clearly, these problems could be attributed to the lack of protected area site management plan based on IUCN standard. It is important to note that it is not enough to simply have such plans, but that there should also be concomitant commitment to their implementation. Such plans should, for instance, bounding legal frameworks (Gazetting) , concisely detail zoning schemes and programs such as on ecological issues, tourism development, community partnerships where applicable and protected areas operations and security supported with sound budgeting commitments. As such, the report could serve as basic reference for further strategic actions.

Despite the fact that it is now quit long time since the study was conducted, relevance of the findings and recommendations of the study report on wildlife and ecotourism is indisputable as many of the finding and recommendations are believed to be valid. Particularly, these days when

the government of Ethiopia seemed to be determined to pursue a green economy, Oromia region with great potential for nature-based tourism and wildlife will be in a right position to benefit from the sector. As such, information on wildlife and nature-based tourism is crucial to design an informed policy for tourism development in the region. It would also be important to understand most of the challenges identified and recommendations made in the report are still valid. For example, the problems of boundary and legal gazetting, lack of management plans, lack of policies and strategies on utilization of wildlife resources, problems of institutional arrangements and human resources, Lack of cooperation and collaboration with neighbouring regional states on trans-regional PAs, ex. Awash National Park, limited community participation and benefits, lack of tourism infrastructure, services and facilities... etc are still persisting issues in current PAs..

The plan had proposed primary sites of potential development and types of infrastructure needed to enhance the conservation and preservation of natural and cultural resource. Moreover the study had proposed three sites of natural resources to be nominated to World Heritage Property, of which one PA – Bale Mountain National Park is currently in WH Tentative List.

Nature-based tourism is seen in the region as an avenue through which the prevailing tourism product, which is predominantly cultural and heritage-based, could be diversified. It is worth noting that the study suggested, nature-based tourism products rely heavily on the natural environment and consequently its sustainability and conservation is important for the long-term development of the industry.

It should also be appreciated that the success and sustainability of the tourism industry in the region will depend on the extent to which such natural resources are sustainably exploited for tourism use. Conservation is thus one of the routes to achieving the sustainability of such resources. The relationship between tourism and the resources, on which it relies, both natural and cultural, should thus be seen as being symbiotic.

The study had emphasized that the wild animals (mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, fishes and insects) are mainly restricted in the wildlife protected areas of the region and deserve strong attention for conservation and tourism development.

The recommendations made by the study is that only through a combination of strategic interventions, effective institutional structures for multi-stakeholder engagement, and increased investment in tourism would drastically increases employment-generation potentials of Oromia's tourism sector. This combination of measures will help to improve the tourism sector's status from underperforming to a more competitive and economically productive one in the short to medium term. The study could be used as main reference for policy making and research in the future; hence the report must be consulted for immediate use.

2.2 Historical and Cultural Resources

This part of the study report on relevance of 'Oromia tourism master plan' covered historical and cultural heritages of the region. The study had tried to make an assessment and preliminary inventory of the cultural resources of Oromia, and recognized that the region is endowed with many cultural and historical resources. The study claimed that Oromo Nation constitutes the major segment of the Ethiopian cultural and historical spectrum or kaleidoscope. The study was aimed to encapsulate the rich and diverse cultural and historical resources of the region, to highlight the role of cultural and historical heritages in tourism development and synthesize the problems/constraints which impede the preservation and use of the cultural and historical resources. It is intended to present a realistic and viable strategic action to enhance the preservation of these cultural resources which are neglected and use them as important tourism resources/products. The cultural and historical resources of Oromia were grouped into the following categories:

- **Historical sites:** seats and assembly places of Oromo people such as Gumi Gayyo, Kubi Corraa, Gumi Dibe, Futo, Adola, Oda Dogi, Oda Bisil, Oda Bultum, Oda Nabe, Jimma and the surrounding as birth place of coffee, birth place of Abba Gammachis, the Portuguese Bridge,

- **Oromo Music, dances and folklores**
- **Handcrafts, festivities and market places.**
- **Palaces and museums:** Daj. Kumsa Palace, Abba Jifar Palace, Jimma Museum, Wellega museum, Addis Alem Mariyam Museum, small museums at Debre Libanos and Tullu Gudo in Ziway
- **Pre-historic sites and ancient caves** – Melka Kunture pre-historical archaeological site, cave paintings in Hararge (23), Sof Umar cave system, megalithic sites
- **Spiritual and traditional worship places:-** ex, Irrecha, monasteries, churches, mosques, shrines, etc (ex. dirre Sheikh Hussein, Ula Quni,, Sheikh Umar; Debre Libanos Asebot, Qulubi, Ziquala, Adadi, Itisa, also others like Mendida Mariam, Duber Gebreal, etc. Places like Debre Libanos, Itisa Tekle Haymanot, Ziquala, Asebot, Washa Michael are not only famous for being monasteries and sacred sites but also for their breathtaking natural sceneries and landscapes. Moreover these holy places have several antiquities which are additional attractions in themselves.

The report is well organized and it has considered more of practical issues which are important for the conservation and development of historical and cultural tourism products. This study has described the sources of data and consulted literatures. The study report had made an effort to assess historical and cultural resources of the region and covered some important historical sites. The need for conservation of heritage and cultural resources is also discussed very well in the report. However, assessment of the resources may need further work to have a complete record of historical and cultural resources inventory in the region. Designing strategy to develop these resources to produce a marketable tourism product from the resources also needs further work. Yet, this study document is very important and could serve as base for further research. The study had made a remarkable attempt of inventorying and assessment of the Region's cultural resources zone by zone and analyzed the state of their conservation and preservation of each cultural property. The study has analyzed each cultural heritage separately, the state of their conditions, needed conservation intervention, infrastructure and services, and other constraints separately.

The study had analyzed major challenges and constraints for the proper utilization of cultural heritage in socioeconomic development which is still valid. The study had identified the following constraints as a major impediment for utilization of the region's cultural heritage for tourism development which is valid to the current situation:

1. **Institutional, policy, and legal issues**- lack of regional cultural policy, lack of proper cultural institution with clear and focused mandates, weak linkages between culture bureau and its key stakeholders, lack of human capacity, etc
2. **Lack of awareness**- public authorities and the general public lack awareness on the importance of culture in development, and give less attention to the sector.
3. **Lack of infrastructure**, facilities and services at important heritage sites.
4. **Weak promotion**- no systematic and skilful promotion of cultural heritage to tourist market.
5. **Lack of conservation and preservation** of cultural heritage

Assessing the relevance of the study document is a key objective of this review work considering the long time when the study was conducted. The review team made an intensive review of the study document and made analysis of current situation to evaluate the relevance of the report. The general consensus on evaluation of the relevance of the document is that the document is still relevant in many ways. The study report could serve as basic reference for future research and gives direction and focus areas in historical and cultural heritage conservation and development in the region, but it should be clear that it needs to be substantiated with further research. Moreover, the recommendations and project proposals are very important for historical and cultural heritage conservation, preservation and development and they are still relevant though few of these have already been implemented in one way or another. The challenges identified in the study report are also still valid though there was a tendency to generalize constraints across all areas of the region.

Moreover the study had attempted to highlight their social and touristic values. It also proposed immediate intervention measures to safeguard these cultural resources. It had also proposed some outstanding cultural properties (ex. Dirre Sheikh Hussein, Sof Umar Cave, monasteries of

Debre Libanos and Ziqal, Lake Wonchi and its monastery) to be nominated into World Heritage List.

The study confirmed the richness of the region in diverse cultural heritage and resources with great socioeconomic values in terms of employment opportunities and income generation. The study had highlighted that cultural resources of Oromia have a tremendous potential for the development of the tourism industry. The study emphasized the intrinsic values of cultural heritage to the people, and the complementarities between cultural and natural attractions in enhancing tourist experiences and the growing interest of international tourists in cultural and natural experiences. Moreover, the production of crafts has been identified as offering great potential for job creation and income generation, yet the economic potential of local handcraft products and a region's cultural heritage at large has been largely untapped.

A more interesting aspect of this study report is that it had forwarded a very sensible recommendations and proposals for the conservation and development of historical and cultural heritage of the Oromia. For example, **establishing museums and Oromo cultural villages were recommended and the one now already established in Finfinne is among the recommendations.** The report has several recommendations that are still valid and worth consideration. Among these are the ideas about **promoting horse riding as one of important Oromo culture, the idea about Oromo cultural show, and the need for further development of Oromo cultural handicrafts. It also assessed the status of conservation of some built heritage such as the Royal Palaces of King Abba Jifar and King Kumsa Moroda and the need for their restoration.**

The study had made significant recommendations to conserve and enhance the contribution of cultural heritage of Oromia in the development of the tourism sector. The following are the major ones:

- Preparing cultural policy and strengthening institutional capability and set up
- Undertaking thorough inventory and documentation of cultural heritage
- Enhancing conservation and preservation practices
- Conducting a continuous public awareness creation campaign

- Inscription of heritage of OUV into WHL- DSH; SUC; Debre Libanos and Ziqua; Wenchi lake
- **Enhancing of promotional work**
- Establishing Oromia Cultural Village in Bishoftu
- **Creating a Regional Tourism and Handcraft Training Center**
- Need of training in conservation practices and enhancement of handcraft skills
- Enhancing and maintaining museums and palaces

2.3 Tourism Marketing

This volume of ‘Oromia tourism master plan’ study covered tourism marketing profile of the region in detail. It has considered more of practical issues which are important for tourism marketing of the region. This report had documented an interesting demand and supply analysis of tourism product using quantitative analysis though it did not consider risk and shocks absorption. Its approach in demand forecasting is scientific and methodologically it utilized sound and good assumptions. The report attempted to show the general trend of tourism demand globally, Africa, Ethiopia and Oromia region and showed tourist product positioning in an interesting way (“a maze of nature’s architect”-Sof Oumar cave). The report made tourist demand analysis by purpose (business tourists, vacation, transit, adventure etc) and destination which can serve as base for appropriate mix of product development and marketing strategy to use tourist revenue to the maximum benefit of the region.

Resource assessment based marketing analysis and Zonal based tourist destination analysis of the study sounds well. The projects identified by the study as medium and long term are interesting and show the level of rigor of the study. The report indicated various tourist circuits and routes and use of all the promotion materials that would enhance tourism development in the region. The Oromia culture and tourism bureau has attempted to use most of the promotion materials suggested by the study without noticing its existence. But the distribution channels and quality of the printed promotion materials are below standards and failed to bring impressive results. However, some of the points raised in the report are either implemented or in the process

of implementation and hence further study may help to identify current marketing potentials and appropriate marketing strategy for sustainable tourism development in the region.

Evaluation of the relevance of the study document is one of important objective of this review work given that the study stayed a bit long since it has been documented. The review team made an intensive review of the study document and made analysis of current situation to evaluate the relevance of the report. The general consensus on evaluation of the relevance of Oromia Tourism Marketing document is that the document is still relevant in many ways. Specifically, evaluation checklist used by the study was good and can be used for future developments as well. It emphasized product positioning and promotion through various Medias which still needs great attention. Data base creation, management and use of efficient promoter are still relevant. The study report could serve as basic reference for future research and gives direction and focus areas in tourism marketing development in the region. Moreover, the recommendations and project proposals of the study document are very important for tourism marketing development and they are still relevant though few of these have already been implemented in one way or another. The challenges identified in the study report are also still valid though there was a tendency to generalize constraints across all areas of the region.

2.4 Human Resource and Institutional framework

The report presented is very concise and presented the approach of the study clearly. It conducted a detailed evaluation of the tourist facilities and manpower availability by zones. From the available manpower only about 2.6% satisfied minimum standards which indicated urgent attention for the sector if the region plans to benefit from tourism industry. Its approach of projecting manpower required was good. However, to use the recommendation of the study to the maximum advantage of the region it needs serious data updating and comprehensive study is needed. It would be sufficient to indicate areas of interventions for different stakeholders involved.

The review team made an intensive review of the study document and made analysis of current situation to evaluate the relevance of the report. The general consensus on evaluation of the

relevance of the document is that the document is still relevant in many ways. It can serve as the reference for further and elaborated assessment and extensive study. The study is relevant from its approach for further research and planning on institutional and tourism manpower assessment in the region. It can be used as a reference for further assessments and study. It tried to establish the assessment of manpower of tourism training institutes and Tourism office with the quality of tourism industry management and professional development. Awareness creation, promotion of private institutes and government establishment of training institutes outside of Addis Ababa and training of required manpower for management of the sector in foreign Universities was suggested which could still need attention.

The challenges presented in the report as well as those identified through consultative meeting with experts in the office which still remain challenge for the development of tourism industry in the region and relevant to the current conditions.

- First and for most lack of coordination between various Bureaus in the region in the planning, developing and implementing projects related to each sector still remain challenge in the region. (e.g. investment project, land and natural resource management, wildlife conservation);
- Inadequacy of trained personals and inappropriate placement of manpower in the tourism management, tourist facility provision and tourist guide;
- Inadequacy of regulatory framework for classifying the quality and standards of hotels and lodges.
- Inappropriate institutional arrangement or overlap of responsibility of different offices in the region (forest and wildlife conservation, national park management, investment license and investment land management).

2.5 Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure

This volume of the study assessed tourism infrastructure and facilities available in Oromia national regional state in detail. It critically analyzed problems related to infrastructure and tourist facilities in the region. The study's approach of indicating development plans at different levels and time could be seen as the strength of the study and its level of rigor. It tried to show the centrality of infrastructure for economic development in general and tourism in particular. The study indicated the

importance of engaging different stakeholders for its development and this still needs attention. It has indicated several bottleneck, hurdles and problems for the development of tourism industry in the region with regard to tourism infrastructure and facilities. On the basis of problems identified it has proposed different solutions. However, most of the problems raised are either addressed currently or changed their form and hence need different approach for their solution than what is proposed by the study.

The study is extensive and could be used as reference for further study and assessment. Beside, some of its recommendations presented below still need attention and should be reconsidered by the concerned offices in the region and private businesses.

In this volume of the report on tourist facilities and infrastructure the reviewers identified several constraints indicated by the time of study and still partially or fully persist and thus team appreciates them as the challenge of the sector that requires consideration.

- Lack of proper up keep and maintenance, lack of trained personnel;
- Inadequate and/or worn-out furniture fixture and equipment and operating equipment in old hotels;
- Lack of tourist facilities in tourist attraction centers and other infrastructure and also lack of incentives for investors to build hotels in the remote area attraction centers;
- Lack of or inadequacy of feeder roads to tourist attraction centers, including access roads in parks, conservation areas and the like;
- Infrastructures like channel of communication, electric power, water, etc do not exist in most of the tourist attraction sites. In some towns, these facilities are in many cases malfunctioning;
- Constraints related to Land Use Policy were raised by the consultants which are summarized below.
 - ☞ There is a conflicting interest between agriculture, settlement and tourism resources which needs detail study to find lasting solution for the problems.
 - ☞ No cooperation between different stockholders for management and development of tourist facilities (Orthodox church etc)

- ☞ Management of wildlife is by other organization and tourism management is by other office.

III. Gaps of the Study

It is unquestionable that the study has documented invaluable information that is important and is ahead of the time when the report was prepared. Given the time and realities under which the study was conducted, one could hardly focus on limitations of the study. This section presents gaps of the study. The focus is given to gaps to further develop the study document and update with new data. Accordingly gaps in information to be generated and works that need to be done will be discussed under this part of the report per the five thematic areas of the Oromia Region's Tourism Master Plan.

3.1 Wildlife and Ecotourism

The study report on wildlife and ecotourism had addressed a wide range of issues pertinent to the subject. However, always there is room for improvement and learning. Given the time the study was conducted it would quite normal to see range of gaps identified. Therefore, the team tried to emphasize that the following identified gap are only meant to give direction for future work on potentials of natural resources for tourism development.

- The recorded wildlife was mostly from the national parks and some conserved areas. Consequently, there is a strong feeling that the report had not exhaustively covered the wildlife species that are available in the region. For example, *Chillimo*, *Yayo*, *Dhati-Walal* and other forest and habitats for wildlife as well as biodiversity hot spots in the region were not considered. This suggests the need to have an up to date record of wildlife habitats and PAs that are potential tourist attraction for planning of effective tourism development.
- The study appears to propose for Oromia to focus on development of ecotourism. This is good, but ecotourism is one segment- specialized segment- of nature-based tourism. Natural resources and PAs can also attract several segments of tourist markets such as nature, cultural heritage, trekking, adventure, educational, agro-tourists, community based tourism, mass tourism etc.) The study almost entirely recommended ecotourism as a major

alternative for Oromia's tourism development whereas the natural resources of Oromia can be tapped to attract several segments of nature-based tourism).

- Community participation (in) and (benefit from) the wildlife and PAs was barely discussed. In contrary, the study seemed to take old approach that focus was given to guarding forests instead of ensuring community participation and ownership of the process.
- The study didn't consider marshland conservation which is important area for biodiversity with high potential for tourist attraction (ex. Dhati Walal National Park).

The aforementioned gaps could be filled through conducting comprehensive studies on:

1. Study on Eco-tourism potentials of the region and its utilization strategies including community participation approaches
2. Study on the region's wetland (marshland) potentials and its biodiversity resources including its utilization modalities.

3.2 Historical and Cultural Resources

The identification of gaps in the study report is solely aimed at giving clear direction for future work on historical and cultural heritage and not to duplicate researches and not to waste resources. It is aimed to help future researches/experts and concerned institutions to address the gaps and not to repeat the same mistakes while researching historical and cultural heritages of the region.

- There is huge gap in considering tangible and intangible saleable heritage tourism products in the region. The study entirely focused on tangible heritages and almost ignored intangible heritages that have significant value to the Oromo. For example Gada system and irrecha was just written in a few lines. These intangible heritages have a very significant socio-political and cultural importance to the Oromo. Particularly, Gada system is invaluable ancient civilization of democratic governance system that the Oromo could offer to the world. Irrecha could also help to show partly the Oromo's world view and philosophy to the world.
- Martyr memorial places (e.g. Chalenko, Anole) were also not considered as marketable tourism products.
- Handcrafts of the region (cultural clothes and household items) also need further considerations.

- Emphasis was not given to employment and job creation potential of culture sector particularly for women.
- The linkage between cultural heritage and natural heritage, the complementarities of the two as tourism products and experiences were not explored/emphasised
- Low attention was given to the development and preservation of cultural values of the region.
- Despite the existence of cultural and natural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value that deserve inscription into World Heritage List, no property from Oromia has been enlisted so far. These are areas where further investigations and work is needed.

3.3 Tourism Marketing

The study focused on quantitative analysis of tourism demand and supply of tourist products. It could have been strengthened by including qualitative analysis (particularly in Oromia case).

- Almost all national promotion means focused on the historical routes of the country, but the writers did not appreciate this as a problem and bottlenecks for the development of tourism in the region.
- Lack of accurate data on the number of tourist visitation to Ethiopia was the major problem to analyse the trends of tourism growth. The problem was more serious in the case of Oromia because the few existing data refers only to the national level. Due to this problem it was understandable at the study time that the number of tourists to Oromia, length of their stay, amount of their expense, purpose of their visits, etc that are indicated in the study cannot be taken for granted. It is considered that this regional data should be approached cautiously. A similar situation exists for accommodation statistics. Consequently, the research data included in this report is limited to research conducted by the Consultants field study. It is important for the region in the future to develop its own reliable and comprehensive tourism data base. Without a reliable and comprehensive tourism data it is difficult to forecast trends and design appropriate policy and guidelines for decision making.
- Oromia must adopt effective regional marketing plans and strategies to confront the serious challenges which have been facing the region. These include competition from traditional tourist attraction regions (the historic route/northern circuit), many of which have always

been, in essence, tourist destinations, but have now chosen to be more aggressive in their marketing strategies. Additionally, there are several new emerging destinations (ex. The southern region). Furthermore, the quality of our tourism product has to be enhanced in such a manner as to meet the needs of our visitors while preserving the integrity of our resource base as well as ensuring host population acceptance of our tourism development efforts.

- The study focused on use of printed materials as means of promotion. Recent information technologies like electronics media and social media could be considered for future as promotion tools. The growing importance of information technology to the travel industry is one which requires earnest attention. It is a key to the economic survival of the industry and is central to any new distribution channels, especially those going directly to customers.

3.4 Manpower and institutional arrangement

The reviewers through detailed discussion and review of the document identified the gaps between the study and what has been practiced to date. One should be clear here that efforts made by the consultants by the time need to be appreciated as it was prepared with sound standard by the time. Besides, the regional government has accomplished several things and has exerted notable effort to improve the institutional and manpower related to tourism development though the consultation to the document was not made. There are several achievements in the region: promotion of private inventors in the area, expansion of training institutions and universities that backup the sector in providing skilled and required manpower for the development of the sector. But the reviewer identified the following gaps.

- The institutional and manpower analysis of the study do not show current realities of the region. Recent developments should be shown with up to date information.
- Distributions of hotels by zone are presented but they need to be linked with the availability of tourist attraction sites.
- Tour operators are licensed by the federal office and not under control of regional office. It did not show how the regional government could manage and benefits from them. Mechanism of attracting these agents through awareness creation, developing competitive tourist product and use appropriate promotion was not given due attention.
- Educational background of hotels staff is not valid currently.

- Availability and expansion of tour and travel agents in the country is well explained. Yet, the operation of these agents is not clearly presented for Oromia region. For that matter, the existing tour operators in the country, whether it is by design or by accident, do not have sufficient knowledge of the tourist attraction sites in Oromia region.
- The organization structure and manpower analysis made by the study undergone dramatic structural changes and manpower of the organization changes as well. Therefore, this needs serious reconsideration and assessment.

3.5 Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure

The gaps observed from the report as well as from the consultative meeting made by the group are presented below under different headings.

- Information on transportation infrastructure could help to enhance tourism attraction. But they have not well discussed and analyzed this aspect of infrastructure by then;
- The study should have identified any issues and recommendations regarding key factors in providing tourism services related to safety and security, health, communication, energy and water supplies availabilities which they have either not mentioned or not thoroughly discussed;
- The study indicated the importance of up grading or construction of feeder that contribute for destination accessibly and they mentioned some of them; but there were more than 30 inaccessible but important attraction sites for which they failed to recommend road construction;
- In general this situation indicates that existing situation/by then of resource and infrastructure data gathering lack completeness or at least not gathered to sufficient extent.
- From the nature/characteristic of Oromia tourist attraction, sustainable and ecotourism aspect of development is important or could be said indispensable, however, they also failed to analyze these aspects of managing destination.
- Tourist facilities are concentrated in the center and need different incentives scheme to attract investors in other areas.
- Connecting roads to the tourist attraction sites are not properly addressed

IV. Ways forward

The primary aim of this review work is to explore ways to use the research result that had already been produced before resorting to conduct new research for tourism sector development of the region. Towards this end, based on the assessments made on the relevance of the Oromia Tourism Master Plan Study documents and gaps observed in the study documents the review team has come up with the following ways forward to be considered under each thematic areas (Wildlife and Ecotourism, Historical and Cultural resources, Tourism Marketing, Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure, and Human Resources and Institutional Frameworks) as follows.

4.1 Wildlife and Ecotourism

There have been several changes and developments on ground and in approaches towards PAs and wildlife as well as natural resources utilization since the study was undertaken. Ethiopia uses protected areas as part of its biological resources sustainable and wise utilization mechanisms and the major types of these protected areas include National Parks, Wildlife Reserve, Sanctuary, Controlled Hunting Areas and Community Based Wildlife Conservation Areas. Currently, there are sixty-six documented wildlife protected areas in the country, in which twelve national parks and two wildlife sanctuaries are managed by the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) at the federal level and the remaining Wildlife Protected Areas are protected by the respective Regional States of the country. Thus Wildlife Protected Areas of the region have greater potential for nature based tourism development. The review team realized that, most of the identified challenges PAs are still valid and need due attention. Apart from lack of legal boundary (Gazettment) all the protected areas do not have proper management plan which is a precondition to run effective conservation practises and sustainable tourism development. Owing to these basic conditions now many of the national parks of Oromia lack proper tourism services and facilities which are important to satisfy the needs of tourists and enhance tourist experience. Therefore; the great potential of the country's wildlife tourism is not well tapped.

The Master Plan under review had assessed conservation conditions of the PAs in Oromia. It concluded that the Wildlife Protected Areas of the region have greater potential for nature based tourism development, and Oromia's significant natural and cultural values hold the key to its future potential as a popular tourism destination but currently these opportunities lie dormant.

It concluded that the PAs and natural resources of the Region were not conserved appropriately and some of them were even deteriorating. Major reasons identified were institutional issues, human resource dearth, lack of policy and strategy, lack of management plan, legal framework, lack of demarcation of boundary /gazettiment, lack of infrastructure, services and facilities,... It also proposed recommendations for these problems and challenges that are still valid today. The way forward section of this review would suggest some recommendations taking into account the study report and current situations and challenges.

A. Institutional framework, policy, regulations issues

1. Reorganizing and strengthening institutions working on tourism sector

The need for a close relationship between tourism and conservation of natural resources should be a priority in the development of PAs. At the regional level, the responsibility of conserving the PAs/natural resources rests upon the OFWE, while that of conserving the cultural heritage and tourism development is the OCTB. The relation, cooperation and coordination between OCTB and OFWE are weak. So far there is no any established alignment to strengthen the tourism potential of PAs. Tourism planning and development in the region is uncoordinated and fragmented. Therefore, there is a need to establish alignment between the OCTB and OFWE. Establishing a framework of regional conservation and preservation of natural and cultural tourist attractions is the first step. This measure would be important to ensure the proper conservation practices as well as sustainable tourism development for the benefit of the local communities around the conservation areas in particular and the country as a whole. A collaborative framework has to be developed among national, regional and destination stakeholders to ensure the alignment of tourism development initiatives with environmental and cultural strategies and plans.

2. Establishing necessary policies, regulations, guidelines

- **Designing Parks Tourism Policy.** The regional government has to establish policies, regulations and guidelines on the proper conservation and utilization of PAs for tourism purposes. The Region has to develop the Regional tourism strategy to implement the NTDP. In addition to the Regional Tourism Strategy, the sector is also in great need of a

regional strategy for conservation areas, which could create an additional basis for eco-tourism and community-based tourism development in protected areas.(regional level *protected area tourism policy*)

- While sustainability underpins all activities within the development of the tourism sector, special attention must be paid to sensitive, vulnerable sites. Strict tourism guidelines will be developed in compliance with national and regional conservation and protection policies and within Management Plans for protected areas and heritage sites.
- The interests and needs of local community have to be respected. Local community has to be benefited from the development of CAs. They have to participate in all aspects of the development and conservation plan.
- Designing Regional tourism development plan is very important. For instance, some tourism development along the shores of hinterland lakes are taking place without a proper plan, putting at risk the attractiveness of the places and the sustainability of the tourism development. (Ex. The Rift Valley Lakes and Bishoftu area lakes).

3. Design proper destination development and management plans and Operational guidelines in place

- **Designing park management plan:** Park plans contain a variety of subjects, one of which is how tourism should be managed, impacts mitigated, and opportunities enhanced. Developing a park tourism plan requires integrating with other plans for the protected area, such as a wildlife management plan, fire management plan and vegetation management plan, zonation ...etc. This will solve growing and unresolved conflict between the sustainable management of Wildlife Protected Areas on the one hand and the interests of the governing body (government) and local communities on the other.
- Each PAs in Oromia need to have destination development and management plans. The plans should take into account the tourism potentials of the PAs. Without these plans it would be difficult or impossible to conserve and utilize these properties. A landscape approach should be adopted when preparing management plans.
- Many of the national parks of Oromia lack proper tourism services and facilities which are important to satisfy the needs of tourists and enhance tourist experience. Services and

facilities expected in the nature based tourism includes proper internal roads, foot tracks, signage, resting sights, tended camps and standard camping sites with the required facilities are some of the important facilities needed by tourists. However, many of wildlife protected areas of the region lack these important services and facilities. Therefore; the great potential of the region's wildlife as economic driver through tourism is not well tapped.

4.2 Historical and Cultural Resources

After critical evaluation of the relevance of the study and based on the identified gaps in the study report, the following recommendations are suggested as ways forward regarding historical and Cultural Resources of Oromia :

- The Regional State of Oromia has to have its own Cultural policy and strategies to implement it.
- Heritage management requires accurate and up-to-date inventories. However, for Oromia comprehensive picture of heritage is still incomplete as there are few inventories of heritage sites and monuments, thus rendering effective management impossible. Inventory and documentation of cultural heritage of Oromia should be made urgently. Without regional inventory, conservation and development of heritage is impossible.
- World Heritage Sites are among the world most visited and heavily marketed tourism attractions, forming the basis of national tourism products. OCTB has to focus and make every possible effort in identifying cultural properties of Outstanding Universal Values to inscribe them in World Heritage List.
- Gada system and irrecha needs further effort to make it world heritage. The need and relevance of promotion of these two heritages should be considered at a national level. In relation to this, it would be wise to give national holiday position for irrecha in national calendar. Giving proper position for Oromo historical and cultural heritages in national museums also needs to be ensured.
- More effort to turn Irrecha to tourism product like carnival. Promoting cultural sports like horse racing could be considered as part of this.

- Obviously, one of the proposals to establish a museum in Finfinne has already been implemented. Considering establishment Oromia cultural village in Bishoftu would significantly in promoting tangible and intangible heritages of the Oromo.
- Identification and categorization of the significance/values of the property/element have to be classified according to their significant local, Regional, national, and international values and should be demarcated and gazetted. OCTB should have guidelines and criteria for the classification. Each should have its own management and development plan. To sustainably manage valuable cultural heritage a framework must be developed that guides this process.
- Research and conservation of cultural heritage should be given appropriate attention in the structure of OCTB. Currently there is not a department or a team for research and conservation of cultural heritage.
- Use UNESCO’s cultural heritage conservation, management and preservation guidelines. Additionally, a better integration of WHS management with existing local and regional development strategies, as well as with overall cultural heritage (tangible, intangible) management strategies within OCTB, is also critical.
- Encouraging private sector engagement in cultural industries.
- Collaboration among all stakeholders – public and private sector, non-governmental organisations, communities, trade associations – is necessary if effective resource conservation is to take place. Sustainable management requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable management is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary.
- The role of the cultural and creative industries is critical. Ethiopia, and in particular Oromia, has very few cultural sector exports and weak ancillary services (culture and entertainment services or products) that undermine the value of the tourism experience in Oromia. Competitive ancillary services can play a critical role in enriching the tourism experience, as well as increasing tourists’ average stay and expenditure. Research shows that Ethiopia’s **craft sector has the highest pro-poor impact** (: 55 percent of tourist

expenditure in crafts benefits poor households in the form of wages and/or profits) relative to accommodation, excursions, construction, and food and beverages. Traditional Crafts and Arts :-Oromia is well known for its beautiful artisanal craft products of diverse features namely jewellery, metal works; traditional leather crafts; traditional textile crafts and garments; basketry, Bamboo works and other vegetal fibre works; woodworks, stone and horn carvings as well as pottery and ceramics. There is a lack of permanent spaces to properly display and sale crafts to tourists (and residents) in a pleasant environment. Lack of plans and initiatives to support small artisans, linkages with tourism companies, hotels, and tourists are the major constraints. Production and marketing of Oromo handicrafts would help to promote the historical and cultural heritages we have. However, craft production is very limited except cultural clothes. Therefore, it would be important to create handcraft training centre. This could help as capacity building (skill development) in the tourism sector.

- Oromia is the land of diverse traditional Performing arts including music and dancing with rich cultural musical instrument. These potentials are not properly developed or integrated in the tourist product of the region so far.
- Ethiopian Culinary Tradition:- Oromia as the land of diverse culture has variety of unique culinary traditions which can be develop into Gourmet tourism products. This culinary tradition of food and beverage usually go together with the famous traditional coffee ceremony.
- **Colorful Traditional Festivals:-**Oromia is renowned for its traditional festivals that in most cases reproduce traditions that have been maintained for centuries. These festivals attracts international tourists as well as a high number of domestic tourism , however they are not well developed as tourism products specially in terms of services provision facilities and maximizing for economic impacts in the respective destinations. Ex. Irrecha
- Non involvement of the private sector. It is now clear that heritage conservation is the business of all, including the private sector. The private sector benefits from heritage (cultural and natural) through tourism and other tourism industries, but is not considered a major stakeholder in heritage conservation. The result is that the private sector has done little or nothing to support heritage conservation in Oromia/Ethiopia.

- Other intangible aspects of Oromia’s rich heritage relate to traditional crafts, music, traditional festivals and ceremonies, and rural way of life. Most intangible heritage—as well as current expressions of Oromia culture in the form of modern music, gastronomy, visual arts and sports—remain unexplored avenues for tourism development.
- Running in Oromia∇ Distance running has produced many champions in Ethiopia. Abebe Bikila became a legend when he won the Olympic Marathon in Rome in 1960 running on barefoot; he also won the Olympic Marathon in Tokyo in 1964, with an Olympic record. The world famous champions Derartu Tullu, Haile Gebreselassie , Kenenissa Bekele, Tirunesh Dibaba, Mesert Defar have won gold medals with new records in several World Championship and Olympic races. Oromia is the source of these world class champions. It is important to promote the region’s cultural potential through these athletes. It is important to build on the image of the great Ethiopian athletes to initiate the potential sport tourism such as mountain running in Oromia (like the Great Ethiopian Run).
- Information and statistical update of historical and cultural heritages.
- Encouraging collaborative research among higher institution and Oromia culture and tourism bureau. This would help to generate more rigorous information on historical and cultural heritages.
- Finance and looking for source of fund. Need to look way for raising fund from local

4.3 Tourism Marketing

After critical evaluation of the relevance of the study and based on the identified gaps in the study report, the following recommendations are suggested as ways forward:

- The regional government has limited or no significant power of influencing the activities of national tour operators and travel agencies. These organizations appear to operate with their own whims and will. The regional government has to design mechanisms to influence the activities of these organizations. Such mechanisms may include creating continuous dialogue form, enforcing the inclusion of important destinations in Oromia into their selling packages, establishing view points on the routes passing in Oromia.
- Alternatively, it is also important to encourage and support with special incentives the establishment of operators and agencies which focus their businesses in Oromia.

- Resource Requirements: The Regional government is further challenged to find the financial resources to maintain develop and augment the tourism product and marketing without compromising the very environment on which the industry is based. It is essential to adopt cooperate marketing strategy in which public-private joint marketing undertakings is utilized.
- The Oromia cultural Center must establish a “walk in” tourist information centre with full information about tourism information in the region. This includes Producing Tourism map and integrating it with possible tourism route.
- The regional culture and tourism office needs to participate in international tourism promotion. And regional tourism bureau has to have a say and position in Federal Ministry of culture and tourism (for example in ETO).
- Workshops, exhibitions, educational tours, establishing different tour clubs, familiarization tour should be mainstreamed to promote tourist destination (to encourage investors and domestic visitors) and other stakeholders.
- Linking all stakeholders in promotion activities (including neighbouring countries eg Kenya), regions and private investors (lodge owners).
- Ethiopian Airlines contribution in promotion is very limited in promoting tourist products in Oromia (Air port design, advertisements and news letter circulated in the trip) give little emphasis for this part.
- Cross border tourist movement must be facilitated with the free economy zone with neighbouring country (eg entry from Kenya via Moyale should be eased with little regulation (reconsider vehicle guarantor)).
- Oromia culture and tourism bureau needs to closely work with Hotels to use them as distributional channel for tourist products and destination promotions. As such, hotels need to serve as agent.
- Using potential tourism products (eg Sof Oumer) as brand for business and sports.
- While positioning Oromia as a region, it is suggested to consider area positioning (eg. Bale, Borena, etc).
- Oromia as regional government or as tourism office need to have a forum to discuss and claim back tourism products that were belong to Oromia. (Eg. Jimma as coffee origin, Borena Lark that has been named Sidamo Lark (Bird)).

- Working with ETO in negotiating with ETO an information desk in the Gateway Centre, where visitors will be able to obtain information about the region from Oromia specialist information officers; upgrade the Oromia cultural centre in Finfinne as regional VIC, Adama, Shashamene, Robe, Jimma, Nekemte and Ambo as local centres and also having information points at: Bishoftu, Batu, Fiche, Awash national park, Harar and Bale mountains; producing a regional travel brochure and travel map; supporting a national Visitor Information Centre (VIC) classification, branding and improvement program.
- *Strengthening regional institutional marketing capacity; Collaboration with ETO* in implementing the national strategy; maximising regional exposure in national initiatives; *motivating* to the Regional Council for increased tourism funding; *outsourcing* certain specialist promotion components such as digital marketing, MICE marketing, route and product development, etc.; *launching a concerted capacity building program* to improve knowledge and skills of tourism staff in Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau.
- Develop and Promote a compelling Oromia brand proposition and identity to ensure recognition of the region as a key destination in Ethiopia
- Collaborating with ETO to ensure Oromia plays its rightful role in supporting the execution of the national marketing strategy, while leveraging optimally promotion opportunities for Oromia and engaging in elf-initiated actions to promote Oromia and strengthening the marketing mix of the region.
- Cooperate closely with ETO in ensuring that the region gets the best possible international marketing exposure possible, launch a domestic marketing drive and focus on strengthening online promotion.
- Representation of Oromo cultural and historical Heritage in National Museum. This is true for other regions of Ethiopia.
- Modern management of the religious, historical, cultural and natural tourists' attraction areas enhance the benefit from tourism.
- Infrastructure plays prominent role in the development of a given country as a whole and tourism sector of the country. Specially, expansion of modern infrastructure (airport, rail transport) is sine quo non for boosting international tourism and tourism revenue for the

country. Thus, regional state should expand modern infrastructure in tourist attracting sites (expansion of airport, rail transport and connecting roads).

- Working with Diasporas for promotion of Oromia's tourist products. This may include Diasporas to establish business in Oromo historical and cultural and natural heritages.
- Promotion printing materials should be printed with different languages (English, French, Germany, Italian) and maintain standard publication.
- There are considerable problems related to organizational structure and institutional arrangement of the bureau. The organizational structure did not give due emphasis to marketing and promotion department. As a result, the following structural arrangement is needed.
 - Establish Marketing and Promotion Department under the office
 - Establish regional Heritage Management and Development Authority
- Develop and manage dynamic website of the office with different languages
- Inviting international media for promotion of festivals, cultural ceremony and historical resources (organizing fam-trip)
- Tourism promotion (specially using international media) needs huge budget. The office need sustainable financial sources beside the government allocated budget. The regional government should work on some policy to establish sustainable sources of Tourism Fund (e.g. Tourism Levy);
- Local community empowerment from different perspective for the successfulness of the conservation (alternative means of livelihood; benefit sharing and participatory conservation; self reinforcing tourism products/creation of value chain) would promote tourism development in the region
- Marketing and planning of tourism product must be supported by research
- Foreign exchange earning potential of the tourism product should not be over emphasized. The region should give due emphasis for promotion of local tourist and its local economic impacts.
- Resort tourism (Bishoftu, Wonchi, Dendi), religion pilgrimage (Kulubi gebreal, irreacha, debrelibanos, Shekhusen...) should be promoted well

- Conference tourism should get due attention (Adama, Bishoftu, Ambo, Woliso, and others) with creating standard post and pre-conference facilities. It has comparative advantage due to its proximity to the capital city.

There are also other factors which make Bale zone a potential tourism destination. Four main properties of Outstanding Universal Value are in the process of inscription in to World Heritage properties. These are Bale Mountains National Park (BMNP), the Sheikh Hussein Shrine and the Sof Umar cave system, and Melka Kunture Pre-historic site. Their chances of gaining World heritage status are very bright. World Heritage sites have been described as “magnets for visitors” and World Heritage designation is “virtually a guarantee that visitor numbers will increase”. World Heritage status increases the popularity of a location or destination with visitors. The Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau and other concerned bodies are pre-occupied with trying to get these natural and cultural heritage sites listed in the prestigious World Heritage List, which is fine but it appears that little work has been done so far to cope with and facilitate the development opportunities and the increasing number of visitors coming with their enlistment. There are high expectations in local communities of the opportunities which tourism could bring to relatively isolated and impoverished areas such as Dirre Sheikh Hussein and Sof Umar areas. It is important to focus on these sites as priority potential areas.

4.4 Human Resources and Institutional Frameworks

What the study recommended and still valid

- The study recommended establishing tourism training institute at regional level to produce qualified personnel for tourist facility provision;
- Institutional arrangement and organizational structure need reconsidering to enable effective development and management of cultural, historical and natural resource base of the region for tourist attraction;
- Basic and continuous training of management at different level either locally or abroad was recommended and still need attention;
- Promotion of handcraft product develop and market linkage;
- For awareness creation syllabus at different level should mainstream tourism issues;

- Establishing regional hotel and tourism training institutes and encourage private sector involvement as well.

Recommendations from the reviewers

- Enhance the linkage between tourist facility providers, handcraft workers, local tour guide and Micro and Small enterprises development to enhance self employment and poverty reduction;
- Joint work with Micro and Small enterprise agency and the bureau would improve the performance of the sector and foster entrepreneurship in the tourism sector as well;
- Land use planning and tourist attraction potential areas must be identified and allocated for different standards (e.g. Langano, Babogaya); follow ecotourism guideline, its local economic contribution for licensing investment in tourist attraction areas;
- Establish Heritage Research and Management Department under Regional Heritage Management and Development Authority proposed previously;
- Tourism is not well promoted as a center of carrier and hence enhancing the image of tourism as a center of carrier would attract more interested professional and required manpower that would manage the sector;
- Appropriate institutions must be established for the management of conservation areas in the region;
- Investment license for establishing hotels in tourist attraction site must pass prior approval for ecological, biodiversity and accommodate local realities (joint work of investment commission and Culture and tourism Bureau);
- The Bureau shall issue rules and regulations on Investment on Tourism potential area identification, development and regulation in collaboration with concerned Bureaus (investment, Agriculture, Natural resource...);
- Criteria for lodges and guest houses standardization shall be formulated by the office;
- Management of national parks in the region is mixed. Some national parks are under Federal government and some are under regional governments. Hence, relative performance of these parks need further study to establish appropriate management institution;

- Organizational structure of the Bureau of Culture and Tourism need to be reconsidered to clearly incorporate departments like Marketing and promotion department and subdivision, Heritage registration, development and management department;
- Skilled manpower is crucial for development of hotels and services, their employment potentials is also high but incentive for workers is very low; need some legal on minimum wage in this industry;
- Failure of cooperation among different bureau of the region hampers the performance of the sector which needs serious attention;
- Sustainable, multifaceted and gender sensitive training packages on handicrafts, artistic work, tourist guide and tourist facility providers need to be given due attention.

4.5 Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure

With regard to tourist infrastructure and tourist facilities the points recommended by study and the reviewer's team still recognizes them as valuable and thus worth carried on for the future.

- The document recommended formation of tourism council and this can be taken as good indicated the importance infrastructure development (Airport)
- The study recommended the formation of regional training institute outside of Addis Ababa. Appreciating the recommendation, the group suggests special regional training institute and regulatory institute. This institute should train people with low income and susceptible to shock to withstand it.
- Alternative infrastructure for the tourism development is important (rural air strip, airport) still need attention;
- Priority tourism development area should be developed infrastructural (roads, air ports or air strip);
- The study recommended that new land use policy must be promulgated encompassing the following:
 - ☞ Identification and demarcation of land to be allocated for tourism should be separately from the land to be used for other purposes;
 - ☞ Tourist facilities to be built in tourism demarcated areas must be standardized;
 - ☞ Tourist facilities to be built must as much as possible incorporates the local motive;

- ☞ The land to be allocated must be commensurate with the project, in particular prime land should not be given to projects of low standard;
- ☞ Benefit sharing mechanisms with the inhabitants of the area should be in the policy;
- Tourist facilities to be constructed must have prior approval from the concerned Bureau in order to check the project has met the minimum requirement,
- The classification and standardization must not be left to the whims and wishes of the older ones.
- Regular inspection of the facilities for up keep and maintenance, quality of accommodation and service must be carried out without fail.
- Improve, develop and expand existing tourist facilities
- Invite investors to build hotels, lodges in tourist attraction centers, through illustrated pamphlets, exhibitions, films, other promotional mechanisms etc,
- Build the necessary infrastructure in tourist attraction centers,
- Satisfy the minimum requirements at the future tourist demand by building the basis for long term development
- Improvement of road and air transport between neighboring regional states in order to facilitate the development of tourism
- Public sector plan and coordination for the execution of the necessary infrastructure with concerned authorities
- Coordination with other regional states like Afar, Somalie, Benishangul Gambella, Harari, Amhara and SNNPR for development of tourism in adjacent areas.

V. Recommendation from the Reviewers

- Encourage private public partnership in tourism training
- Joint work with Rural land management and Natural resource with culture and tourism (Institutional cooperation)
- The current practice in protected area resource use and management governing structure/institution should be established, like authority ... accountable to OCT office
- To empower women and orphanage training should be given by ODA and other NGO some tourist attraction area facility should be provided for these organization to get sustainable impact on segment of society
- Strengthen the link between regional offices and Federal government office (Tourism commission).
- Meeting of the regional tourism council is too long (6 months). Hence, establishment of subcommittee for the council to monitor the tourism activity in the region.
- Incentive structure for remote area must be different from central areas./special incentive for remote areas
- Mapping of potential tourism development areas and design different incentive schemes to encourage investors
- Development and management of tourist potential natural scenic environments need policy framework (eg hot springs)
- Need extensive survey and identification of project and invite investors in the area. (Abiyata shala, Boku geothermal, Wenchi lake etc)
- Tourist infrastructure and facilities should be geared to remote areas.

In addition to the above, the following points emanate from either the review work or considering current situations

- All the points stated in the gap analysis along with their recommendations should be considered in the future studies and development plan of Oromia tourism.
- For tourism developing need not only current resource assessment but also current infrastructure and tourist facility assessment as a mandatory.
- All gap or need analysis and development plans should be based on assessment result (qualitative and quantitative).
- The evaluation/assessment of infrastructure and tourist facility need to take the following factors into consideration: Quality of the surroundings; Availability of basic services such as electricity, water and sewage; Presence of adequate transportation to the destination; Assurance of a safe and secure environment; Road connectivity, reliability, safety, and security factors considered.

VI. Conclusion

Oromia tourism master plan study conducted by NBYS Management Consultancy and Trade Services in the year 1999 under economic study project is reviewed for high level regional consultative workshop and communication. The study is very comprehensive and covered almost all cornerstones for the development of tourism in the region. It went to the extent of developing specific projects for tourism development of the region. It is fact that the regional government has achieved remarkable development and progress in developing and promoting tourism and enhancing the benefit of tourism for regional economic development. However, more impressive tourism development in the region could have been achieved had it been the Bureau of Tourism consulted the study result for planning and management of the sector.

The reviewers have a strong believe that most of the study results and recommendations of the study are still pertinent for the development of the sector. It is, therefore, wise to communicate the relevance of the study document to the regional Bureau of Tourism and concerned stakeholders before resorting to conduct new researches. This is helpful as new studies will take time. However, it is equally important to understand the study was conduct quite long ago and most information need updating. Moreover, study to prepare Tourism master plan for the region needs to be prepared for the long-run which means the information on the current study result will not be dependable for policy making. Therefore, the study could documents could be consulted for immediate use though current realities should be considered.

Generally, the study could be used as a reference for future research in preparation of Tourism development master plan in the region. Yet it is imperative for the region to have a tourism development master plan which should be prepared based up dated data and based on current realities in the region. As such further work will be needed to research tourism potential of the region, global tourism demand as well as Ethiopia's tourism potential, and to have concrete information on Oromia's comparative advantage of different tourism products. This would help the regional government and other stakeholders to design a well informed tourism development policy.

VII. Implementation Plan

Background

Following the review of the Oromia tourism master study documents, the reviewing team identified multiple recommendations to be implemented. This is implementation plan is to suggest, means of implementing those recommendations based regional and national priorities and approaches to communicate the document and the recommendations to key stakeholders.

The plan is divided into three:

- I. Means to Implement the recommendations**
- II. How to Fill the gaps identified**

I. Implementing the relevant recommendations

1. Ecotourism and Wildlife			
s/n	Activities	Means/approaches of implementation	Remark
1	Synergy among institutions working on forest and wildlife and tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation workshop among stakeholders • Preparing collaborative framework among stakeholders 	
2	Designing Parks tourism plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation workshop among stakeholders • Preparing Oromia parks Tourism plan 	
3	Designing Oromia protected areas development plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting assessment on PAs • Consultation workshop among stakeholders • Preparing Pas development plan 	
2. Cultural and historical resources			
4	Identifying Oromo Cultural properties to inscribe in World Heritage list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gada and Irrecha • Identifying Other cultural properties to be inscribed in World Heritage list • Establishing a taskforce from intellectual and prominent personalities to work on it 	
5	Turing Irrecha to tourism products like carnival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through developing Hora Arsede of Irrecha to the best tourism destination • Organizing various parallel events (e.g. Hours Race, Great runs, cultural events sporting • Constructing pavilion for the event • Mobilizing domestic tourists to the area • Organizing side events for Abba Gadas, elders, prominent individuals to take part on various issues to discuss with the public • Developing the area to the best recreation area • Organizing trade fairs (bazaar) • Organizing colourful traditional festivals (music festivals, sports) 	
6	Promoting the Gumi Gayyo events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing pavilion for the event • Mobilizing domestic tourists to the area • Organizing side events for Abba Gadas, elders, prominent individuals to take part on various issues to discuss with the public • Encouraging domestic tourists through mobilizing Oromo community in distant zone 	

		<p>to attend the event to learn and share experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the area to the best recreation area 	
7	Constructing Oromo cultural village in Bishotu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the design in the study document • Engaging private business in the activities • Engaging ancillary service providers • Cultural costume producers • Must be designed in a way it promotes Irrecha festivity • Conferences hall for various events 	
8	Promoting traditional crafts and art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying available traditional crafts and arts of the region • Encouraging those engaged in traditional crafts and art production • Creating value chain for traditional crafts and art producers • Motivating designers to works on it • Connecting all traditional crafts and art producers to the Oromo villages at Bishoftu • Using the Oromia cultural centre in Finfinne to promote the Cultural village and Oromo traditional crafts and art products • Using the Oromo village design in the study document • Linking Oromo traditional crafts and art products with international hotels 	
9	Promoting traditional food and drink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documenting available traditional foods and drinks of the region • Encouraging those engaged in traditional food and drink production • Motivating nutritionists to works on it • Connecting Oromo traditional foods and drinks producers to the Oromo villages at Bishoftu • Using the Oromia cultural centre in Finfinne to promote the Oromo traditional foods and drinks • <i>Epecially the “Wasila” of Borana traditional food similarity with “Nama-Choma” of eastern Africa countries known dish could be the best means to attract international tourists</i> 	
10	Encouraging privates to establish/build event hosting Centres near the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For international conferences • For high level trainings 	

	Oromo cultural village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International or national trade fairs • Hosting side events e.g. when there is a national or international events organizing some other related events 	
3. Tourism Marketing			
11	Establishing Oromia Hotels network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating to them the existing market opportunity in hotel and tourism industry in the country and region • Consultation on how to promote their services and use proximate opportunities of their locality to attract tourists • Designing collective promotion strategy to attract domestic and international tourists • Focusing on hotels located in zones with limited promotion 	
12	Establishing walk-in tour information Center at Oromia cultural Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That could be constructed at the entrance of the Center without police check in to make it friendly for foreign tourists • Engaging some hotels to use it as promotion site • Equipping the walk-in tour information Center with qualifiers promoters in foreign language • Equipping walk-in tour information Center with standardized promotion publications, (pamphlets, maps, etc) • Using websites and other electronic promotion materials 	
13	Producing publications for promotion and websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The identified tourist alteration sites of the region could be used for publication • Private promoters to take part in the activities • Forming of Oromia hotels network and platform to design the promotion 	
14	Designing corporate public-private tourism marketing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forming of Oromia hotels network and platform • Consultation with concerned body • Forming of Oromia hotels network and platform 	
15	Designing mechanism to influence the national Tour Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing policy documents regarding tour operation and building capacity of regional tour operators • Consultation with concerned body • Forming of Oromia hotels network and platform 	
16	Joint cross-regional and national	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing link or partnership mechanisms for joint tourism promotion approaches 	

	promotion activities	with neighbouring regional states especially SNNR and neighbouring country e.g. Kenya <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with key hotels and promoters 	
17	Domestic tourism mobilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing exposure visit , and recreation of government staffs (E.g. different Oromia zones visiting the other zones far from theirs • Encouraging privates business in Oromia to visit such sites (e.g. Banks in Oromia to visit Oromia cultural and historical sites) • Organizing exposure visits for Students to Oromia cultural and historical sites (this could be effective through school clubs and university students studying culture and history) 	
4. Human power and Institutional framework			
18	Establishing/encouraging privates to establish hotels and tourism training institutes focusing on Oromia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through private-public partnership in establishing Tourism training centre • Communicating to private business the existing market opportunity in hotel and tourism industry in the country and region • Consultation on how to promote their services and use proximate opportunities of their locality to attract tourists • Designing collective promotion strategy to attract domestic and international tourists • Focusing on hotels located in zones with limited promotion 	
19	Encouraging internationally known hotels or developers to invest in Oromia hotel and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through proper promotion of Oromia Tourism potentials • Using the hotel networks to look for such partnerships • Organizing consultation workshops for hotels, promoters, business developers or entrepreneurs • Looking the establishment for Caravan hotels for holiday makers 	
20	Establishing taskforce (think-tank) that advises the regional government culture and Tourism Bureau on promotion, research and capacity building to properly utilize regional tourism potentials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide the Bureau on research and capacity development interventions • Advise the bureau how to implement issues identified in the Tourism Master Plan • Support the bureau on how to utilize Tourism resources of the region • Advise on the agendas or give inputs of Oromia regional tourism councils 	

II. Filling the gaps identified

1. Grand/General Recommendations		
S/n	Activities	Means/approaches of implementation
1	Updating the Oromia Tourism Mater plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the existing Oromia Tourism Mater plan as References • Using the review document as a guide to identify gaps to be filled • Developing method of data collection to fill the gap
2	Setting/designing proper coordination mechanisms among stakeholders (e.g. Federal institutions, regional states bordering Oromia, Counties bordering Oromia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying areas of cooperation • Identifying areas of mutual benefits • Consultation on joint cooperation and framework of partnership
3	Land use planning for tourist attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and demarcation of land to be allocated for tourism from the land to be used for other purposes; • Tourist facilities to be built in tourism demarcated areas must be standardized; • Tourist facilities to be built must as much as possible incorporates the local motive; • Benefit sharing mechanisms with the inhabitants of the area should be in the policy;
4	Legal revision/review regarding Protected areas and Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing policy on sustainable Tourism fund e.g Tourism levy • park and protected areas policy
2. Ecotourism and Wildlife		
5.	Conducting study on Oromia Eco-tourism potentials and its utilization mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation for key stakeholders on the study approaches • Collecting early studies in the area by different stakeholders • Identifying the gaps • Conducting study
6.	Conducting study on Oromia wetlands and biodiversity potentials and its utilization mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation for key stakeholders on the study approaches • Collecting early studies in the area by different stakeholders • Identifying the gaps • Conducting study
3. Cultural and Historical Resources		

7.	Listing all Oromo intangible heritages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation for key stakeholders on the study approaches • Collecting early studies in the area by different stakeholders • Identifying the gaps • Identifying all the intangible heritages as zone distribution 	
8.	Listing of Oromo cultural and natural heritages to be nominated for world heritages planning for its inscription	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using the existing data • inquiring further sources • using existing means for nominations • using various Oromo community networks to promote the nomination 	
9.	Promoting Oromo cultural heritages within the Oromo community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • through domestic tourist mobilizations across the Oromia zones • through organizing various visiting programs for offices 	
4. Tourism Marketing			
10.	Mapping potential tourism development areas and design various incentive schemes for investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using the existing data • consultation with potential investors • conducting study on incentive packages • designing tourism map and incentive mechanisms 	
11.	Conducting research on Tourism planning and marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using the existing data • consultation with potential investors • conducting the study 	
12.	Conducting of research on handcraft production and marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using the existing data • consultation with potential investors • conducting the study 	

