

# SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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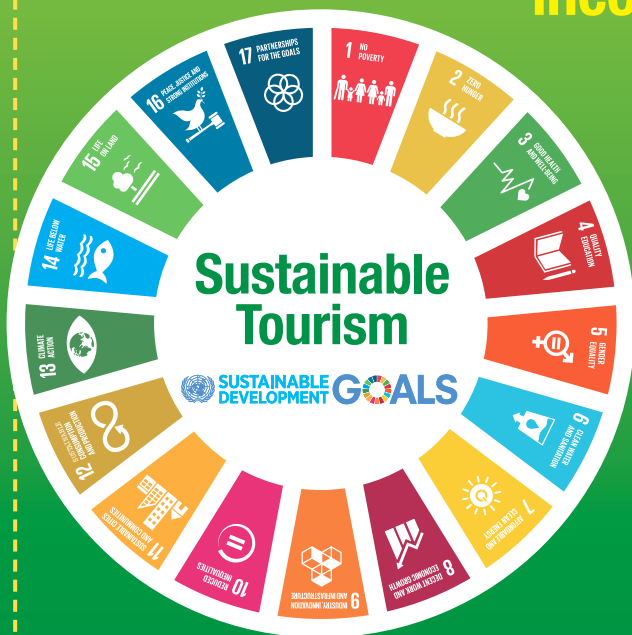
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# IY2017 - Obstacles in Transforming Sector into a Real People Impact (RPI) Industry



**Sustainable tourism has received a vote of confidence from United Nations. 2017 has been declared International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. It is the second time in 15 years that United Nations recognises sustainable tourism. The first recognition came in 2002, when the year was declared the International Year of Ecotourism.**

That sustainable tourism is significant in the future growth of tourism is now evident. From 2002 to 2017 declarations, the momentum to create awareness and make sustainable tourism the norm and not a niche market phenomenon has been sustained. Nations, private and public organisations have developed tools or put in place systems for

enhancement, implementation, monitoring & evaluation, measurement, recognition, and reporting sustainable tourism and sustainability in tourism. Some of the international organisations that have engaged include:

- UNWTO - United Nations World Tourism Organisation
- GSTC - Global Sustainable

- Tourism Council
- IUCN - Green Destination Guidelines
- UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
- WTTC - World Travel & Tourism Council

The role of advocacy organisations like Global Ecotourism Network, The International Ecotourism Society, Global Sustainable Tourism Council, National Geographic, and SKAL has also escalated these efforts through conferences, awards, and development of standards. In academics, the contribution has come

through curriculum development for graduate and postgraduate studies in sustainable tourism. The extensive research in this field is a further affirmation of the relevance and significance of sustainable tourism in the future and growth of tourism and wellbeing of people around which tourism is consumed.

Suffice to say the engagement of these organisations, and the UN recognition has given tourism an opportunity to transform into a Real People Impact (RPI) industry. This has led to a shift of focus from simply complying with standards to enhancing visitor experience and safeguarding people and planet rights. However, obstacles remain to realising a real transformation of tourism into an RPI industry.

Contrary to common belief, this year is not about creating events and celebrations with short-term focus. It is about making long-term commitments that will transform tourism to a Real People Impact RPI industry. Therefore, if significant gains are to be made from IYE2017, nations must put in place systems that will contribute to ending tourism as we know it. Focus must shift to ethical people engagement. This will call for bold actions by all to confront and deal with obstacles. What are some of these obstacles?

### Exclusive Tourism

Sustainable tourism will not be realised if tourism remains exclusive. Tourism has become increasingly exclusive, locking out residents and/or, host communities from places and resources. Here in Kenya, our beaches stand out. Access to beaches, which should have been public areas, have been restricted, through ex-



clusionist systems, perpetuated by capitalist tendencies, in the name of enhancing guest experiences. The old ways of doing tourism assume tourists do not want to interact with local people. Properly designed host and guest interaction can enhance visitor experience

The parks are other examples of exclusive tourism. History has confirmed that locking out host community's form interacting with parks has not saved our wildlife. Reports indicate that Kenya has lost more than 40% of our wildlife in 40 years despite running efficient exclusionist

# 40%

**History has confirmed that locking out host community's form interacting with parks has not saved our wildlife. Reports indicate that Kenya has lost more than 40% of our wildlife in 40 years despite running efficient exclusionist park systems.**

park systems. Yet studies show that integrating managed live-stock grazing in parks can yield positive results.

Other forms of exclusion are manifested in designs that do not consider people with disabilities. They are excluded for using or working in these facilities by the design

### Unfair labour practices

It is not enough that tourism creates jobs. It must create reliable work programs that respect employee rights. Unfair labour practices is, a problem among unconscious tourism businesses. Two forms of injustices define unfair labour practices in tourism:

- Season-based employment, which deny employees benefits associated with continuous long-term employment. In areas where tourism is seasonal, companies are known to release employees, with no pay, during low season. Most employees can be described as casual labourers
- Denial of right to belong to a union. Most employers in tourism deny their workers the right to join unions. This is made easy because a majority of their staff fall in the casual labour group and the rest are considered management.

The consequence of season based contracts and denial of rights to belong to unions is low wages and poverty. How else can tourism explain high levels of poverty in established tourism destinations, where tourism is the key economic activity?

### Leakages

Persistent poverty in established tourism destinations in develop-



ing countries can also be attributed to high levels of leakages of tourism income. When there are no linkages between formal tourism sector and local economy, leakages occur. The percentages of leakages are high where there is limited capacity by local economy to deliver goods and services required by visitors. The importation of these goods and services reduces the amount of tourism income left in the local economy. As part of transforming tourism towards sustainability the overall tourism strategy of nations must provide for skills development and creation of linkages

### **Irresponsible Consumption**

Irresponsible consumption is an obstacle to transforming tourism to a Real People Impact (RPI) industry. Irresponsible consumption patterns in tourism are characterised by unwillingness to pay competitive prices for services and products procured from local areas, buying from brokers instead of building capacity of local producers to attain consistency in supply and appropriate quality. Lack of attention to supply chain may result in irresponsible consumption if goods and service are produced from forced or child labour. Worst example of irresponsible consumption involve tourism denying local people ac-

cess to water by 'acquiring' the only reliable dry-season source of water available to the community so visitors can have unlimited access while people and their animals trek for kilometres in search of water. For real transformation, consumption patterns that reduce the quality of life of local people, or threaten their livelihoods must be avoided.

According to STTA, this should be the agenda for 2017 and the future:

Businesses should make new commitments to sustainable tourism by developing strategies and plans and setting specific goals.

- Tourism membership organisations should up their game, and extend their lobbying powers to compel their members and state to participate in the IY2017 activities.
- It is the year for Destination Marketing Organisations to hand over power to local communities, and residents so they can create experiences for travellers.
- It is the year for investors to relook their partnerships and/or create effective partnership-based linkages with host communities



**It is the year for Destination Marketing Organisations to hand over power to local communities, and residents so they can create experiences for travellers.**

- It is the year for tourism operators to review the distribution of tourism towards a more fair and equitable systems that minimise leakages
- It is the year for public regulators to pay attention to positive impacts generated by tourism instead of focusing on numbers and revenue
- Regulators should come up with bold and disruptive sustainable tourism strategies to secure tourism into the future.
- It is the year for sustainable tourism assessors to return credibility to certification programs by recognising and rewarding impact, not cost cutting measures and documented intentions.
- It is the year for financing organisations to include sustainability considerations in their eligibility criteria.
- It is a year for retraining tourism sector practitioners to embrace sustainability to enable them to drive and capture the future of tourism.
- It is the year to end Greenwashing.

**It is the year to end tourism as we know it!**



# Being a Responsible Business

## Perspectives from Carlson Rezidor Group



**A**s part of our new series on sustainability leaders, and to learn about different models of sustainable businesses Judy Kepher-Gona, STTA Founder, interviewed **Inge Huijbrechts, Vice President of Responsible Business of the Carlson Rezidor Group.** The interview focused on the Group's sustainability philosophy, how the philosophy is integrated in operations of individual hotel units and the practices/ programs that define their sustainability agenda. In Kenya Radisson Blu in Upper Hill and Park Inn in Westlands are part of the Carlson Rezidor Group.

### About the Group

The Carlson Rezidor group has seven hotel brands. Out of these, only four brands operate in Africa. These are Radisson Blu, Radisson Red, Park Inn and the luxury brand Quorvus. The first Quorvus hotel in East Africa will be opened in Uganda in 2017. The Group has identified East Africa, and Africa at large as a strategic growth area and will be opening more properties in the coming years.

Globally, the group has more than 1100 hotels under its portfolio

with 300 more in the pipeline. Africa has, 37 properties, which offer 16,000 beds. Radisson Blu is the dominant brand in Africa accounting for 30, out of the total 37 units. The other 7 units are the Park Inn brand, a brand that is steadily growing in numbers. The number of properties in Africa is expected to double in three years.

In East Africa, the group has four hotels namely Radisson Blu Nairobi, Radisson Blu Kigali, Park Inn Kenya and the yet to be opened Quorvus in Uganda. Radisson Blu

sees Africa as growth region and a large percentage of the planned 30 units will be in Africa.

Significant to note is that the Group does not own any of the hotels it operates. However, they influence design of properties they have identified for lease to ensure the design meets the Groups selected brand quality and work closely with the property owners to achieve the best guest experience and environmental performance of the buildings.

### Motivation to be Sustainable

Origins and innovation summarise the Groups motivation. Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group was founded on a culture of a responsible business. This tradition and culture is associated with the Group's Scandinavian roots. Having emerged from the Scandinavian Airlines in the Nordic countries, a region known for its environmental conscious-

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>>>> ness for over 40 years, the Group continued with the tradition. Over the years the group has expanded the consciousness beyond the environment into a full responsible business approach and incorporated human rights, green operations, youth empowerment, water management, supply chain management, guest safety and green design among others. The Group is constantly looking for new ways to increase their positive impact. Their efforts have won them recognition for example recently with the 2017 UNWTO award for excellence and innovation..

### Conceptualising Sustainability / Responsible business

Put simply, at Carlson Rezidor, being a responsible business means having sustainable operations and sustainable social engagement, which is beyond Corporate Social Responsibility. It is acknowledged that a clear conceptualisation of the concept of responsible business and engagement of everybody in the organisation, from management, to staff and clients is key to being a successful responsible business. Today different businesses translate the sustainability concept variously; some 'green washing', others trying to pass CSR as sustainability and many more using the term in publicity material without doing much towards being responsible. At Carlson Rezidor Group, being responsible means goes beyond the triple elements of sustainable tourism, which is, people/ community, environment, and economics. It is a total appreciation for sustainability, which means investing in and being ethical and transparent about people/ community engagements, environment, and economics in ways that create authentic experiences for guests, promote learning and fulfilment for employees, create innovation partnerships, challenge and be challenged by partners and influence the future of the industry. The Group perceives sustainability as a dynamic space that al-



Think People is concerned with human rights in the supply chain with a focus on women, eliminating forced and child labour. Additionally the Group focuses on providing meaningful employment and on people development e.g. providing employability skills to the youth, vulnerable women, and people with disabilities.

Think Community focuses on empowering the local communities through donations, volunteer programs or supporting access to social services.

Lastly, Think Planet is focused on reducing the Groups carbon, water and waste footprints.

Each brand handles/ implements a specific focus area of the Think People, Think Community, and Think Planets Pillars. For example, The Radisson Blu brand focuses on water by supporting community access to clean water and sanitation while the Park Inn brand focuses on empowering youth. Park Inn Cape town for example, has 30% of its employees that are deaf. Radisson Blu hotel Vendôme Cape Town also has a similar program with a growing number of deaf employees. Through this initiative, the group has won the Guardian Sustainability Award in 2015.

### Outstanding Initiatives of Radisson Blu Kenya SOS Kenya

The cooperation with SOS Kenya started when the Group's CEO, Wolfgang Neumann, raised funds to sponsor one of the Nairobi

family homes for orphaned children. Since then, the Radisson Blu hotel has continued the support and developed other axes of co-operation with SOS.

Among other initiatives SOS youngsters are involved in re-purposing of soap waste for the hotel for use at the children's home and for sale. The hotel and its partner Sealed Air, have provided the SOS village with safe equipment that sanitises left over soap, adds value to it through introducing different scents, then it is packaged for market. The project has been successfully running for just a few months and has potential to be grown.

Radisson Blu Nairobi also mentors the youth from Children's village by regularly inviting them to the hotel or by stopping by to prepare and enjoy a meal together. In the near future, the Radisson Blu will start working with SOS' vocational They invite the centre to perform at Hotel events instead of hiring established artists. This is meant to develop talent among them.

### Makueni Water project

This project provides water for life to one person for every 250 times that guests respond to the towel change policy in a Radisson Blu Hotel or Resort. Through a partnership with Just a Drop, a global not-for-profit organisation that works in the water sector to improve access for marginalised / rural communities, lifelong sustainable water access solutions are provided to this community from the hotels towel change policy. Arguably, the towel change policy is a water saving project as much as it is contributes to other environmental credits and economic benefits for the hotel. By the end of 2016, the Makueni Sand-dam water project had 200 projects, mainly focused on constructing sand dams, rock catchments and school water tanks. Specifically, the donations from Radisson Blu hotels have helped to provide water for life to 8300 people,

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### Recycling

The hotel, in partnership with a local innovative waste recycle company Taka Taka Solutions, has managed to recycle 98% of its waste. So almost none of its waste ends up in a landfill. They took time to look for and work with a waste management company to achieve these remarkable results and continue tracking performance through 6-monthly reports.

### Carbon Offset

Through its loyalty program Club Carlson, the Group calculates and offsets its carbon footprint for meetings and events. Every tonne of carbon generated by a meeting on site in one of the Carlson Rezidor hotels and booked by a member of Club Carlson, is offset through a combination of VCS carbon certificates and the planting of an additional tree in Kenya by ESCONET, a forest group based in Limuru. Between 2013 and 2017, Carlson Rezidor hotels worldwide supported planting of 39,000 trees.

### Integrating Responsible Business Pillars in Operations

Radisson Blu believes in empowering employees and having clear systems that support monitoring and a structure that ensures delivery of targets while allowing for creativity. This is core to their integration of responsibility busi-

ness practice to its operations. The first engagement by employees is training. All employees go through the Living Responsible Business training irrespective of their position. This is to ensure that every employee has a role to play in implementing the group's responsibility strategy. In terms of structure, the Group has a Vice President who oversees the entire groups responsible business strategy by motivating the regions and units to be creative and engaged. At the regions, like East Africa, there are regional coordinators who work with a master trainer and a Responsible Business coordinator located in each hotel unit. The regional coordinators assist the VPs in monitoring targets and compiling the sustainability data and best practices from the individual hotel units. The master trainer at each unit coordinates the specific hotel responsibility practices, inducts all new staff through training, and is responsible for overall sustainability training in the unit. Both the Responsible Business coordinator and the hotel Responsible Business training are employees of the hotel with other roles e.g. the head chef, HR manager, front office supervisor, and only volunteer in the responsible business role.

To support individual hotels in realising their focal projects, the group works with targets. The

targets are documented in the Groups 5-year Responsible Business plans. The last responsible business plan ended in December 2016 and new targets have been set for 2020. All staff are engaged and encouraged to identify best practices along the focus areas for implementation by their units.

Documentation is an integral part of integration. Every individual hotel keeps record of its interventions in the responsibility chain, which are guided by the indicators in the plan and documented as best practices. This is then shared with the office of the Vice President, through the regional coordinators who share them across the units. This encourages cross learning. Without documenting and reporting cross learning would not be possible. In summary, every hotel is a living responsible business

### Sustainability and City-based hotels

The perception that it is challenging for City-based hotels to embrace responsible business tradition is false and defeating. Definitely every business can embrace sustainability and operate as a responsible businesses and the city is not a limitation. Being a responsible business has nothing to do with location, it has to do with choice.



## >>>> The Profitability Question

Being a responsible business is profitable whichever way one looks at it. However, there is need to invest in right systems to be able to measure the impact. The Group has developed a triple bottom line accounting and reporting system that tracks the savings from the responsibility initiatives. They have also integrated the World Bank's Edge Tool, an IFC innovation that not tracks and calculates the return on investment from green investments and promotes green buildings in emerging markets. Using the IFC system also allows the Group's management to work with investors to design and build their hotels in green ways.

Between 2011-2016 the Group saved 5 million Euros in utility costs in their leased estate from managing energy. Further, the Group attracts corporate clients that relate to the responsible business approach. This is expanding /growing very fast and its good for business. The Group also attracts passionate employees who become ambassadors of our Responsible business agenda. This has a knock-on effect on customer experience and by extension the bottom-line.

Being responsible is always recognised. The group has been named one of the World's Most Ethical companies every year since 2010. Other awards have been won by the Think People projects that increase employability opportunities for youth and people with disabilities. This improves the brand value and has positive knock-on effects on the Groups bottom-line.

It is clear that, having a responsible business culture as a rallying point makes it easier and less expensive to be a responsible business, and gives a quicker return on investment.

### Role of Partnerships

Partnerships are important in enhancing opportunities for responsible businesses. The Carl-



son Rezidor group has recently partnered with World Bank to use its approved tool for Green Buildings known as EDGE. All new hotel units will be analysed in EDGE and efforts will be made to retrofit existing ones. The Group embraces this tool because it is evident that building in green technology from the start is more cost efficient than retrofitting.

As part of this partnership with the IFC World Bank, Radisson Blu Nairobi will host a Green Building Summit in 2017 to promote Green Buildings in Africa

### Measuring Success

Radisson Blu views success in terms of the commitment of their top management, the passion in their staff in creating guest experiences and supporting the responsible business targets, guest satisfaction, resilience of the brand, the approval by business partners and third party recognition they receive over and over again

### Role Responsible Vice President, Responsible Business

To progress the agenda of a responsible business Carlson Rezidor, the mother company of Radisson Blu, has a Vice President Responsible Business who

oversees the programs by facilitating and creating the right mind-set for everyone- employees, clients, business partners, suppliers to respond.

### How does the future look like for responsible businesses?

Hotels have no option but to go green. It is encouraging to know that significant efforts are being made by many global hotel groups towards this end. As a responsible business, Carlson Rezidor is spreading the message of sustainability by creating opportunities for networking and engaging other hotels businesses in Brussels and globally. Currently the Group's CEO chairs a sustainability forum of leading hotel groups as their way of influencing the industry.

**Finally, Inge Huijbrechts** believes that sustainability is a non-competitive space. Everyone can engage

(Additional reporting by Job Odhiambo-STTA)







# Journey to Sustainable Development Goals: Opportunities and challenges for tourism-conservation enterprise partnerships in Kenya

## Historical overview of tourism-conservation enterprise partnerships

Since the realization of the importance of actively managing and governing the use of wildlife and natural resources in the 19th century, diverse nature conservation efforts in Eastern Africa have been witnessed. Some of the earliest documented conservation efforts include the British East African Company's sport hunting licenses and regulations, which came into force in 1884. However, more structured conservation efforts began after the World War II and entailed the setting aside of nature parks and reserves aimed at preserving land occupied by wildlife. This 'preservationist' conservation paradigm, in which nature was viewed as wilderness and local people as a threat, dominated conservation efforts of the colonial and post-colonial governments until the late 1970s. In addition, governments as the main decision-makers adopted 'militaristic' tactics and infrastructure, which have been described by critics as 'coercive' and 'fortress' conservation given their 'top-down' approach as well as barrier fences and trespassing fines. In established protected areas, tourism was viewed as an economic strategy for increasing among others a county's gross domestic product (GDP), employment and attracting foreign capital.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, some of the key conservation challenges included increased poaching, declining wildlife populations and hostility towards protected areas by local communities. Given these challenges, especially the latter, attempts were made to integrate the socio-economic development of local communities along with the objectives of conservation programs. The 'community conservation' paradigm thus emerged with the aim of rectifying the human costs associated with the introduction of protected areas. Organizations including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donor organizations began to support interventions, including tourism-based ones, aimed at addressing biodiversity

conservation and development issues such as poverty. The inclusion of community socio-economic needs in conservation interventions was also in line with the aspirations of sustainable development, which advocate for simultaneous achievement of economic, social and environmental goals.

Early 'community conservation' efforts were mainly in the form of interventions such as the Integrated Conservation and Development projects (ICDPs), which were meant to create economic benefit flows to communities as incentives for conservation. Early ICDPs, were, however, critiqued for their failures to involve local populations in planning and bene-

fit sharing. Based on this weakness, communities began to be engaged as significant actors in conservation and as a result, Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) interventions were initiated through popular programmes such as the Communal Areas Management for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) in Zimbabwe and Administrative and Management Design for Game Management Areas (ADMAGE) in Zambia.

The CBNRM approach was borne out of a desire to make communities stewards of natural resources by empowering local communities, enhancing their participation and decentralising governance to the local level. In Kenya, the CBNRM model was widely embraced after the realization that more than 65% of wildlife resides outside protected areas and communities were critical to the survival of wildlife and protected areas. In addition to the CBNRM, Community-Based Tourism (CBT) enterprises including eco-lodges, cultural villages and nature walks were established aimed at generating revenues as incentives for community-led conservation. As an approach, CBT is believed to have the potential to create an avenue for communities to have a stake in the management of natural resources.

The neoliberal development discourse of the late 1990s and early 2000s saw the inclusion of the private sector in conservation and development initiatives. In addition, after the launch of the Millen-



Millennium Development Goals in 2000 and the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), partnerships were encouraged as the most viable institutional arrangements for governing conservation and sustainable development. In line with the partnership model, the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) conservation NGO pioneered a 'new' partnership model for the implementation of their tourism-conservation enterprise strategy. According to AWF, conservation enterprises are 'commercial activities that generates economic benefits in a way that supports the attainment of a conservation objective'. In this model of enterprises, communities establish a partnership with a private investor and AWF operates as a 'neutral' partner to moderate the institutional arrangement, promote a 'fair deal' and to secure 'good' or 'sound' governance. As models of CBT, the partnership enterprises are aimed to contribute to the economic, environmental and social pillars of sustainability.

### Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development, though debated widely in terms of meaning and practice emerged in the 1980s as a solution to two major global challenges, which are believed to be intricately linked, increased biodiversity loss and increased poverty. The United Nations Assembly established the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), based on the concept of 'Our Common Future' as a development paradigm that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Building on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the UN instituted 17 universally applicable goals that are aimed at balancing the three dimensions of

sustainability by addressing the significant areas of people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships. The 17 goals include: (1) Ending poverty, (2) Ending Hunger, (3) Good health, (4) Quality Education, (5) Gender equality, (6) Clean water and sanitation, (7) Clean energy, (8) Good jobs and economic growth, (9) Innovation and infrastructure, (10) Reduced inequalities, (11) Sustainable cities and communities, (12) Responsible consumption, (13) Combating climate change and its impacts, (14) Conservation of oceans and marine resources, (15) Conservation of terrestrial ecosystems, (16) Peace and justice, and finally (17) Global partnerships.

Though the tourism-conservation enterprise partnerships can contribute to the achievement of majority of the SDGs, tourism has mainly made significant contributions in the areas of poverty reduction, health provision, education, job creation and conservation of terrestrial resources.

### Opportunities and Potentials

Theoretically, partnerships are positioned as having a great potential for enhancing governance, as they- almost per definition, by engaging multiple partners, improve inclusiveness, transparency and re-distribute power. The partnerships if well governed thus have the potential to contribute to equality and cohesion within communities.

The partnerships moreover have the potential for creating win-win outcomes for both biodiversity conservation and community livelihoods in terms of capital assets established such as physical assets (buildings, health, education support), social capital (pride, belonging and identity), financial capital through employment and other income, as illustrated by the case of the Sanctuary at Ol Lentille Partnership in Laikipia, which facilitated the

construction of a 24-bed sub-district hospital with an x-ray room, a maternity ward, a youth centre and doctors' quarters. The Partnership also provides bursaries for local needy children, funds the construction of classrooms among other contributions and in 2008, it began promoting access to financial services especially for women through the establishment of the Nasaruni Savings and Credit Cooperative (see <http://www.awf.org/projects/nasaruni-savings-and-credit-cooperative>).

The Sanctuary at Ol Lentille Partnership enterprise has also contributed to natural capital and biodiversity conservation through land use zoning and development of land use plans for community lands. Additionally, surrounding communities have begun to set aside for conservation. For example, the Kijabe group ranch set aside an initial 2,000 hectares for conservation. Other neighbouring community groups have also set aside land to benefit from the Sanctuary at Ol Lentille Partnership. By the end of 2011, the land under exclusive conservation at the Ol Lentille conservancy was over 7,050 hectares.

### Challenges

Despite the major contributions and great potentials of the tourism-conservation enterprise partnerships in the achievement of SDGs, there are various hindrances. The first challenge is the complexity of the partnerships in terms of the different actors involved their varied interests and aspirations, rendering them difficult to govern.

Additionally, there also exists a legal and policy void for tourism-conservation enterprise partnerships in Kenya. The diverse partnerships arrangements are driven by different organizations, different models and actors, resources and regulatory arrangements, all which pose challenges for the governance of the partnership

arrangements. The questions that emerge are who coordinates all these arrangements? Though organizations have been created such as the Federation of Community-Based Tourism Organizations (FECTO), the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA) among others, it is not clear who actually should coordinate or oversee these partnerships and such, the question of which organization is best placed to coordinate and play an oversight role still remains.

Another challenge is limited community capacity. Despite communities being major stakeholders in the partnership enterprises, they have limited community capacity to manage the costs related to living with wildlife and accompanying threats such as human-wildlife conflicts thus limiting the potentials for achieving the SDGs. In addition, most tourism-conservation enterprise partnerships are mainly in the form of group ranches, and this poses a major challenge as this model of land ownership and land tenure is often imbued by leadership wrangles and power struggles, lack of clear accountability mechanisms, unclear membership and election procedures among others, all which limit the achievement of the SDGs.

In addition to these challenges, questions have also arisen on the durability of the tourism-conservation enterprise partnerships. Key questions include, are the partnerships modelled to be in operation for perpetuity? What happens when there are disagreements among the partners, as was the case of Kimana and Shompole enterprises, where there were disagreements among partners? Are there mechanisms to protect the enterprises from such occurrences? A related challenge is that most tourism-conservation partnerships are donor financed and since donor funding is time bound, the issue of sustainability arises. How

will the enterprises be sustained once donor engagement comes to an end? The question is how can long-term engagement of the partners be ensured? In addition, how can communities be empowered to run the enterprise in perpetuity? Additionally, tourism is also prone to seasonality and low occupancy among other challenges, which calls for additional interventions that can generate revenue for the local communities during low seasons. Overall, the key question is whether tourism enterprises, especially partnership-based enterprises, is a viable strategy for achieving the SDGs, given that the benefits arising from tourism partnership enterprises are driven by philanthropy.

## Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, it is evident that tourism-conservation enterprise partnerships have the potential to contribute to the SDGs especially on aspects related to health, education, and poverty reduction. Given the partnerships face numerous challenges, related to governance, power relations as well as ensuring the durability of the enterprises and there is no single 'silver bullet' that can address these challenges, there is need for targeted and interventions and concerted efforts by the diverse stakeholders to address these challenges and ensure the long-term sustainability of the enterprises.

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# Poverty Eradication or Prevention of Absolute Poverty among Local Communities?

## Case of Kenyan Conservancies

### Introduction

Poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and Kenya is no exception. It is estimated that nearly half of the population live below the poverty line or are unable to meet their daily nutritional requirements because of income inequality and limited access to basic social services such as education, clean water, healthcare and sanitation. Majority of these people live in rural areas (KNBS, 2009). Ironically rural areas in Kenya host the largest share of Kenya's wildlife, a key asset to the second highest foreign exchange earner of the country, tourism. Poor natural resource management has been identified as the main cause of poverty in rural areas (Rural, n.d.). This mismanagement has also led to massive loss in wildlife due to encroachment of wildlife habitats for settlement and agriculture and illegal consumption of wildlife.



Private and community conservancies in Kenya were set up to protect biodiversity and provide required incentives for local communities sharing the same space with wildlife to better manage their natural resources and also alleviate poverty among the locals (KWCA, n.d.). However, Kenya has continued to lose biodiversity. According to a recent study conducted by the Directorate of Resource Surveys and Remote Sensing, the International Livestock Research Institute and the University of Nairobi, wildlife populations have declined on average by 68% over the last four decades. This is an indication that conservation strategies in Kenya are failing in the protection of wildlife. Which begs the question, are conservancies in Kenya eradicating poverty or propagating poverty in rural areas? This question requires a good understanding of what is poverty, the relationship between poor people and biodiversity and the role played by conservation areas in eradicating poverty.

## Poverty

Poverty is often described as a state of being extremely poor. Initially poverty was commonly described in economic terms i.e. as not having enough money to meet basic needs including food, clothing and shelter (absolute Poverty) or lack of minimum amount of income needed in order to maintain the average living standards of a particular society in which they live (relative poverty).

Perspectives of poverty have evolved with time and various approaches have emerged to try and explain what poverty is. Examples of these approaches include;

- Income approach that refers to incomes below a “minimum subsistence” or 50% or 60% below the median e.g. less than 1.25 dollar per day, a common poverty measurement applied

by the World Bank

- Basic needs approach that defines poverty as scarcity of resources and opportunities to satisfy basic needs
- Capabilities approach that defines poverty and deprivation as a lack of prerequisites for self-determined life, “lack of capabilities” to manage one’s life.
- Well-being approach that describes poverty is the flipside of well-being, as state of being uncomfortable, unhappy or unhealthy
- Inequality approach describes poverty is a process embedded in inequality, insecurity, vulnerability, discrimination and exclusion socially, politically and economically.
- Lastly, the Human Rights Based Approach that describes poverty a violation of basic rights and fundamental freedoms. This approach is regarded as a multidimensional and comprehensive perspective

The different perspectives and approaches have shown that poverty is more than the lack of income and resources to ensure a sustainable livelihood, but it is multidimensional with various manifestations. Poverty therefore is lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments; social discrimination and exclusion; characterized by lack of participation in decision-making and in civil, social and cultural rights (OHCR, n.d.).

Poverty is also not static, but changes. People move in and out of poverty. Additionally, lack of

certain assets may not necessarily mean this people are poor, but nonetheless may be extremely vulnerable in times of need or crisis.

Understanding the multidimensional and dynamic nature of poverty is therefore key to its eradication.

## Poor People and Conservancies

Assets available to the poor are often scarce and contested resources. For example, many or most of the world’s major centers of biodiversity coincide with lands occupied or controlled by poor people. These biodiversity centers constitute important ecosystems that provide services that are important for biodiversity survival. Furthermore, the ecosystem services such as clean air, clean water, access to food sources, climate control, cultural and spiritual values, and raw materials for consumers, ensure the well-being of humanity, especially the poor who most directly rely on them. Protecting these ecosystems is therefore important. Protected areas emerged to provide this service.

Initially protected areas were primarily set up to protect and conserve these ecosystems and biodiversity with the exclusion of the native communities residing close to or beside wildlife. These native communities were in fact seen as enemies of conservation who threatened conservation efforts. A situation that led to the emergence of conservation refugees, people displaced from their lands for the purpose of creating protected areas (Dowie, 2009). A classic example of what happens in the establishment of national parks. On the other hand, natives saw conservation efforts as a denial to their ancestral land use rights and access to needed resources which were further compounding on their disparity situation. This led to conflicts

between the local natives and protected area managers that resulted to further loss of wildlife.

Since poverty and conservation efforts co-exist in the same space, the imperative therefore was to find approaches to deal with such co-existences (Emerton, 2008). Unlike previous thinking, it emerged that empowering local communities was actually vital for the survival of wildlife especially in areas where people and wildlife shared the same space. Local communities would better manage their natural resources if conservation led to actual benefits to sustain their livelihoods. The concept of private and community managed conservancies started to emerge. The main aim of conservancies was to provide an incentive for the sustainable management of biodiversity resources, by linking their maintenance with poverty alleviation or livelihoods benefits for the people living in their vicinity (Louise Glew, 2010). Many conservancies in Kenya have been formed for this purpose, especially community managed conservancies. Most of these conservancies have included poverty eradication initiatives in their conservation strategies, an effort aimed at promoting sustainable development and to attracting the support needed for their creation. However, wildlife loss still persists.

### Kenyan Conservancies; Reducing poverty or preventing absolute poverty?

A desktop research conducted by STTA, revealed that the most common poverty eradication strategy practiced by private and community conservancies was provision of basic formal education, healthcare services and clean water. Few conservancies were empowering local communities with specialized skills they needed to sustainably generate their own income especially

among private conservancies. The few conservancies, mostly community conservancies, that offered the specialized training mostly limited the specialized training to bead works especially among women.

The weaknesses of these strategies, with the exception of specialized training, is that they only address one approach to poverty, basic needs. Although the provision of these services are important are if not essential to individual well-being of these local communities, they may not actually reduce poverty, but may contribute to people not falling into absolute poverty (Stephanie Mansourian, 2008).

Having access to basic formal education for example may help these local communities to learn a universal language, familiarize or become more aware of their world, express or communicate without difficulty and also help them make informed decisions to some extent. However, without the access to specialized training to complement the formal education, access to information or freedom to actively participate and express themselves in decision making, these local communities may not be well positioned to sustainably manage their resources or lift themselves out of poverty for prosperity. Furthermore, lack of education may no necessarily mean that these local communities are poor, the may be having access to the most fundamental basic assets i.e. food, shelter and clothing facilitated by their possession of land or livestock or other property that may generate income. They may only be in need of vulnerability reduction strategies to protect them in times of crisis, especially to shocks such as climate change. Same case applies to access to clean water.

### Conclusion

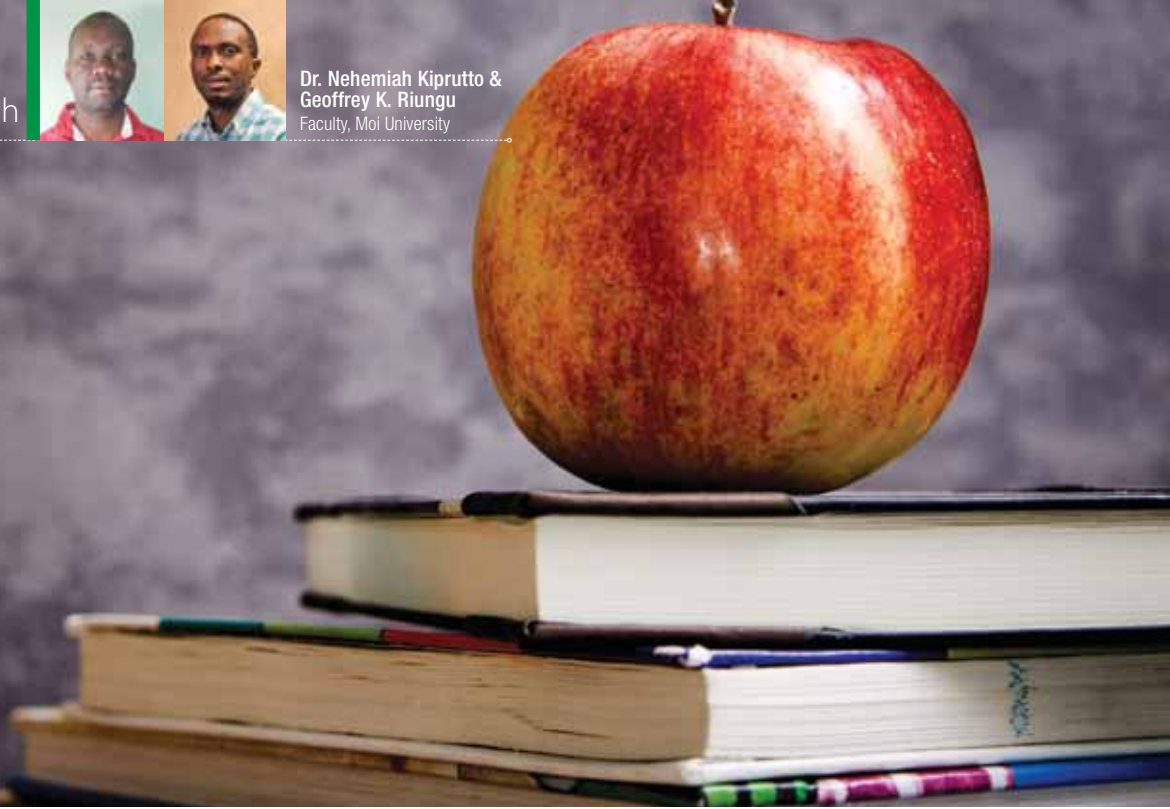
The common practice of Kenyan conservancies in addressing one

approach of poverty and trying to prevent local communities from falling into absolute poverty instead of eradicating poverty itself maybe contributing to the continued loss of wildlife. Holistic approaches to the perspectives of poverty is required (WWF, 2008). Poverty reduction for minimizing loss of wildlife is only possible through a multidimensional and comprehensive perspective approach that promotes equal opportunity and inclusivity, facilitates empowerment (especially those that encourage transformative participation of local communities) and enhances security from calamities.

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# Is there Synergy between University Research and the Tourism Industry in East Africa?

**Strategic partnerships and collaborations are increasingly a major factor in the global economy and one sector that has made great strides in forging working relationships is the tourism industry. Tourism managers, planners and academics alike recognize the need for a collaborative strategy for leveraging scarce resources in an era of fiscal constraint as well as collectively respond to industry challenges and opportunities. Key objectives of such partnerships and collaborations in the tourism industry include economic development, social development, conservation, and/or protected area management.**

These partnerships are borne from evidence that collective and concerted action increases the opportunity of achieving desired outcomes more than singular and disparate efforts. However, given that the decision making process is often a complex undertaking that requires ac-

curate data to inform it, there is need to link industry decisions to research, which necessitates regular and systematic investigations in order to arrive at options that would give desirable outcomes. In essence, tourism actors need to view research as a critical component, which

can assist them achieve their business goals. In this view, institutions of higher learning, comprising colleges and universities, can play a central role in providing technical support to the tourism industry. Primarily, by equipping emerging scholars with the necessary technical knowhow on how to undertake research and by promoting and supporting initiatives that develop research, scholarship and creativity likely to positively affect not only the tourism sector but also other sectors in general, in terms of economic and social development.

In the tourism industry, research plays a key role in trying to establish a balance between conservation and use (level and type) at attraction sites. The sustainable



tourism development concept is hinged on research to provide a model that considers different stakeholders, among other variables, and how their interactions affect one another. Conclusions from such studies offer measurable and defensible positions that influence policy development.

In developing economies like East Africa (EA), studies to aid tourism development are mainly undertaken by the government, mostly with the financial support of donors. It is also common to see non-governmental organizations (NGOs) either engaging consultants or conducting research on their own. Due to low capital base, Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises (SMTE) may rely on impulsive investigations, owners' experience and intuitions to make decisions as opposed to formal research, which is costly.

### **Uptake and Applicability of University Research by the Tourism Industry**

Though public and private universities in EA are reputed to be centres of excellence in research, research findings from these institutions are not being used to inform decisions particularly in the tourism industry.<sup>1</sup> Research undertaken by acclaimed East African Scholars responsible for developing undergraduate and postgraduate level programs in universities across the EA region, continue to gather dust on university shelves or remain locked in electronic journals. Academic research focusing on the tourism industry plays a piv-



**Universities need to reach out to the industry and demonstrate the viability of their findings.**

otal role in answering the question of tourism sustainability in East Africa among other issues. Additionally, they offer an appropriate foundation to further theories and provide a point of comparison to estimate trends and acknowledge development in tourism. Despite various studies<sup>2</sup> being undertaken by universities across the region, there is no definitive evidence to show that local organizations, local governments or national governments use findings from such studies to inform their policies.

There exist legitimate concerns to explain the disconnect between university research and uptake of the resultant findings by policy makers, businesses and development agencies, which can be mainly attributed to limited access to academic materials like theses and dissertations by organizations and government agencies may be limited. Inadequate information technology (IT) infrastructure is one major impediment with some of the universities lacking electronic databases to act as repositories for their work, which impedes the reach and audience of their work. Secondly, majority of postgraduate students often fund their research work thus the scope of their studies is therefore limited. Consequently, policy makers may not be willing to incorporate findings from

such studies. Additionally, since the majority of postgraduate students in East Africa have minimal interest in pursuing careers in academia, they are rarely motivated to publish their theses and/or dissertations in peer-reviewed and established journals after graduating. The limited exposure of student research. Such students may lack proper guidance on possible avenues to publish their work.

### **Strengthening the Linkage**

In light of these challenges, it is imperative that existing linkages be reinforced and where there are none, engagement between research institutions and tourism stakeholders needs to be streamlined. The question that arises is how can this be instituted? There are four avenues, which both parties can explore in this regard.

First, universities need to reach out to the industry and demonstrate the viability of their findings. However, this is easier said than done. Universities have two core functions, teaching and research, with the former being overt, but the latter role is rather blurry to many, and is only known to government, partners/donors and individuals who are well versed in higher education. For people to know about this rather obscured purpose, universities should have in place adequate IT infrastructure to allow access to all their academic publications, including theses and dissertations. This can also be an income-generating unit for universities, since universities can charge subscription fees for accessing the repositories.

Secondly, relevant government agencies charged with the man-



<sup>1</sup> Major universities in the region offering post-graduate programs in tourism related studies include Moi University, Kenyatta University and University of Nairobi in Kenya, Makerere University in Uganda, the Open University of Tanzania in Tanzania and University of Rwanda in Rwanda.

<sup>2</sup> For example, in Moi University, an average of 10 (masters and PhD. level) tourism related theses and dissertations are approved every year by the School of Tourism, Hospitality and Events Management.



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agement of higher education in EA need to standardize procedures on how research should be conducted. Presently, procedures on approving, monitoring and reviewing research involving people/humans as subjects are either non-existent and where they exist they are not standardised and for the most part, the majority of the universities have autonomy to pursue research without adequate oversight. Lack of standardisation may as such pose inconsistencies on how data is collected and whether ethical considerations are observed in the course of the study. For example, is obligatory that respondents are not coerced or intimidated to participate in a study. Participation should be voluntary and through informed consent, otherwise the validity and reliability of the research may come into question.

Thirdly, structured conversation between universities offering tourism related studies and tourism industry with the aim of forming mutual collaboration should begin. It is a bit difficult

**Relevant government agencies charged with the management of higher education in EA need to standardize procedures on how research should be conducted.**

**Structured conversation between universities offering tourism related studies and tourism industry with the aim of forming mutual collaboration should begin.**

for the industry to participate in utilizing research outputs from a university they do not have any form of stake in. One way to fast-track engagement entails establishing memorandum of understandings between industry actors and institutions of higher learning. Such agreements would enable the industry to fund research on areas of their interest through universities, while at the same time making use of the available information at the university.

Finally, aside from collaborating with industry stakeholders, universities should strive to work together. This is critical in enhancing synergy and harnessing local resources (human and social capital) especially given that universities in EA currently dedicate considerable time and resources attempting to create linkages with universities overseas, overlooking regional universities. Creating a regional network is likely to lead to a plethora of scholars, thereby promoting interdisciplinary research (e.g.,

climate change and tourism), which would ultimately improve the visibility of EA universities and offer viable solutions to ecological, economic and societal issues unique to EA.

### Conclusion

In order for synergy to be established, universities need to view the tourism industry as their immediate consumers and subsequently, promoting industry-university collaborations will facilitate the transfer of human capital, technology and research. In a bid to enhance collaborations, tourism stakeholders can provide competitive research grants to promote research on various industry-specific issues, for example, destination marketing, consumer trends, application and impact of technology in the tourism industry among others. Such studies are likely to shift stakeholder roles from being reactive to a more proactive role. With the tourism industry in EA being seasonal, a proactive approach driven by research is likely to influence the marketing strategies of tourism-related enterprises and inform policy development, which will translate to improved operations including sector profitability. Promoting and engendering such collaborations will bring firms and institutions in EA to a level that they can effectively compete with other regions in Africa as well as the rest of the world. ➡





# Pride & Prejudice

## Sustainable Tourism in Africa

Six short years ago, the McKinsey Global Institute ignited the flames of global interest when it designated African economies as “lions on the move”. At the time, those lions had been moving (and shaking) for a decade, generating an annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth of around 5.4% of the global GDP, adding billions of dollars to the continent’s annual GDP.

Since then, the lions appear to have lost a little of their lustre, with growth declining to 3.3% between 2010 and 2015. Have they, perhaps, followed their namesakes and lacked the stamina for a prolonged chase? Apparently not, if The Economist is to be believed. In May 2016, this illustrious publication predicted that Africa’s economy would grow by 3.7% in 2016 and that East Africa, in particular, was going to be the economic

powerhouse of the continent. The lions, it seems, are once more on the hunt, but with urban growth soaring (in 2013, six of the top 10 countries with the highest urbanisation rates were in sub-Saharan Africa) and African leadership all but ignoring the pressing issue of climate change, the challenges the continent faces are titanic.

With the current rate of urbanisation and projected upward

trend across the continent, it is imperative for African governments to take sustainability seriously and to plan for a more sustainable future. Nowhere is this more evident than in the tourism sector. One of Africa’s economic “golden geese,” tourism has been at the forefront of economic growth for countries like Kenya, Tanzania, Seychelles, Botswana and South Africa for the best part of the last two decades. Yet in spite of the plethora of golden eggs it lays – employment for millions, massive foreign investment through major global hotel chains, improvements in infrastructure and development, stimulation of local economies, etc., etc., etc., – tourism’s goose has all but been cooked, in that African governments have largely failed to pri-





>>>> criticise the sector's long-term development in favour of short-term returns.

To paraphrase further – tourism is widely regarded as a cash cow, which has been consistently over-milked with little to no regard for its welfare or how better care might improve its longevity. Indeed, the need for proper, legislated and policy driven focus on sustainability in tourism has never been greater.

Curiously, Africa has become something of a world leader in sustainable tourism, thanks largely to the vision of the private sector, which in East Africa and other African nations where the safari industry is vibrant, has formed the cornerstone of the industry. Tourism businesses in these countries have always had a healthy regard for preserving, conserving and protecting natural resources (and in particular wilderness areas) for future generations to enjoy. That same private sector has also largely understood that in order for tourism to be sustainable and in order to protect the continent's fragile environments and eco-systems, it is essential that local people and communities benefit directly from tourism ventures. Despite this understanding, the required paradigm shift needed to make sustainable tourism mainstream tourism is still not evident and sustainability continues to be regarded as a niche market, albeit a growing niche market.

Organisations like South Africa's Fair Trade Tourism (FTT), which began in South Africa as a small NGO under the auspices of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) almost 15 years ago and which now spearheads sustainable tourism

development across the continent, have a critical role to play in helping to transform Africa's tourism landscape into a more sustainable one. For example, FTT assists tourism businesses in adjusting their business models to make them more sustainable and in line with global best practice. Once businesses have made these adjustments, they are put through a rigorous audit process culminating in certification. FTT certifies businesses directly in South Africa, Mozambique and Madagascar and assists in benchmarking sustainability practices in other countries through its partnerships with like-minded organisations such as Ecotourism Kenya, Responsible Tourism Tanzania, Seychelles Sustainable Tourism Label, Botswana Tourism Organisation's Ecotourism Certification Programme and Eco Awards Namibia. Through these partnerships and the work of the Alliance, FTT has enhanced awareness on the need for sustainable business practices in Africa's tourism industry and has been a key player in streamlining the harmonisation of sustainable tourism standards across the continent.

### **Achieving Sustainability in the Tourism Sector**

However, even with these advances in the sector, it is going to take more than harmonised standards and certification protocols, which are aligned to global best practices, to transform tourism in Africa and spread its benefits to a much wider community. Overall, the tourism industry needs to recognise the need for sustainability in everything it does and raise its voice.

First and foremost, it is imperative for tourism businesses across

the continent to examine the way they operate and commit themselves to adjust and align their business models to the recognised pillars, which underpin sustainable tourism – fair labour practices, respect for human rights, culture and the environment, fair distribution of benefits, fair participation in decision-making processes, reliability and transparency, among others. In a truly sustainable tourism industry, sustainability must filter down to every single aspect of a tourism business, from procurement and human resources to safety and reliability. It is about asking the right questions, such as, "Where do I get my produce from? Is it produced in an ethical and sustainable manner? Am I supporting local businesses through my procurement and purchasing processes? Am I paying my staff a fair wage? Do my staff have the opportunity to be involved in decisions taken about the future of the business? Do I provide a safe and healthy work environment for my staff? Am I promoting ethical tourism? Does my business benefit my or my staff's community?"

Indeed, sustainable tourism is as much about what a business does not do as what it does do. For example, a sustainable business will not support tourism activities or sell experiences, which are exploitative of either people or wildlife. Nor will it purchase cleaning products, which are potentially harmful to the environment or employ casual staff at below minimum wage or without required work permits.

Additionally, the paradigm shift towards a more sustainable tourism industry will require serious political will, which will be difficult to attain as long as

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»»» governments across Africa continue to avoid and downplay sustainability issues. This laissez-faire attitude by governments towards sustainability issues necessitates sector stakeholders to proactively advocate for the review and or development of sector policies to include sustainability and also support the governments to ensure these policies are implemented. Effective advocacy and lobbying are central in the engagement with governments at every level, and to achieve this effectively, the tourism industry needs to speak with a united voice, recognising that only through unity and commitment to a common goal can future policy be properly influenced.

Aside from lobbying and engaging governments, tourism organisations and associations really need to actively engage with each other and work in concert to formulate common sustainability policies and clearly defined sustainability goals. They also need to understand that being green, whilst a step in the right direction, is not necessarily being sustainable.

### Sustainability Challenges

For many in the industry, the shift to sustainability has been met with resistance, most often because of the impact on profit margins. The cost of running a sustainable tourism operation has been a consistent thorn in the side of the move towards a more responsible industry, especially on a continent, which is perpetually challenged in terms of what it can produce because of climatic conditions. This means that quantity invariably wins out over quality, for example, buying 5litres of supermarket brand

cooking oil is always going to be a cheaper option than 5litres of sustainably produced extra virgin olive oil, irrespective of how much rain forest has been destroyed in the process of its production. Consequently, doing the right thing is not always nor necessarily the most affordable option as modern commercial models have been built to make mass production more affordable.

Aside from challenges in terms of sustainable production and profit margins, industry stakeholders have to contend with often-unstable political landscape as well rampant corruption, which renders the operational environment of tourism difficult and certainly paints a gloomy picture of the sector's future.

However, there is an upside. The continent still has a large market share especially where tourism arrivals are concerned, and this is particularly true for East Africa. The millions of tourists who flock to Kenya and Tanzania each year to experience the region's incredible natural wonders and sample the rich cultures and heritage which make East Africa such a tourism hotspot carry serious economic power as they bring with them much needed foreign exchange and are as such, a valuable part of the region's economic engine. However, retaining these numbers is difficult especially when factors beyond the control of industry stakeholders affect visitor flow. Key factors that often affect tourism numbers to the continent and East Africa in particular include, political instability, terrorism, disease outbreaks, e.g. Ebola, etc. Moreover, with this decline the continent's economy and specifically, that of East Africa bears the brunt.

### Conclusion

Today's tourists are becoming more and more aware of where their holiday spend goes and how their vacations are benefiting people and the places they visit. While major international tour operators will be at pains to say that sustainability does not sell destinations, with respect, it has been selling East Africa for the better part of a century. Some of the most respected safari operators in East Africa were founded on the pillars of sustainable tourism long before sustainability became a buzzword and an apparent panacea for mass consumerism. That a sustainable African tourism industry is now widely regarded as integral to the long-term survival of the continent's economy is proof positive of the incredible achievements these businesses have made in spite of the challenges they have faced.

Organisations like FTT and Eco-tourism Kenya have taken these achievements and built on them, recognising the need for structure and measurable standards in sustainable business models and developing blueprints to assist businesses to succeed through being sustainable, not in spite of it.

With Africa's economic lions on the move again, perhaps the time is ripe for the tourism industry to step up and lead the pride, finally becoming the lion king it is surely destined to be.

### Endnote:

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# Sustainability of Kenya's Park Branding initiatives and its impacts on Recreational Park Choice in Kenya: Park Branding and Park Choices

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## Abstract

This paper seeks to understand better about the role of park branding in influencing visitor recreational market behaviour. A study was conducted from August 2013 to December 2013 by use of Post-visit questionnaire targeting the travellers to randomly selected branded parks in Kenya. This study recommends the need for the park brand's perception, personality and (or) uniqueness be revealed better through marketing concepts that are linked to historical, ecological, socio-cultural values of the park. This way, the park's brand personality could positively influence unique market segments as well as choice behavior of targeted market segments. There is also need for tourism stakeholders to apply a targeted brand communication policy to key segments. It is also important that tourism policy addresses the need to develop a coherent and sustained information promotion of KWS park brands based on market needs, at the international, regional, national, county and city level.

**Keywords:** *Park branding, Recreational Choice Behaviour, Kenya, Wildlife Tourism*

## 1. Introduction

In African context, tourism in protected areas ideally provides a means for sustaining economic benefits to regional and national economies as well as funding conservation and community development within wildlife preserves, (Higginbottom, 2004). The socio-economic and ecological impacts of parks in African context have accentuated the need for regulations to protect, secure communities interests and conserve these resource areas sustainably. The notion of Economic sustainability can then be seen to establish local economies that are economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible. There is continued expectations that such initiatives would lead to a corresponding increase in visitation levels (Eagles and Higgins, 1998). However,

tourism studies on market trends seem to dispute this rationale owing to the competitiveness of private-sector led conservancies within the country as well as a key focus on private sector-led market development initiatives (Melta and Mendlinger, 2013). There has been an increasing focus in Kenya to promote public private partnerships as well as market-drive initiatives that promote the conservation goals of these parks through tourism. The domination of destination brands have in a sense triggered an increasing interests and focus on iconic parks as core elements of sustainable tourism product offerings in Africa. Indeed a superfluity of studies in the field, show different effects of branding on tourism demand (Eagles, P, 2010).

Further, the anticipated growth in Wildlife tourism as a >>>>



>>>> growing component in international tourism in Africa has resulted in the governments' increasing prioritization of Wildlife tourism in most countries' tourism developmental agenda. Studies have shown that the conservation revenues may be higher than all the other alternative land use revenues. In Zimbabwe and Rwanda, the governments have prioritized tourism as a means for generating sustainable socio-economic opportunities. Shackley (1996, p.1) identifies key factors instrumental towards the development of Wildlife Tourism including the market growth and product diversification in world tourism; the growth of cheaper and faster access to new destinations;

In Kenya however, there has been an increasing traditional focus on wildlife tourism in terms of marketing, policy and sustainable development focus. Wildlife and nature-based safari tourism lies at the core of Kenya's tourism offerings. Wildlife tourism has been instrumental in the realization of national economic goals set out in Kenya's Vision 2030, Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERS 2003-2007), as well as the Medium Term Plan (2008-2012). Subsequently, through its multiplier effect on the economy, wildlife tourism has promoted local development, created new commercial and industrial enterprises as well as stimulated a demand for locally-produced goods and services (United Nations Economic Commission For Africa, 2011). With the foregoing, the sector is expected to spearhead future national economic development agenda for the country. It is expected to contribute significantly towards the overall goal of increasing the GDP growth from 2.6 % in 2009 to 10% per annum by the year 2030 (Government of Kenya, 2011).

## 2. The Research Problem

While there are many references to the size and growth of wildlife tourism in existing literature (Barnes, Burgess and Pearce 1992; Amante-Helwey 1996; Roes, Leader-Williams and Dalal-Clayton 1997), very little effort has been made to actually realize meaningful socio-economic impacts in Africa. The AU through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) identifies a need for a keen focus on Wildlife and (or) Nature-based Tourism as a means of socio-economic diversification in Africa (IGAD, 2013). A unique focus on protected areas as focal points for tourism growth cannot be underscored. The Kenyan recreational sector remains relatively underdeveloped, compared to other countries, in terms of the number of visitors, yield and diversity of recreational experience. According to the National Tourism Strategy, only 1.5 million visitors visit Kenya a year, compared to some 8.3 million per year in South Africa (Government

of Kenya, 2013). Kenya's National Tourism Policy, echoes a need to expand product choice, quality and diversity and to address unexploited and underdeveloped products (Government of Kenya, 2008a). Trends on Tourism arrivals in Kenya are currently spatially concentrated in only six (6) parks (Nairobi National Park, Lake Nakuru National Park, Maasai Mara National Reserve, Tsavo East National Park, Amboseli National Park, and Tsavo West National Park), which receive 81 per cent of the total number of visitors to the country's 26 wildlife sanctuaries (Government of Kenya, 2007; Government of Kenya, 2008b; Government of Kenya 2011; Government of Kenya 2013). The popularity of these park brands has created a spatial distribution of tourism development and arrivals in Kenya. Further, the enumeration of a profile of visitors to protected areas globally has not been universally determined (Eagles, P, 2010).

## 2.1 Objectives of the study

The Objectives of this study were to:-

1. To Evaluate visitors' perceptions of park brands in Kenya and influence on outdoor recreational choice behaviour;
2. To Explore the influence of brand personalities on recreational choice behaviour of visitors to Kenyan parks

## 3. Literature review

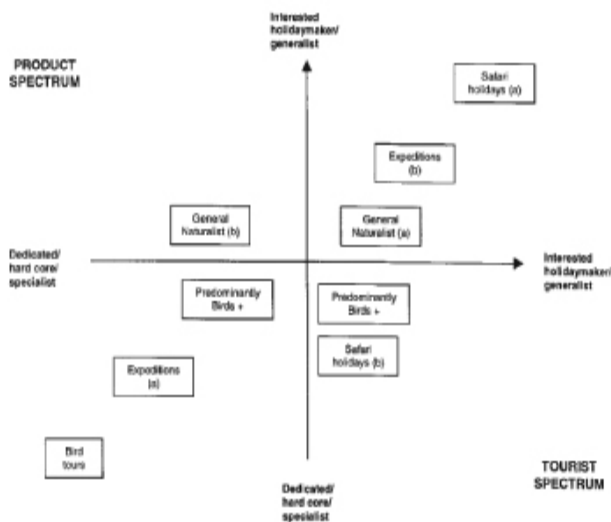
### 3.1 The Concept of Outdoor Recreational Behaviour

Recreation has been regarded as the behavioural pursuits engaged upon during leisure time other than pursuits to which people are normally committed to (Obina, Owie, Ayodele and Okwakpam, 2009). These behavioural pursuits are undertaken on holiday and within the free leisure time and vary from active, passive, in-door and out-door events. Choice of recreational destinations may refer to a phase within the decision making process that visitors make prior to, within and after their travel to the destination. These pursuits are varied in nature, location and context. Studies have indicated that a choice in recreational pursuits ultimately results to choice in destination. Woodside and Lysonski (1989) clearly highlights this by showing that the destination chosen for a vacation is the outcome of a series of explicit and implicit recreational judgements which progress from an initial state of awareness condition from which particular destination preferences arise and a travel intention is formed. The study further showed that the recreational choice of destination differed from the one intended due to the tourist interaction with certain situational variables within the destinations for example the security situation at the destination, news of a potential/active epidemic or terrorism activity (Opperwall, Hybers & Crouch, 2010; >>>>

>>>> Woodside and Lyonski, 1989). An essential prerequisite of marketing according to Bresler (2001) to visitors is an understanding of the degree of freedom they enjoy in their recreational choices.

The degree of freedom in recreational choice is then manifested from the unique brand perceptions of the destination. Studies on brand perception indicate that powerful brands create meaningful perceptions in the minds of consumers (Keller, 1993), with brand perception and reputation enhancing positive differentiation and thus potentially having a positive influence on recreational behaviour (Gordon, et.al., 1993; McEnally and de Chernatony, 1999). Cohen as cited in Raju (2009) suggests a cognitive typology to describe what travel means to different people. Tourism can be: recreational i.e. to relieve tensions and strains of work; diversionary, where the visit is a true escape from the boredom and routines of life; experiential, the tourist here is a modern pilgrim looking for authenticity in the life of other societies because he has seemingly lost it in his own; experimental, where the tourist wants to experiment with lifestyles other than his own; and finally existential, a tourist who actually acquires a new spiritual centre as a result of the travel experience. Curtin and Wilkes (2005) developed the Wildlife tourism-product spectrum highlighting a variety of domestic and outbound tourist choices/ opportunities in Wildlife Tourism within generalist and specialists product continuums.

Figure 1.0: Tourist/Product spectrum



Source: Curtin, S & Wilkes, K (2005) British Wildlife Tourism Operators: Current Issues and Typologies, *Current Issues in Tourism*, 8:6, 455-478, DOI: 10.1080/13683500508668231

To exacerbate the situation even further, some all-inclusive product portfolios of outbound tour operators

offer itineraries to suit both dedicated hard core enthusiasts as well as the casual, less active, wildlife holiday seekers. This makes the products categories very difficult to place. Maitland (2010) however reinforced the need of the destination brand perception and the distinctiveness of the place and argued that the serial production of standardized tourism zones would lead to inherently unappealing environments for visitors. It is therefore essentially critical that the brand identity created by the seller about natural and/or artificial attractions, histories and people, is portrayed as a positive brand perception and may become motivations of choice to the consumers. The nexus between the destination choice and the choice of vacation experience presents an ideal challenge to tourism marketers. As Oppewal, Hybers & Crouch (2010) notes, a tourist may decide initially that they would choose the destination first before choosing the vacation experience and in other instances, the reverse order would apply. These situations suggest that a series of situational variables influence particular destination preferences and hence travel intentions are formed.

### 3.2 Park Branding

Ashworth and Goodall (1998) posited that Parks are amalgamations of tourism products, experiences and other intangible items promoted to consumers. This was in sharp contrast to traditional views of parks as designated areas for just the protection of biodiversity, habitats and ecosystems. In a tourism context, a Park brand “represents a unique combination of product characteristics and added conservation values, both functional and non-functional, which have taken on a relevant meaning, which is inextricably linked to that brand, awareness of which might be conscious or intuitive” (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Prayag, 2009). In a contrasting opinion, Buhalis (2000) and Leiper (1995) concur that Park brands represent are amalgams of products that offered an integrated experience to consumers. A Park brand can be therefore viewed as a perceptual concept, which can be interpreted subjectively by consumers. Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, Shepherd and Wanhill (1998) further noted that Parks are the focus of facilities and services designed to meet the needs of the visitors. Therefore, the focus on Parks as the core of tourism products need not be underemphasized. Cai (2002) provided a unique rationale for branding Parks by arguing that the essence of branding a Park is aimed to create a unique, single, permanent entity, with a strong political and legislative framework for tourism marketing and planning.

Clarke (2000) noted that, since contemporary tourism is high involvement, branding helps reduce choice. According to Gartner (2003) and Woodside and Lyonski (1989), the predominant reason why Parks have become an integral aspect in branding to date is due to the fact

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>>>> that tourist preferences of Parks are based on the degree to which they engender favourable perceptions of conservation brands. Therefore, Park brand perception is integral in the tourist decision-making process. Further, Foley and Fahy (2003) notes that a brand reduces the impacts of intangibility of service, as well as the risk factor associated to holiday decision-making.

### 3.3 Park Brands Perception and Recreational Choice Behaviour

Marino (2010) noted that destinations with recognizable perception and positive recreational image have a higher probability of being chosen. Further, Marino (2012) continues and hypothesizes that recreational perception has a distinct implications on post-visit. There were three distinct levels of recreational perception that can influence a destination's perception. These include perception "a priori", "in situ" and "a posteriori" perception. Perception "a priori" refers to the mental construction an individual makes of a place without having a physical connection with the place. This actually meant that the tourist has already visited a place before they physically visit it. Perception "in situ" is central to the tourist's experience because it contrasts what the tourists have imagined. Finally, the 'a posteriori' perception refers to the fact that tourists' experience doesn't end with the trip but tourists consume some elements in their daily life.

### 3.4 Park Brand Personalities and Recreational Choice Behaviour

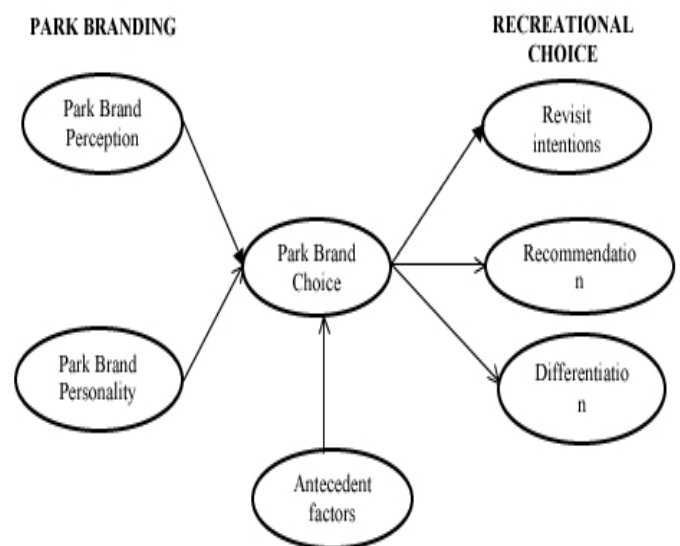
The essence of branding lies on creating a unique personality type which forms the stable unique qualities of an individual. Although most studies in personality psychology have focused on the human personality, minimum attention has focused on place personalities and in this case park brand personality. It is due to this limited existing attention devoted to brand personality itself, that most tourism services have not fully understood its significance within the sector over the last few decades. However, contemporary studies and empirical evidence reveals that consumers have a higher preference for brands that they perceive to possess a personality that reflects their self-identity. This preference is due to the fact that the personality traits associated with a brand facilitates consumers' expression of their actual or ideal dimensions of the self (Belk, 2010; Sirgy, 1982) and society (Kaplan, Yurt, Guneri & Kurtulus, 2008).

## 4. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual model (Figure 2.0 below) depicts a conceptualized view on the proposed effects of brands on visitors' recreational choice behaviour. It specifically

hypothesizes that brand personalities may affect visitors choice behaviour. These consumers may however differ in terms of personal characteristics, tastes and preferences. Recreational choice intentions were hereby trichotomized as post – behavioural intentions (satisfaction, loyalty and recommendations). When consumers choose amongst brands, according to research by Blain, Levy and Richie (2005), they rationally consider practical issues about the relative uniqueness of the different brands on offer They also assess the symbolic value of the brand based on their perceptions of these destinations (Howard and Sheth, 2010) as well as the marketing information available from different sources (Odunga and Maingi, 2011). The consumers are bombarded with various marketing communication (Advertising, online, Sales promotion, Personal selling, PR, word of mouth etc.), which inform their behavioral intentions.

Figure 2.0: Conceptual framework

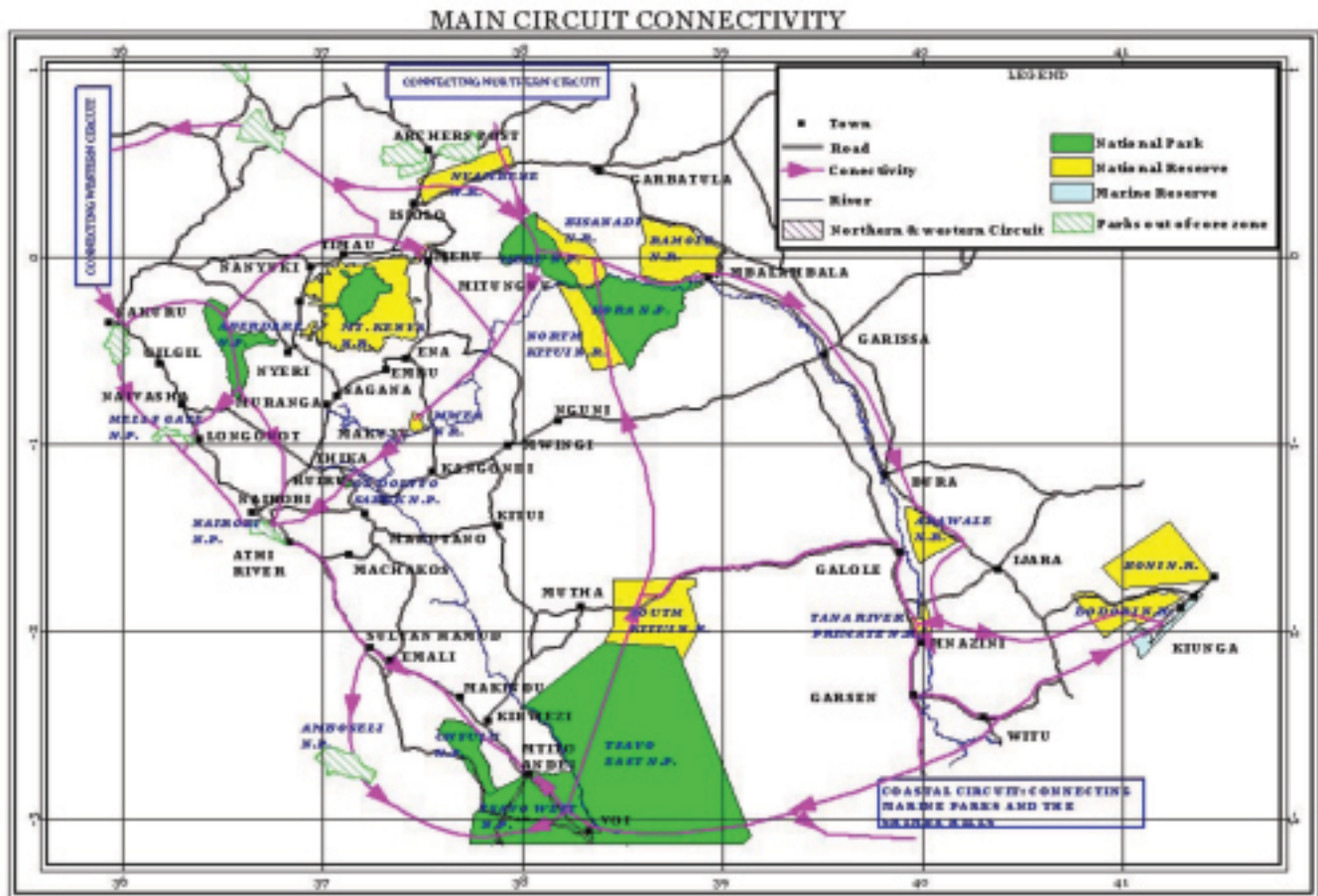


Source: Research data (2014)

At the same time, they evaluate different brand personalities, forming a gestalt view about the brand that most closely represents the perception with which they wish to be associated. The destination's uniqueness may make it stand-out from other areas by virtue of its inherent appeal being stronger than its competitors' (UNWTO, 2010). Further, the conceptual model postulates that social determinants such as group-based travel behaviour on all-inclusive travel may significantly influence visitors' post-behavioural intentions on brands. In many cases, tourism behaviour may be group-oriented rather than being an individual consumption activity and therefore, travel parties are a significant influence on group-oriented travel behaviour and continues to set the fad on the definition of 'fashionable' and 'attractive'.



Figure 3.0: The study locations within the main circuit connectivity



Source: GoK (2008c) Mt. Kenya Tourism Circuit Guide (2013-2014). Georeferencing consortium

## 5. Research Methodology

A descriptive survey design was adopted in this study. Data were collected from August 2013 to December 2013 by use of a Post-visit questionnaire targeting the travellers. A Two-stage cluster sampling technique was adopted in coming up with a representative sample. This constituted of branded parks as the primary sampling units (clusters) and the second level constituted of the visitor/tourist visiting branded parks. L. Nakuru National Park, Nairobi National Park, Hell's Gate National Park and the Aberdares National Park formed four sub-clusters. Though the four parks have commonalities in the sense, they are less congested and focus more exclusively on wildlife tourism; they are all remains of the white highlands and are in close connectivity (See figure 3) and have close proximity to the private ranches and Nairobi (Japan International Cooperation Agency, 1997).

The respondents were obtained from a random issuance of the questionnaires at the main park exit points as well as the tourism facilities within the parks. The data had been gathered from self and enumerator-administered questionnaires. Target numbers of respondents in the main study were 385 respondent questionnaires. Total questionnaires collected were completed by 358 respondents in the focal areas under study. This represented an overall response rate of 93% that were deemed adequate for the analysis. The data collected within this phase was subjected to a screening process where outliers and inconsistencies were determined.

## 6. Findings and discussion

### *Preliminary findings*

*Findings on Objective 1: To Evaluate visitors' perceptions of park brands in Kenya and influence on recreational choice behaviour*

>>>> Specifically, Structural Equations Modelling (S.E.M) was adopted to examine how park brand perceptions and personalities influences recreational choice behaviour choices and the antecedent factors influencing their choice as well as explore the influence of brand personalities on behavioural intentions of tourists to Kenyan parks. S.E.M is adopted when the goal of the researcher is to investigate the influence of a factor (unobserved latent variable) that is assumed to exert causal influence on observed variables. Such analysis is termed as Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

Using the sample data, an analytical plan was instituted to test the null hypothesis. This involved the specification of the significance level (\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ ) as well as the test statistic that was the linear regression t-test (to determine whether the slope of the regression line differs significantly from zero) as well as the coefficient of determination measures. The tests were conducted on the latent constructs and the results for the individual parks indicated the following:

#### *Indirect effects: Structural model*

The tourists' brand perception of Hell's gate National Park significantly influenced brand differentiation ( $p < .05$ ) as well as revisit intentions ( $p < .05$ ) positively (See table 1.0). The results significantly concur with Aaker (1996) findings that brand image perception is a key factor in describing experience dimensions. According to Echtermeyer (2006), brands are status symbols that appeal to the luxury segment and safety symbols to the budget segment of tourists. It is therefore key that the brand perception be unmistakeable and suit the target group.

Table 1.0: Structural model regression results - Hell's gate N.P.

Regression Weights						
Structural relationships			Estimate	S.E.	t-value	P
Brand differentiation	β-	Brand perception	0.670	0.080	8.354	***
Recommendation	β-	Brand perception	-0.048	0.049	-9.79	.328
Revisit	β-	Brand perception	0.077	0.012	6.597	***

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

As for Lake Nakuru National Park, the tourists' post-visit park brand perception moderately influenced revisit intentions of tourists. Brand perception did not significantly influence recommendation and differentiation decisions of tourists (as indicated in table 2.0). This factor may be attributed according to Gunelius (2013) that there may be a difference between the brand

positioning within the marketing communications and the consumers' brand perception.

Table 2.0: Structural model regression results - Lake Nakuru N.P.

Regression Weights						
Structural relationships			Estimate	S.E.	t-value	P
Brand differentiation	β-	Brand perception	.128	.069	1.854	.064
Recommendation	β-	Brand perception	.045	.037	1.209	.227
Revisit	β-	Brand perception	.081	.037	2.181	.029*

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

As for Aberdares, there was strong evidence against the hypothesis that brand perceptions did not significantly influence differentiation intentions of consumers. The main explanation to this finding was the fact that the lack of brand distinction from other park brands or inadequate market information may be a key factor leading to this trend. (See table 3.0 below)

Table 3.0: Structural model regression results - Aberdares N.P.

Regression Weights						
Structural relationships			Estimate	S.E.	t-value	P
Brand differentiation	β-	Brand perception	.068	.067	1.007	.314
Recommendation	β-	Brand perception	.052	.018	2.905	.004**
Revisit	β-	Brand perception	.110	.038	2.915	.004**

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

The S.E.M findings however showed that the park brand perception significantly and positively influenced recommendation and revisit intentions though it did not significantly influence brand differentiation (as indicated in table 3.0). This finding was indicative of a high degree of brand loyalty as well as tourist satisfaction with the experiences.

There was very strong evidence to suggest that in Nairobi National Park, tourists' perception of the park brand significantly influenced brand differentiation, recommendation and revisit intentions of tourists (as indicated in table 4.0). The results indicate that the brand is a determining factor to choice behaviour of tourists.

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&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt; Table 4.0: Structural model regression results - Nairobi N.P.

Regression Weights						
Structural relationships			Estimate	S.E.	t-value	P R <sup>2</sup>
Brand differentiation	β-	Brand perception	-.180	.049	-3.671	*** -.501
Recommendation	β-	Brand perception	-.169	.042	-4.057	*** -.543
Revisit	β-	Brand perception	-.214	.051	-4.215	*** -.565

Note. \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

This actually confirm's Evans and Berman (2005) proposition that the service brand may be perceived as an indicator to quality and a determining factor to purchase. However, it may be important to note that the country-of-origin cue for the park brand may have a significant influence on the brand perceptions and therefore significantly influencing the tourists' choice behaviour.

*Findings on Objective 2: The influence of brand personalities on recreational choice behaviour of visitors to Kenyan parks*

The AMOS S.E.M structural model findings (see table 5.0) indicated that the Lake Nakuru National Park brand personality significantly and negatively influenced brand differentiation (  $b = -.131$ ;  $SE = .071$ ;  $t\text{-value} = -1.852$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Therefore, it was critical to address the brand personality image from the tourists' viewpoints. Further, the Park's brand personality did not significantly influence tourist revisit/recall (  $b = -.018$ ;  $SE = .035$ ;  $t\text{-value} = -.508$ ;  $p > .05$ ).

Table 5.0: Structural model regression results - Lake Nakuru N.P.

Regression Weights						
Structural relationships			Estimate	S.E.	t-value	P R <sup>2</sup>
Brand differentiation	β-	Brand personality	-.131	.071	-1.852	.024 .960
Recommendation	β-	Brand personality	-.026	.036	-.706	.480 -.094
Revisit/recall	β-	Brand personality	-.018	.035	-.508	.612 -.071

Note. \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

The findings were indicative of the increased brand salience (proportion of consumers with a negative brand personality) towards Lake Nakuru National Park. The Park brand may therefore be said to have a high brand salience ratings and that is expected to have a negative impact on the post-behavioural intentions of tourists.

The findings from Nairobi National Park (as shown by table 6.0) indicated that brand personality significantly and positively influenced all behavioural intentions of consumers i.e. revisit, recommendation and differentiation.

Table 6.0: Structural model regression results - Nairobi N.P.

Regression Weights						
Structural relationships			Estimate	S.E.	t-value	P R <sup>2</sup>
Brand differentiation	β-	Brand personality	1.581	.304	5.200	*** .544
Recommendation	β-	Brand personality	.142	.030	4.773	*** .622
Revisit	β-	Brand personality	.189	.039	4.839	*** .653

Note. \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

The results were suggestive of the fact that consumers-endowed the park brand with human-like personalities. Holding, Knudtzen and Bjerre (2009) notes that an emotional bond between the place brand and the consumer is hence strengthened significantly if the brand has an attractive and relevant brand personality. Therefore, it can be envisioned that a positive differentiation of the brand from the competitive brands shows the efficacy of the brand within the choice process.

Hell's Gate National Park showed a significant degree of brand salience. The park brand's personality did not significantly influence brand differentiation, recommendation and revisit decisions of tourists (see table 7.0).

Table 7.0: Structural model regression results - Hell's Gate N.P.

Regression Weights						
Structural relationships			Estimate	S.E.	t-value	P R <sup>2</sup>
Brand differentiation	β-	Brand personality	0.035	0.082	.424	.671 .061
Recommendation	β-	Brand personality	-0.037	0.020	-1.862	.063 -.214
Revisit	β-	Brand personality	-0.003	0.033	-.098	.922 -.014

Note. \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

These findings were contrary to Sirgy (1982) who linked brand personality to positive brand preference as well as Fournier (1994) who linked brand personality to trust and loyalty. Further, Biel (1995) maintains that brand personality being more enduring and more stable than other brand associations, it should favour the consumer's will to maintain the relationship with the brand in future. Therefore an unstable brand personality has an effect on brand preference.

The Structural model regression results indicated that the brand personality recorded by tourists to Aberdares National Park did not significantly influence brand differentiation ( $p > .05$ ), recommendation intentions ( $p > .05$ ) and revisit intentions ( $p > .05$ ).



Table 8.0: Structural model regression results - Aberdares N.P.

Regression Weights							
Structural relationships			Estimate	S.E.	t-value	P	R <sup>2</sup>
Brand differentiation	β-	Brand Personality	.015	.112	.132	.895	.021
Recommendation	β-	Brand Personality	-.065	.034	-1.899	.058	-.270
Revisit	β-	Brand Personality	-.121	.071	-1.715	.086	-.247

This finding as noted here indicated that the park brand personality did not significantly influence the behavioral intentions of tourists to the park. The probable reasons to such an observation may be either because the park brand did not have significant appeal, a striking profile, or a clear identity to the tourists.

## 7. Conclusions and recommendations

In conclusion, as far as there is need for the government to enhance sustainable future cross-sectoral interlinkages and adopting strategic partnerships (PPPs) in product development between the travel trade, suppliers, local communities and the park brand management agency (KWS) through in-market representation with the travel trade in advertising, trade-fairs and media etc. The state of roads and tourism infrastructure should be similarly enhanced as a matter of strategic development priority within the park as it enhances the park's access to key attractions. Accessibility was deemed as a significant factor in determining choice. Accommodation quality was also viewed as key to park brand choice and needs to similarly enhance within and outside the park through stakeholder consultation and support. Such support can be enhanced through partnership arrangements such as Design, Build, Finance, Operate (DBFO); Build Own Operate (BOO); Build, Operate, Transfer (BOT). The implementation of the tourism infrastructure development strategy depends on the partnership between public sector investment (especially in physical infrastructure development) and private sector investment (especially in tourism infrastructure development). There is need to enhance the park's online brand proposition as well as differentiate the brand offering to enhance the value of the brand in the market. The online brand needs to focus more on peer-to-peer online recommendations by tour operators and travel agents through you tube video reviews, Facebook friend reviews and news article reviews

On the evaluation of visitors' perceptions of park brands in Kenya, the study findings point out that tourists are becoming more experiential and personal in their tourism choices, making them more critical, independent and

more determined to achieve their ideal holiday needs. Individualism and perception may significantly account for the growing need for unique experiences and park brand personalities that generate them. On overall, external brand perception was deemed to significantly influence choice behavior of tourists. Therefore, there was need to ensure that the park brand perception and image is well enhanced. There is need for KWS to communicate high value to the client through a local storyline. The essence of the park brand needs to be identified, felt and perceived positively from the initial contact with the tourist throughout the holiday to the departure of the tourist. The park brand should help create a sense of feel (affect and emotions); think (creativity and cognition); act (individual actions and lifestyle) and relations (connection with a reference group or culture).

Further on the influence of brand personalities on recreational choice behaviour of visitors, the park brand's personality and (or) uniqueness needed to be revealed better through marketing concepts that are linked to historical, ecological, socio-cultural values of the park and the adjacent communities. In this way, the park's brand personality could positively influence choice behavior of targeted market segments. It is therefore important for the tourism stakeholders to enhance the efficacy of park brands by assessing and developing seven main aspects of the park brand. These include brand communication, packaging, experience, personality, design, perception and partnerships at the destination level. On overall, these recommendations are key towards ensuring that Kenya's Flagship Park Branding Initiative strategically influence visitor recreational choice Behavior. For further research, it is to be noted that there is need in the long-term to understand cultural biases / perceptions of the destination brand and their influences on recreational choice behavior of various segments of tourists. It is also important to assess the efficacy of the online and social media in influencing the overall perception of the destination brand as well as choice behavior of tourists.

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Lippa Wood  
co-founder of the  
Enonkishu Conservancy



# Enonkishu Conservancy, Mara Beef, Ecotourism, and the Mara Training Centre

**A**s the Mara Serengeti ecosystem's unique and complex grasslands are increasingly under threat what are the options for ensuring that there are attractive and viable incentives available for pastoralists to ensure their long term commitment to sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices. One such endeavour is the Enonkishu Conservancy, which works with local communities to improve their resilience by conserving natural resources, wildlife and heritage, through sustainable and commercial livestock enterprises.

With tourism and livestock being the major economic drivers in the region, it is important that neither negatively impacts the other and Enonkishu is playing a major

role in ensuring this does not happen in the Mara Serengeti. This hypothesis is at the core of Enonkishu Conservancy's work as expressed by Tarquin Wood,

Managing Director of Mara Beef and one of the founding members of Enonkishu Conservancy, who avers "we all want to see prosperous regions and rural economies, which encourage investment and add value to an industry which the Maasai people place their pride in."

Established in 2013, Mara Beef has fast become a model for good cattle and rangeland management. The company rears top quality beef on the Mara Beef Farm as well as within the Enonkishu Conservancy on the edge of the Maasai Mara with the aim of promoting sustainable cattle ranching based on good practice as well as being



a consistent supplier of high quality beef to wholesalers and consumers throughout the country. Mara Beef works in partnership with the Enonkishu Conservancy to promote sustainable natural resources management, with a focus on integrated management of wildlife and livestock. The promotion of this integrated approach among communities in the area aims to spread the economic and financial risks, increase resilience to extreme weather conditions and increase food security through supplementary income. There is evidence that this approach holds enormous potential benefits for wildlife conservation and livelihood security. As evidenced by the case of Enonkishu Conservancy, where controlled livestock grazing and improved breeding and herd health has positively impacted on wildlife numbers and local biodiversity as well as on the socio-economic environment. The approach is increasingly gaining traction and interest among the local community, with and community members keen on working with the conservancy. "The conservationists and pastoralists need to work together," says Moses Nampasso, a landowner and professional guide working in the Enonkishu Conservancy.

Aside from promoting the sustainable grassland management benefiting both wildlife and the local communities as well as raising cattle, Mara Beef additionally links pastoralist communities with high value markets in key cities using Mara Beef's existing and well-developed marketing and distribution systems, in a manner that is reliable, predictable and commands significantly higher prices. Currently, Mara Beef products are available at the Meatery Deli in most Naku-matt outlets, Tusky's deli's as well as Naivas and Game supermarkets.



#### Rangeland Management

In 2014, the Enonkishu Conservancy was one of the few institutions selected from a pool over 90 applications from 25 countries to become a Savory Hub, a member of the global Savory Network. Following the selection, Enonkishu management underwent training at the African Centre for Holistic Management (HM) in Zimbabwe to learn the Holistic Management approach, developed by Zimbabwean rancher Allan Savory – to heal grasslands. Within 18 months of integrating HM in the Enonkishu Conservancy and Mara Beef farm, there have been more positive changes in the health of the grasslands than the landowners have seen in the past decade. The improved health of the grasslands has resulted in increased number of wildlife species returning to the area, ranging from diverse kaleidoscope of butterflies to herds of elephants and everything in between.

Sustainable management of resources, both flora and fauna, has enormous impact on ecosystem health, which in turn generates benefits at various levels and humans can learn from animals as espoused by Savory, who insists that humans need to mimic nature. Savory contends that herbivores like cattle and sheep can

actually restore degraded lands.<sup>1</sup> To demonstrate how wildlife can and do improve health of grasslands, Savory argues that when herbivorous wildlife, which often roam the grasslands as tightly knit herds, are being chased by predators, they trample the hard surface of land thus loosening the soils enabling the soils to absorb water like a sponge and additionally, their dung fertilizes the plains thus improving overall health of the land.

Savory advocates carefully rotating livestock in different paddocks to feed on grass at the optimum time of its growth for the optimum amount of time. He states that animals left alone in one place for extended periods of time chew their favourite grasses down to the roots, killing them and causing erosion. Ultimately, he says, overgrazing is not about the number of animals on a fixed amount of land, but the amount of time the plants are exposed to grazing and the amount of recovery time in between. This is an issue among pastoral communities, including the Maasai, who are the predominant community within the Mara-Serengeti ecosystem as explained by Musa Kiseer, an HM community trainer in Enonkishu Conservancy, who explains that, "Despite various recommendations that in order to survive, the Maasai pastoralists must reduce their livestock, the Maasai have yet to reduce their livestock herds and as such, the land might continue to deteriorate and they could be left with less to sell."

Holistic management does not just entail rotational grazing, but also promotes decision-making

<sup>1</sup> More than 3 million people have viewed Savory's TED talk, [https://www.ted.com/talks/allan\\_savory\\_how\\_to\\_green\\_the\\_world\\_s\\_deserts\\_and\\_reverse\\_climate\\_change](https://www.ted.com/talks/allan_savory_how_to_green_the_world_s_deserts_and_reverse_climate_change), since it was posted.

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process for planning around several variables, including ecological variables, such as wildlife numbers, prevalence and pervasiveness of poisonous plants at any given time, water restrictions, etc. HM is as such, contextual and focused on results and does not prescribe to a specific ranching method.

### Impact and Partnerships

As an organization, Enonkishu is keen on collaboration and works closely with other stakeholders. Currently, Enonkishu is working in partnership with the World Wildlife Federation (WWF) and UNESCO-IHE under their Mau Mara Serengeti (MaMaSe) project, and Enonkishu Conservancy was selected as a pilot project and demonstration site for Sustainable Rangeland Management in the region. Enonkishu has set

up sound ecological monitoring systems and undertakes monitoring on a quarterly basis focusing on rangeland health index incorporating several biological indicators including wind erosion, vitality of shrubs and key species, and percentage of vegetation cover. Each indicator relates to ecological processes and correlates with key environmental services provided by grasslands such as soil stabilization and biodiversity – not just plants, but also micro-and mega fauna and wildlife, above and below the ground.

In 2016, the Mara Training Centre was built with the support from the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund Grant. The centre offers training in relevant community-based land use enterprises, with a major focus on Sustainable Rangeland Management and Livestock Production. “We aim to work with a range of different communities around us to help them fulfil their aspirations as more commercial livestock producers, in a wildlife-livestock integrated system and with the opportunity to work with the marketing and processing facilities of Mara Beef, so improving their market linkages and value chain access, as well as the eco-tourism linkages,” Says Doug-

las Kamaru, the Manager of the Enonkishu Conservancy.

Enonkishu Conservancy and Mara Beef are exposing and propagating a method of land and resource management that regenerates land through production instead of depleting it. The vision is to strengthen rural communities, protect wildlife and decrease the risk of catastrophic hazards such as, droughts and floods, whilst improving soil health.

With the dramatic increase in biodiversity and wildlife following the implementation of the regenerative grazing practices in the region, Enonkishu hopes to attract more visitors to see the positive impact of the work of the conservancy. Following a decade of low wildlife population, Enonkishu Conservancy now has abundant herds of herbivores, a resident pride of lion, elephants seeking refuge in the forested hillsides, and the rangers are working hard to ensure the increasing wildlife population have a safe and secure environment, with pastures that will support the wildlife as well as community livestock based on holistic grazing plan. Additionally, the increased wildlife population has improved tourist numbers, which has generated positive socio-economic outcomes for the local communities. Visitors to Enonkishu are housed in the conservancy's House in the Wild, located within the Enonkishu Conservancy along the banks of the Mara River, whose serene environment, often leaves guests feeling inspired and motivated about the conservation efforts being undertaken within the Mara.

[www.marabeef.com](http://www.marabeef.com)  
[www.enonkishu.org](http://www.enonkishu.org)  
[www.maratrainingcentre.com](http://www.maratrainingcentre.com)  
[www.houseinthewild.com](http://www.houseinthewild.com)



# STTA NRM & Sustainable Tourism Field Course

Promoting Sustainable Natural and Cultural Resource Management through Student Travel & Research

## Modules

1. Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecology
2. Wildlife Species Management
3. Community Cultural Development
4. Conservation Areas Management



Understand the world through field based research.

use tropical habitats as your laboratory.

Engage with host communities and experts to solve problems in natural and cultural resource management.

Kick start your career in conservation and sustainable tourism development.

Course	Description	Sites	Activities (Includes stop-over)	Duration
Module 1	Introduction to Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecosystems (Functions, Services, Problems, Protection)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wasini Island-Marine Ecosystem</li> <li>• Tsavo West-Savannah Ecosystem</li> <li>• Lake Naivasha-Inland Aquatic ecosystem</li> <li>• Mt.Elgon-Montane and Alpine Ecosystem</li> <li>• Kakamega Forest-Tropical Forest Ecosystem</li> <li>• Dunga Swamp-Wetlands Ecosystem</li> </ul>	Field Lecture	1-2 weeks
Module 2	Wildlife Species Management (Morphology and Physiology of wild flora and fauna, habitats, services, human wildlife conflict, protection)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kisite Mpunguti Park and Reserve-Herpatology</li> <li>• Shimba Hills-Botany</li> <li>• Tsavo West-Mammalogy</li> <li>• Nairobi National Park-Endangered species</li> <li>• Lake Nakuru National Park-Ornithology</li> <li>• Kakamega Forest-Entomology</li> <li>• Lake Victoria-Ichthyology</li> </ul>	Field Lecture  Camping  Field Research activities (Censoring, monitoring, capture and classification techniques)	2-3 weeks
Module 3	Community Cultural Development (History of social groups in Kenya, migration and distribution, culture, socio-economic activities, impacts of tourism on host community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digo Community - Coastal community</li> <li>• National Museums of Kenya-History, migration and distribution of Kenyan Communities</li> <li>• Luhya Community -Inland community</li> </ul>	Field Lecture  Field Research Activity on community cultural development	1-3 weeks
Module 4	Conservation Area Management by Categories (establishment, planning, legislation, stakeholder engagement, human wildlife conflict, sustainable tourism in conservation areas, challenges)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mombasa Marine National Park-Marine Conservation Areas</li> <li>• Kaya Kinondo Forest- Protected Landscape/Heritage Site/ Forest Conservation Areas</li> <li>• Campi ya Kanzi-Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources/Community Managed Conservation areas</li> <li>• Nairobi National Park and Karura Forest- Urban Conservation Areas</li> <li>• Meru National Park-Complete Wilderness areas</li> <li>• Samburu National Reserve-Strict Nature Reserve</li> <li>• Mt. Kenya National Park-Natural Monument/ Heritage site</li> <li>• Lake Nakuru National Park- Habitat/Species Management Area</li> </ul>	Field lecture  Camping  Design/ Development of a Community-based/ Conservation Project	1-3 weeks





# Why Including an Orphanage Trip on a Tour Itinerary is Wrong

**On the face of it, volunteering in an orphanage seems like a win-win situation for all parties involved. On one hand, volunteers get to do something they feel is making a positive impact and get to experience something completely different from their own world, while the children get to be nursed, cuddled and cared for by a volunteer and the tour operator, by linking the two together, gets to deliver a package that everyone is happy with. So, what could be wrong with that?**

It does not take much research to understand some of the complexities of orphanages and the way in which volunteering in orphanages can often have devastating and long term effects on the children. Research on the subject is overwhelming and various studies support this conclusion as demonstrated by a report by Better Care Network, which, demonstrates

that children living in institutions do not always receive high quality interaction when they most need it and, as a result, are at much higher risk of long-term developmental vulnerabilities<sup>1</sup>. Aside from

<sup>1</sup> Better Care Networks (BCN) is developing country briefs which provide a detailed analysis of children's care and living arrangements in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and other African countries.

these long-term developmental susceptibilities, there is evidence that children growing up in institutions do not manifest these development handicaps until adulthood and try to integrate within society. There is evidence that as these children into adulthood and become independent, often with difficulty, they look at their peers who have been brought up in communities and realise the sense of loss and connection that exists.

## The Case of East Africa

In East Africa, there are situations where orphanages exist solely to provide a volunteering and mission experience. Additionally, though reunification, kinship and foster care as well as domestic adoption are on the rise across East Africa, orphanages that offer voluntourism packages have little

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>>>> or no incentive to reunify children under their care with their families or find family-based alternatives while volunteering and mission trips are active, since volunteers and mission trips would be redundant if the orphanages are empty!

*...volunteering in these facilities... Not only does [volunteering] encourage the expansion of residential care centres, but it also makes children [more] vulnerable to abuse. 2*

### Children's Voices

Often the voice that is unheard in this debate is of those children who experience volunteers and mission trips while they are in orphanages. In comparison to the reportage or blogs of the experience of volunteers, there is minimal of the experience of the children they visit.

In 2016, Stephen Ucembe, founder of Kenyan Care Leavers, wrote very eloquently about growing up in a Kenyan orphanage and the negative impact that volunteers and mission trips had on his childhood.

**D**ressed in a uniform of blue shorts and yellow and blue t-shirts branded with the name of the orphanage, we were gathered under a tree for shade, standing at the centre of the institution to wait for the visitors. We never called them volunteers then, but visitors.[...] The institution staff had taught us a routine. They paraded us, and as soon as the visitors arrived in tour vans we had to exude joy. Indeed, we jumped up and down, and raptured in unison with song and dance that welcomed them.

We knew that the only way to ensure they came back again to help the institution was by how much they smiled at our entertainment, and by the tears, sadness or sympathy that came when they were told that we were "orphans". I remember the senior staff on duty standing at the centre of a circle of volunteers pronouncing how some of us had been abandoned by their parents, how others had been picked from the streets and others rejected by families.

Silently I felt sad and miserable to have people gawk at me and have cameras flashing at our faces. Most of the volunteers were taken round the institution to see where we slept, where our food was cooked, and told of upcoming projects. Some committed to help, and others gave a one off donation. Some of these encounters were brief, they pulled down their sunglasses, walked back to the vans and from the vehicles they waved us goodbye. At this point some of us had gotten used to their coming and going, but others not - especially the younger ones: tears knocked at their eyelids. They tried not to cry in an environment where crying was almost taboo. This practice with visitors had become a routine that made many of us feel even more alienated, isolated, stigmatized, helpless, hopeless, and weak.<sup>3</sup>

Though his account should have been a wake-up call for tour operators and the tourist industry, this was not so, with one global

tour operator being asked by their clients to remove Stephen's personal testimony from the company website and retain 'orphanage volunteering' as one of their services. This demonstrates that orphanages, especially those that offer *voluntourism* are money-making ventures with the tourists deemed more important than the voice of individuals like Stephen and those he speaks for.

Alternative Care Initiatives, a Ugandan NGO, has a Care Leavers programme, which has engaged with over 100 young people who have lived in various care facilities in Uganda made some startling findings with regards to volunteering and mission trips. In their study, entailed documenting the accounts of young people brought up in orphanages, the majority recalled their experiences of volunteers and mission trips as mainly positive.<sup>4</sup> The reasons? The children would receive better food during the period of volunteer missions and alarmingly, they reported they would have a reprieve from abuse – physical, psychological and sexual – while the volunteers were present.

Morris Owiny, a member of the Ugandan Care Leavers' organisation team, grew up in what many consider a 'good' orphanage in Jinja, Uganda. Though the orphanage was well funded and Morris was well fed, attended a good school and did not personally experience the levels of abuse and neglect that many others report, Morris still believes that not enough was done to support him and his siblings to remain in their community. This lack of support, Moses believes, contributed to the fractured relationship he has with the members of his extend-

2 Better Care Network, 2014, p.3

3 "My experience of volunteers: Growing up in an "orphanage" in Kenya" <http://www.rethinkorphanages.org/growingupinanorphanage/>

4 Alternative Care Initiatives <http://www.alternative-care-uganda.org/index.html>

>>>> ed family. Currently, Moses has nowhere to call home as when he along with twenty other children reached eighteen years, the orphanage rented a room and dumped there with the proviso that they were now too old for the orphanage.

Even though Morris was continuing with his studies, the orphanage refused his request for shelter and much more painful for Morris, was the failure of the orphanage to support him when he needed somewhere to stay as he revised for his exams. In retrospect, Morris feels that the constant flow of Western mission trips and volunteers, while exciting at first, distorted his view of foreigners and of the world, an opinion supported by many of the others who grew up in the orphanage. The constant thread of the experiences of children who grew up in the orphanage is that the foreigners came with gifts and kindness, and then left as quickly as they came, which left then bereft and with a twisted view of the world.

Morris avers that some of the people he knew who were in care, especially those growing up in children's villages, were neither Ugandans nor Westerners and therefore always felt like 'hybrids'. Morris explains,

**They witnessed and experienced much of Western culture but cannot attain or reach it. Likewise, they don't really feel Ugandan. The idea of going to the village and helping communities 'dig', which is what most Ugandans from rural communities do, is appalling to them. It's just not what they signed up for. Far from being 'future leaders', as they are often touted, the orphanage systems is creating**

### **long term problems and disenfranchising people from their communities and roots.**

This is echoed by the experience of 'Rebecca', who grew up in a number of orphanages after living on the street. She was separated from her siblings as some of the orphanages traded children between themselves, treating the children like chattels. She recalls that she had no idea at the time of the damage that the volunteers were doing to her. She was constantly told by the visitors that she could achieve anything in her life and that nothing was impossible. With the free quality education provided by the orphanage, being clothed in donated designer clothes and being able to travel to different countries as part of the orphanage choir, Rebecca felt privileged and actually believed that she could achieve anything. However, she got a rude shock when the orphanage hurriedly 'resettled' her when she got pregnant after being raped by a staff member as the management felt that a pregnant 16 year old did not fit in with the religious ethos of the orphanage. After resettlement, Rebecca was left all alone, and no one from the orphanage nor any single volunteer out of the hundreds she met ever contacted her or visited her.

Another case in point is the account of 'Robert', who at the age of 25 nearly dropped out of the Engineering degree programme he was pursuing because of the notions ingrained into him during his years in the orphanage. Apparently, Robert had been mission trip participants constantly told him that he was a good enough football player to play for Manchester United. He was told that 'one day' he would be play-

ing in the red jersey of Manchester and he needed to keep that dream alive and that 'God' would remember his dream. It was for this reason that Robert wanted to quit his studies even though he had never even played for one of Uganda's domestic teams, never worn a proper pair of football boots and, frankly, was not particularly good at football. It came as a shock to Robert when he was told, very politely, that Manchester United does not recruit 25-year-old Ugandans who have never kicked a competitive ball, never been coached and that he would never play for Manchester United. Thankfully he listened, continued with his studies and is now working as an Engineer.

These anecdotes demonstrate how volunteers and mission trips can have devastating and long-term impact on children and require a change of mind-set as well as the rigorous enforcement of child protection policies. The UN Guidelines on Alternative Care (3) prioritise family strengthening and family-based care over institutional care, and are now widely accepted and incorporated into national policies and frameworks. Visiting orphanages is not only negative for the children but also against global, regional and country specific policies and laws. It is encouraging that Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania, are fully embracing family-based care and recognising that orphanages are not a part of the long-term, child protection system, however, authorities in all the countries need to do more.

Though this sort of volunteering in orphanages is declining globally, 'voluntourism' and mission trips still play a central role in sustaining orphanages in East Africa and this will continue to

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>>>> negatively affect the wider child protection system. Consequently, there is need for tourism stakeholders to promote alternative voluntourism packages, while government agencies should enforce the implementation of child protection policies and ensure orphanages adhere to national laws and policies as well as global best practices, which will minimize the exposure of children, especially vulnerable children, to social, cognitive, physical and psychological harm.

### How can the tourism industry help?

East Africa's vibrant cultural and natural heritage can cater for the unique interests of its diverse visitors and as such, does not necessitate offering children as a part of the tour itinerary. Aside from the mainstream packages, visitors to the region can look into skills-based voluntourism in various sectors as well as homestays if they are looking for a more authentic holiday experience. This is not to suggest that tourists and other initiatives should not help; rather help in the right way.

### DON'T

1. Even if an orphanage says it is government-approved, don't visit.
2. Don't put orphanage visits on your itineraries.
3. Do not attend orphan dance shows. They do not give vulnerable children the care they need.
4. Volunteers should not work directly with children.

Volunteering with children may feel good but could be harmful. There are some better ways to help them.

### DO

1. If tourists want to meet local children and young people, this should be arranged through schools, churches and communities.
2. Visitors can ask how they can share their professional skills with the local staff who care for these children.
3. The placement of volunteer professionally qualified medical or childcare experts in orphanages may be acceptable with a medium or long-term commitment.
4. Share and discuss the messages discussed in this article.
5. Tourism industry professionals and tourists who are interested in supporting children may wish to donate to support the work of the organisations listed below.

East Africa has some of the most amazing people, wildlife and landscapes in the world and a visitor to this region ever leaves disappointed. However, children should not be offered as a part of the tour itinerary. There is an abundance of worthy and satisfying activities which do not include visiting and sustaining orphanages and the damage that comes with such visits.

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**Mark Riley** is the Director and a Co-Founder of Alternative Care Initiatives, an organisation working with the Ugandan government and others on child welfare reforms in Uganda and East Africa. In this article, Mark argues that there are many ways we can help vulnerable children but visiting an orphanage is not one of them. Children aren't tourist attractions and orphanage visits should not be on a tourist itinerary.

**Charlotte Beauvoisin** started her life in East Africa with a two-year placement as a professional volunteer with VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas). Although she supports planned, long-term volunteering she advises caution in the uptake of untrained short-term volunteers. Charlotte is a Chartered Institute of Marketing Manager who promotes sustainable tourism in the region. She is concerned at the way in which volunteers are fuelling the growth of orphanages in Uganda. 



# The Enchanting Mombasa



**One of Kenya's oldest and enchanting cities lies by the shores of the Indian Ocean. Mombasa, Kenya's second largest city, is a city of spoken and untold wonders, with its long stretches of palm-studded sandy beaches, peppered with beach resorts from the Southernmost tip to the North, Mombasa offers travellers an exotic experience of the rich African tropics flavoured with the influence of seafaring Portuguese and Arabs. This cosmopolitan destination with its seamless blend of various cultures is linked to innumerable islands by bridges and ferries.**

From the four winds of the globe, wanderers, travellers and the weary gravitate to Mombasa to sample what the city has to offer, from the wide array of water sports, the shimmering coral reefs, underwater boat rides, vintage dhow rides, exotic cuisine, unique cultures and its architectural beauty, influenced by British, Arab, Swahili, Indian, Omani and Chinese immigrants, Mombasa is a cultural melting pot. The webbed streets are graced with numerous medieval mosques, temples, ruins and monuments.

## The Enchanting Mombasa

One of Mombasa's remarkable landmarks is the two pairs of huge tusks, which were erected in 1952, in honour of Queen Eliz-

abeth, when she visited the city. The traversing tusks form the letter 'M', denoting Mombasa. Mombasa is a city of contrasts, antiquated architecture, which is the hallmark of the old town stand out against the more stylish mod-

ern skyscrapers. Mombasa's 'Old Town' is a town within a town, and looks like a town frozen in time. Built by the Portuguese as fortress, the rich architecture of the 'Old Town' echoes their culture. Ornamentally chiselled doors and beautifully -wrought balconies adorn the old buildings that stand elbow to elbow along the quaint narrow streets. The town, which is currently inhabited by communities of mainly Asian, Arab and European origin, is vibrant and reminiscent of picturesque towns built by the Moors in North Africa and Europe. Visitors





>>>> can leisurely stroll down the narrow streets, sample the delicious Swahili cuisine, shop for antiques, scented oils, spices and souvenirs of a kind. Aside from being a picturesque coastal city, Mombasa is well known for its delectable multi-cuisines – from Italian, Swahili, Chinese, Indian, Korean, and British cultures. The city has numerous eateries and brasseries offering a wide array of dishes from the traditional Swahili biryani to fresh prawns and freshly baked Italian-style pizza, any visitor will be spoilt for choice.

### Mombasa's Charm and Beauty

Overlooking the harbour is the ancient and exceptional Fort Jesus, a UNESCO heritage site, built by the Portuguese in 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Fort Jesus, an architectural gem, is a deluxe example of Portuguese military architecture of 16<sup>th</sup> Century, dexterously designed by Italian Architect, Cairati. Built in human shape the building was christened Fort Jesus, denoting the religious orientation of the builders. The Fort, currently houses a museum, which exhibits a wide array of antiques, depicting the culture of various merchants who traded with Kenya's coastal communities. Within the compound are many war-relics and ruins including an Omani House believed to have been built in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century, which vividly showcases the Swahili way of life.

Mombasa is not only Kenya's oldest city but also a key trade centre and home to East Africa's largest seaport known, Kilindini harbour. Kilindini is an old-fashioned Swahili term meaning "profound". The Kilindini channel is very deep and is an example of a natural ria,<sup>1</sup>

formed at the end of the latter glacial epoch when the sea level rose and consumed a creek that was flowing from the mainland. The harbour and a creek, the Tudor Creek, delineate Mombasa city from mainland Kenya.

Another attraction is the Rabai Museum in Rabai town, a town established by Dr. Ludwig Krapf for freed slave. Dr.Krapf, an explorer and exceptional polyglot, learnt Kiswahili within weeks of landing on the Kenyan Coast. Rabai town is the heart of Christianity and the cradle of education in Kenya, as we know it today. A visit to the museum is not complete without a stop at the first Church built on Kenyan soil, a stone throw away from the museum and a walk in the sacred forest of the Miji Kenda, the Kaya Forest.

On the North Coast seashore, lies Jumba La Mtwana (the big house of slaves), a 13<sup>th</sup>Century Swahili settlement. A magnificent grass clad ruin of is the hulking reminder of the house, which was inhabited from 1350 to 1450. The ruins tell a tale of stunning architecture of the Swahili homes and mosques with their ornate and arched doorways. Within the area four mosques, a tomb and four houses including the House of the Cylinder, the House of the Kitchen, the House of the Many Pools, which had three phases, and the Great Mosque still stand and are in somewhat good condition.

Mombasa's south coastline is a riveting beauty of pristine waters. The cosmic blue expanse laps the sun-bleached beaches where thousands visit every year to loll under rustling palms. Rainforests with abundant wildlife roam the tranquil expanse. Closest to Mom-



basa and South of Likoni Ferry is Shelly Beach. The beach is an idyllic stretch of the periwinkle sea spilling, whispering and sidling with an easy-going chatter of foam round the coral reefs. About 17Km south of Likoni Ferry, is Tiwi Beach, an endless stretch of sapphire blue waters and a popular spot for sunbathing and snorkelling. Further south is Diani Beach, a beguiling beach under seamless blue skies, apart from the dance of waves and the southern breeze. Visitors can be seen windsurfing, sailing, snorkelling, diving, water-skiing and parasailing. The coastline north of Mombasa is the pulse and the culmination of Mombasa's fascinating charm. The resorts, airport and the City edge the coastline. Here is the crystal water pretty in the sun, untroubled sands, spread glittering and warm, palm lined beaches, coral reefs and a plethora of water sports. Such is the sheer beauty accentuated by the Nyali Beach, and further north Bamburi beach and Shanzu beach.

About 112 Km from Mombasa, across Mida Creek, is a quiet Swahili fishing village, Watamu, a town that has flourished into a beach resort. Watamu offers extensive views of inter-tidal rocks, clean beds of sea grass, fringed reefs and coral gardens to behold. The numinous asylum offers superb opportunities for snorkelling, diving, wind surfing and wa-

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<sup>1</sup> A ria is a coastal inlet formed by the

partial submergence of an unglaciated river valley.





Source: Nigel Pavitt



ter skiing. Visitors to this haven can wander along the coral cliffs, sandy beaches and the Mida Creek mangrove forest. Watamu is also a vital breeding area for the green and hawksbill turtle species. Visitors to the creek can also indulge in underwater boat rides in glass-bottomed boats, which provide a captivating view of the kaleidoscopic world of turtles, multi-coloured fishes, crabs and dolphins swirling in the creek's pristine waters.

### Mombasa's Oases

Mombasa is also the home to the enchanted Arabuko-Sokoke National Forest, East Africa's largest surviving indigenous coastal forest. The dense and wild expanse of luxuriant trees is an alluring shelter for a vast number of rare species of butterflies, birds, amphibians and plants. The forest ecosystem boasts of more than 260 bird species, including several threatened and endangered species such as the Clarke's weaver, the spotted ground thrush among others and is home to the rare golden-rumped elephant shrew, Ader's duiker and the bushy-tailed mongoose. Walking through Arabu-

ko-Sokoke is like travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world, when foliage ruled in utter silence. The stillness is welcoming and people of different walks of life visit the forest for research and retreat.

Away from Mombasa city, just before Mtwapa town, lies the Haller Park,<sup>2</sup> formerly known as Bamburi Nature Trail. The park's dense evergreen shrubs host zebras, giraffes, Cape buffalo, hippos and waterbucks and innumerable bird species including pelicans, storks, cranes and weaverbirds. The park is named after Dr. Rene Haller, who reclaimed an abandoned limestone quarry site and transformed it into a flourishing nature reserve in 1971. Dr. Haller enriched the soil, planted trees and created what has now become a thriving ecosystem. Splendid paths twist and stretch across the paths where nature lovers can take tranquil walks and cycle. The paths flanked by groves of casuarinas lead to the

<sup>2</sup> Haller Park was the home of the renowned 130-year-old tortoise fondly called Mzee, who adopted an orphaned hippo. The interspecies friendship became an internet sensation.

palm garden, crocodile pens, the butterfly pavilion and Nguuni wildlife Sanctuary, a sanctuary for flocks of ostrich and herds of eland and Oryx.

Mombasa Marine Park is another alluring attraction, with its sandy beach, rolling waves and coral gardens. The park is the perfect place to revel and enjoy marine life from crabs, corals, sea urchins, jellyfish, sea stars to sea cucumber. Additionally, a visitor can indulge in wind surfing, snorkelling, water skiing and diving. Aside from the Marine Park, East Africa's largest crocodile farm, Mamba Village, is to be found in Mombasa. The crocodile farm is not only a tourist attraction but also serve as a source of meat for the Mamba hotel. Additionally, the farm offers horse riding and has an exquisite botanical garden, with flowers, ranging from orchids to unique aquatic plants, strewn along the pathways blossoming like light in the dawn.

### Terrible Beauty

The dazzling sun-life elbows through pearly-purple clouds and touches the cobalt sea creating a tantalizing panorama, which is the Kisite Mpunguti Paradise in the South Coast of Mombasa. Kisite Mpunguti Paradise, which means 'terrible beauty' in Swahili corals two splendour-filled islands, Liwe la Jahazi and Wasini, offer visitors a respite. Adorned with coral gardens, the islands are breath taking, with its untouched natural beauty. A peek into the surrounding ocean water reveals diverse marine life consisting of the crab-plover, roseate terns and, sea turtles and further into the immaculate blue ocean waters one can catch a glimpse of whirling dolphins and whale, what a marvel! Kisite Mpunguti is indeed a 'terrible beauty'!



# Training Modules on *Sustainable Tourism*

STTA offers specialised one-day courses on sustainable tourism. These courses are designed build capacity of tourism practitioners to develop, implement, manage, monitor and report sustainable tourism practices.

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| ✓ <b>Module 1</b> | - Best practices in sustainable tourism and developing environmental standards.   |
| ✓ <b>Module 2</b> | - Working with communities in sustainable Tourism and leveraging on travellers Philanthropy to create greater social impact |
| ✓ <b>Module 3</b> | - Documenting and reporting sustainability  |
| ✓ <b>Module 4</b> | - Monitoring and Evaluating sustainability  |
| ✓ <b>Module 5</b> | - Capacity Building for Community Tourism ventures.   |

## Significance of Training

Today there are two major drivers for sustainable tourism; the recognition that traveller's are making "green" choices because sustainable tourism is a key tool for sustainable development in destinations, and the awareness by private sector that sustainability gives businesses a competitive edge.

Participating in STTA, training modules will enable businesses to plan, implement, monitor, and effectively report their sustainability initiatives to clients and business partners.

## Who Should Attend?

Everyone in tourism practice – Lodge/camp and hotel managers, operations managers, Community liaison officers, CSR officers in camps and lodges, CSR officers in tour companies, Community based tourism ventures, sustainability directors, and conservation managers among others

## Why You Should Attend & What You Will Learn

Our training modules help participants to understand issues pertinent to sustainability and to use the knowledge to plan, implement, measure and evaluate sustainability. The outcome should be an ecological

sustainable and ethically/socially responsible venture. Achievements made from sustainability practices should be used to leverage brand value. The greatest outcome and measure of sustainability in tourism should be enhanced guest experience.

## Approach

Each module is covered in one day (8 hours). The sessions are in seminar form allowing for lecture, and participatory tasks and preparation of action plans by participants.

## How to Participate

Training dates are announced every quarter. To receive notices for training dates, send an email to [info@sttakenya.org](mailto:info@sttakenya.org) or call 0705 283 658 for details



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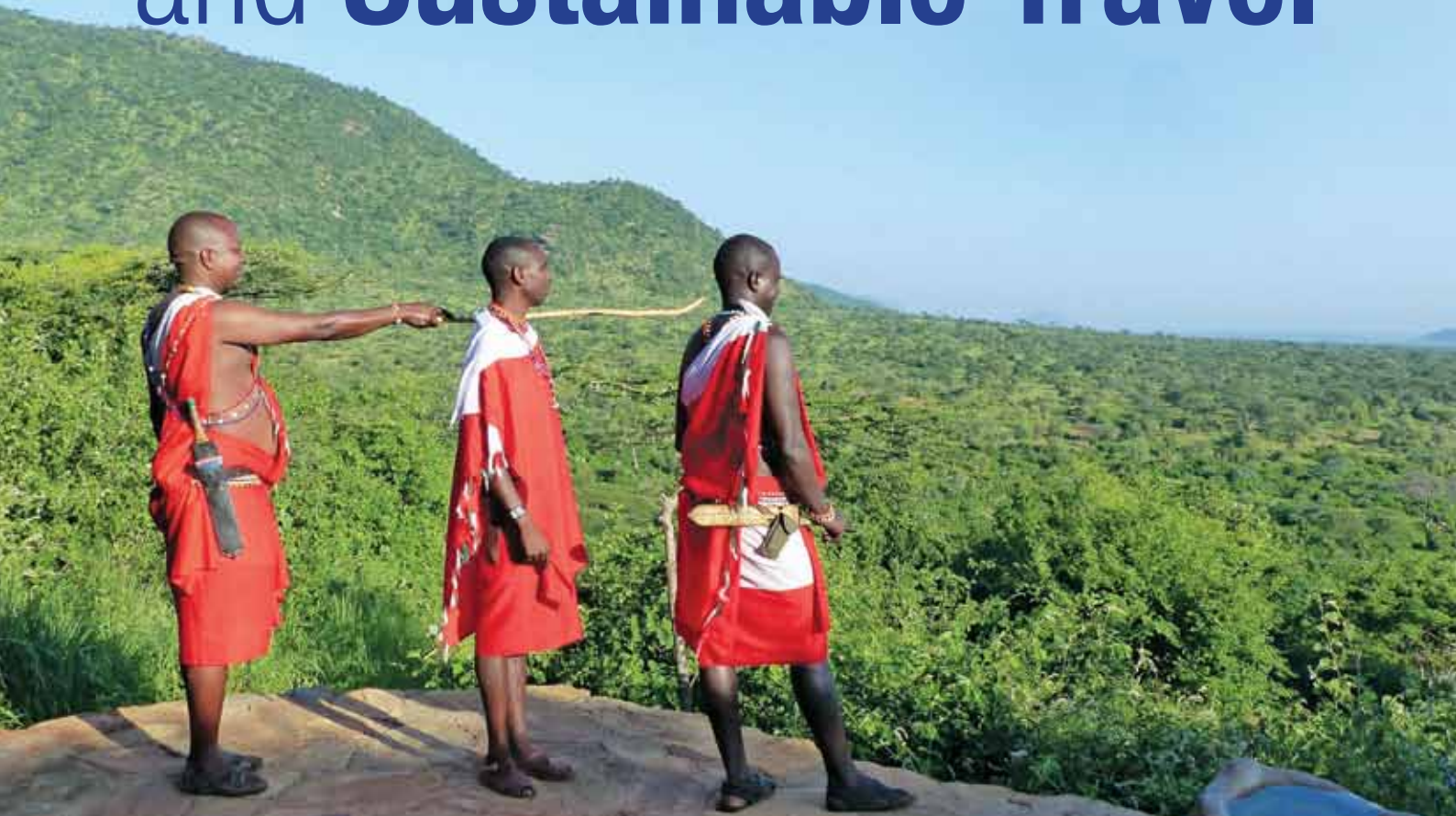




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# We support **Sustainable Tourism and Sustainable Travel**



**Sustainable Tourism** - "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities".

**Sustainable Travel** - "The world's resources are finite and travellers need to take responsibility for this. Airlines are needing to use better, more efficient aircraft and look at ways of mitigating their impacts, and well as other aspects of travelling."

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