

SAFARI TOURISM

Africa is a continent of endless natural attractions that provide many of the world's most sought after eco travel experiences. The same can be said for Southern Africa, which is home to one of the world's greatest natural wonders, the Victoria Falls; the glorious beaches and coral reefs of the Indian Ocean; the endless sands of the oldest desert in the world, the Namib Desert; the most sought after adventure travel and safari destinations, Kruger National Park, Pilanesberg National Park, the Okavango Delta, Etosha National Park... and global award winning safari game lodges and boutique hotel accommodation..

You really don't experience the real Africa without getting out of the vehicles and going for walks in the bush. Every traveler should take a bit of African soil home on his or her sole – and soul! Typical tourists to Africa are herded around in vehicles through the parks and wildlife reserves hell-bent on seeing the “Big Five:” lion, buffalo, rhinoceros, elephant and leopard.

While all of Africa's geographically diverse regions offer many opportunities for adventure travel, travel to Africa -- as in much of sub-Saharan Africa -- focuses on the wildlife safari. In addition to possessing some of the world's most renowned game reserves, the Kruger National Park, Pilanesberg National Park, Hluhluwe-Umfolozi, Africa contains many smaller regional parks and reserves that are all perfect safari destinations!

For close up encounters with African wildlife nothing beats a bush safari, the traditional African wildlife safari. A typical day starts with maybe a walk through the bush in the company of an armed game ranger. Later; you would normally traverse the bush in open safari vehicles to get up close to the many wild animals including the Big 5.

At sunset you will most likely be sipping sundowners sitting on some rock in the middle of the wilderness as you watch the day turn to night! After a night drive, with spot lights.

For those that enjoy getting wet, beach and water safaris offer close up encounters with marine environments. Africa's extensive coastline is a whale watching, kayaking, scuba diving and snorkelling paradise. The many fast flowing rivers offer the ultimate white-water rafting safari.

With a long history of warfare, Africa has numerous historical and battlefield safari options. Many of the battlefields are very well preserved which makes reliving battles of the past so real. Most of the battlefield tours and safaris

concentrate on the many Zulu Battlefields and Anglo Boer War Battlefields dotted around South Africa -- especially in the KwaZulu Natal province.

A popular option for many African Safari itineraries is exploring the majestic uKhahlamba-Drakensberg mountains by a leisurely 4x4 tour up the Sani Pass which takes one into mountain kingdom of Lesotho, or by hiking, walking or horseback. For those looking for a less active safari experience, you can relax at your luxury lodge and admire the awesome scenery.

Top African Safari destinations include the Kruger National Park, Pilanesberg National Park, Hluhluwe-Umfolozzi Game Reserve, St Lucia Wetlands Park and neighbouring private reserves.

South Africa is one of the most diverse and interesting countries in the world and proudly wears her deserved title of "A World In One Country".

Inbound tour operators specialise in tailor-made tours and daily excursions of South Africa and her cities and attractions. Whether you are a seasoned traveller to South Africa or visiting for the first time, enjoy the diversity of this region with the security, convenience, flexibility and knowledge that these professional companies offer.

Africa's Registered tour guides offer personal attention and the experience and knowledge of South Africa and her different regions that only a native can offer. See well known tourist attractions or "off the beaten track" locations, which will allow you to experience the "real" South Africa while sampling local hospitality.

South Africa Package Tours and Scheduled Safaris which have been compiled by experienced Tour Operators, to include "must-see" destinations and attractions including the famous wildlife regions in Africa. Package Tours allow the traveller a stress-free holiday with all aspects of the trip taken care of by professionals.

Many of Africa's attractions can be seen on day excursions with the added benefit of the experience and knowledge of a registered guide.

African Savannah Biome

The African Savannah is typified by the open Savannah Biome and its Acacia Woodland as is portrayed in the "Lion King".

The Savannah Biome is the largest Biome in southern Africa, occupying 46% of its area, and over one-third the area of South Africa. It is well developed over the

lowveld and Kalahari region of South Africa and is also the dominant vegetation in Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. It is characterized by a grassy ground layer and a distinct upper layer of woody plants. Where this upper layer is near the ground the vegetation may be referred to as Shrubveld, where it is dense as Woodland, and the intermediate stages are locally known as Bushveld. The predominant South Africa Nature Reserve / Game Reserve habitat - for example the Kruger National Park - is Bushveld.

African Bushveld is typified by a far closer association of many species of shrubs, shrub like trees and large trees. The African Savannah is normally grassland interspersed with numerous yet generously spaced flat topped and grassland trees. The Masai Mara (Kenya) and the Serengeti (Tanzania) are of this type!

The environmental factors delimiting the biome are complex: altitude ranges from sea level to 2 000 m; rainfall varies from 235 to 1 000 mm per year; frost may occur from 0 to 120 days per year; and almost every major geological and soil type occurs within the biome. A major factor delimiting the biome is the lack of sufficient rainfall which prevents the upper layer from dominating, coupled with fires and grazing, which keep the grass layer dominant. Summer rainfall is essential for the grass dominance, which, with its fine material, fuels near-annual fires. In fact, almost all species are adapted to survive fires, usually with less than 10% of plants, both in the grass and tree layer, killed by fire. Even with severe burning, most species can resprout from the stem bases.

The grass layer is dominated by C 4-type grasses, which are at an advantage where the growing season is hot, but where rainfall has a stronger winter component, C 3-type grasses dominate.

The shrub-tree layer may vary from 1 to 20 m in height, but in Bushveld typically varies from 3 to 7 m. The shrub-tree element may come to dominate the vegetation in areas which are being overgrazed.

The Maasai Tourism

One is wooden and the other made of flesh and blood. However, sometimes it is difficult to tell the difference.

They both stand on the left leg, the right foot effortlessly hooked on the crook of the knee of the other. They spot long ochre-dyed hair and red sheets as the only attire on the body. A spear in the right hand and a stern face complete the picture.

One of them is a carving of a Maasai man and the other is a living member of the Maasai community and, in this case, the difference between the two is obscure because they are one thing: merchandise for the tourism industry.

Merchandise is put in shops for display and that is why there are Maasai carvings in curio shops. Real Maasai are merchandise and that is why they are displayed at the entrances of some hotels as some special attraction.

Merchandise must be glamorised so that it can appeal and so it is natural for the Maasai people to be given a glossy finish on post cards and tourist marketing brochures.

In the end, the myth is sold of a warrior and warlike tribe somewhere in Africa. The tribe's male live on the hearts of the lions they kill in the sprawling savanna. For a change of diet, they turn to blood and milk.

The myth must be seen in its natural form which is in the wild so the mini buses loaded with tourists armed with whining cameras crisscross Maasai land.

The Maasai on their part have learned that there is a dollar in being merchandise of the curio type. So they turn out in front of their manyattas (kraal) as if in Hollywood. For a dollar, the tourist can both see this creature of the wild and photograph it.

For a job well done to deliver the merchandise to the tourists, the tour guide gets his tip. The curio dealer in town is thus matched by the human curio dealer in the Maasai plains.

The tourist goes back home and says that he has seen Africa. He claims that he has seen man almost at his primeval stage. Yet another lie is sold.

One does not blame the tourist for buying the image for it has been sold to him by the Kenya Government through its tourists offices. The image has been marketed by tour companies, hotels and other tourism merchandising concerns.

The tourist buys an irresistible package of lies that culture is a commodity to be bought and sold in the open market. The same package contains very palatable lies that the only cultures that exist in Kenya are those of the so-called "un-urbanised" tribes.

Culture as a fusion of a people's way of life is not a commodity. It is an expression of their totality and when taken otherwise, it is hard to tell between them and

wildlife. In this case, the Maasai has the same camera value with a buffalo since their lives begin when the camera begins to whine and ends when it is shut down.

Culture is much more dynamic than a moment of a camera flash which is what the exotic image made of the Maasai turns it into. Culture holds the past and present, a blending that the post cards of the Maasai kills.

Culture is dynamic and the Maasai are not exceptional to that rule. The shuka-clad (a red cloth that the Maasai wrap around themselves) Maasai man is at home with a Coke as the urbanised man from Central Province. The eyes of the tourists must, however, be tinted so that they see a tribe caught in a time warp. Anything different would kill the image of the exotic.

The image makers would rather join the politicians who live on the ignorance of the people from that community. They would rather make them believe that long pants belong to the second millennium and not to now. So long as shukas are their only wear the tourists will keep coming.

The big lie that only the "exotic" tribes have a culture worth being seen in Kenya by tourists has of course led to the short changing of visitors. They arrive at the airport, head for the game drives and in the process, they also see the Maasai and their manyattas. After hopping from park to park and manyatta to manyatta, it is time to head back home.

There is no time to watch the culture of Luo football fans; the culture of nyama choma; the fisher man's culture and that of the clay pot maker. There isn't a moment to listen to that Shauri Moyo band that plays benga or watch an African play at Miujiza Theatre.

All those and others are facets of Kenyan culture and pretending that they are not only serves to give the tourist a half baked view of Kenya. It is like taking a Kenyan tourist to Trafalagar Square, showing him or her the crowd there, photographing the feeding of pigeons and then loading the visitor back into the plane.

The Maasai and the Big Five are certainly faces of Kenya. However, to take them to be a composite of Kenya is a lie that should stop. To take the Maasai and the Big Five as being the same is to insult a people. It is an insult that has continued for long but its life must end in the minds and acts of those who think of tourism as an affair that deals with people other than commodities.

It is all a matter of understanding that culture is not a plastic thing. It is about real life.

The Big Five

The phrase Big Five game was coined by big game hunters and refers to the five large mammals that were originally most sought in Africa. The term is still used in most tourist and wildlife guides that discuss African wildlife.

The collection consists of the lion, elephant, buffalo, leopard and black rhinoceros. The members of the big five were chosen for the difficulty in hunting them and not their size, which is why the leopard is on the list and the enormous hippopotamus (noted for lazing around in pools and rivers all day) is absent. The big five are among the most dangerous animals.

- *The Lion*; is a large carnivorous feline mammal (*Panthera leo*) of Africa and northwest India, having a short tawny coat, a tufted tail, and, in the male, a heavy mane around the neck and shoulders.
- *The Elephant*; is one of three very large herbivorous mammals, *Elephas maximus* of south-central Asia, or *Loxodonta africana* and *Loxodonta cyclotis*, both of Africa, having thick, almost hairless skin, a long, flexible, prehensile trunk, upper incisors forming long curved tusks of ivory, and, in the African species, large fan-shaped ears.
- *Cape Buffalos*; are quite intimidating. They are the most dangerous of the "Big Five" game animals for hunters. They are definitely bovine characters, but also primal and with slightly mean appearance at times, despite the bouffant look of their horns.
- *Leopards*; are large, ferocious cats (*Panthera pardus*) of Africa and southern Asia, having either tawny fur with dark rosette-like markings or black fur, and are the epitome of elegant cats. They often eat and store food in trees.
- *The Rhinoceros*; is any of several large, thick-skinned, herbivorous mammals of the family Rhinocerotidae, of Africa and Asia, having one or two upright horns on the snout.
- Each South African Rand banknote features a different Big Five animal on each denomination.

Maasai National Park

The Masai Mara is regarded as the most favourite and is definitely the most popular game reserve in Kenya, having over 140,000 visitors per year. The reserve lies approx 270km west of Nairobi and covers an area of approximately 1,510 sq km, bordering with the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania. The landscaped is mostly open Savannah grasslands and acacia shrub land.

Starting any time from late July the wildebeest follow the rains and grazing to the wide and open grasslands of what has become known as "the Mara". They may be late, but they will always make the trip, driven by dry conditions in the Serengeti and led by the lightning and thunder to the north. Come November they start the homeward leg, bound again for the Serengeti.

At this time of the year you will see a large number of lion, hippo, crocodile and vultures all of which prey on the weak and young migrating animals. Other game to be found in the Maasai Mara at any time of the year include; elephants, cheetahs, baboons, gazelles, giraffes, jackals, cheetahs, leopards, hyenas, water buffalo, ostriches, and a large variety of antelope and birdlife.

The most famous and most visited reserve in Kenya. It offers breathtaking views an extra-ordinary density of animals including the "Big Five" and many varieties of plain game. An impressive feature is the annual migration of the Wildebeest, Zebra and gazelle from the plains of the Serengeti that cross the Tanzania border and rivers to reach the Mara lush grassland from late June, hunted by the predators Lion, Hyena and circled by vultures as the journey unfolds.

Development of Ecotourism in Kenya

A lot has been said about Ecotourism and it is thought to be the fastest growing segment of tourism worldwide. It is the type of tourism activity designed to maximize the sustainable use of the natural and cultural resources on which it depends and at the same time enhance the wellbeing of the host community. It suffices to state here that any form of development including tourism should be sustainable. That is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the potentials of meeting the needs of the future generations.

Africa's tourism industry has always been firmly nature based with wildlife, the scenery including mountains and beaches being the major attractions. Ecotourism in Africa has grown and is referred to as responsible tourism in which the integrity of both nature and culture are protected so that the benefits of tourism and conservation can be sustained indefinitely. It is this kind of tourism that brings socio-economic benefits to the country.

Safaris were tailored to the rich and conservation-minded tourist – a small and very exclusive upper-end market. Ecotourism to succeed had to emphasize the link between conservation and real gains for the local community thus sustainable local development. To be a positive force for conservation, ecotourism therefore calls for involvement of all and not small exclusive groups. Thus, tourism today is seen as a set of principles and practices intended to ensure the sustainability to the

entire nature based tourism industry. It is a model form of sustainable economic development that is designed to: -

- Improve the quality of life of the tourist host communities
- Provide a high quality of the visitors experiences
- Maintain the quality of environment on which the host community and the tourists depend upon. It encourages the understandings of the impacts on tourism and the natural, cultural and human environment and ensures a fair distribution of benefits and costs.

Planning and Managment

Since the 1970s visitor arrivals took an upward trend. This trend, accompanied by private sector development of accommodation facilities at the coast and some of the inland parks and reserves was so fast that the government unable to successfully plan and control. Consequently, the infrastructure development has not been able to cope with tourism needs.

The result has been congestion of visitors, in some of the protected areas and particularly around specific attractions. The visitor congestion adversely affects the animal ecology, degrades the habitat and significantly reduces visitor experience and satisfaction. Visitors come to Africa (Kenya, Botswana, etc...) primarily to get a wildlife experience. The refuges of wildlife are protected parks and game reserves, which do not exist in isolation of their surroundings. Communities whose lands were alienated to establish protected areas have overtime grown resentful due to the heavy opportunity costs they bear to support wildlife and until recently their exclusion from the tourism sector.

This has led to Africa adopting new policies, which have in turn catalysed new strategies and programmes. Proper institutional arrangements and a human resource base are the foundation for identification, diversification, maintenance and operation of Kenya's tourist product. Central to this initiative is identification of key stakeholders and ecotourism development opportunities.

More importantly, it should be noted that there has been a tendency of tourism planners to advise the communities of tourism developments likely to affect them or occasionally consult them on tourism project proposals. These actions do not constitute participation of the host communities in tourism development process. It is paramount that the host community be allowed to give their views during the planning process, comment on tourism project proposals and perhaps be involved in the implementation as well as monitoring. Sustainable tourism development

can only thrive when it is participatory, acceptable, and appreciated by the host communities. Communities should be empowered to take an active as opposed to a passive role.

The Kenya Wildlife Service

This body has taken the lead role in promoting ecotourism in the country. Kenya Wildlife Service overall policy and the recently launched partnerships programme have taken up ecotourism for enhancing conservation of biodiversity, generating more revenue from ecotourism for conservation and promotion ecotourism as an alternative land use to promote socio-economic welfare of communities with wildlife on their land.

The Ecotourism Society of Africa is a body whose mission and values are:

- Bringing together commerce, conservation and communities
- Promoting responsible and sustainable tourism
- Protecting the integrity of the natural and cultural attractions on which tourism is based.

The society's main objectives are:

- Fostering tourism practices which conserve Africa's natural environment and improves the live of associated communities.
- Developing a framework of environment management standards for tourist attractions and facilities.
- Devising and publishing eco-tourism regulations and codes of conduct
- Increasing environmental awareness and consciousness and developing strategies to mitigate negative ecological, cultural, social and economic impacts of tourism carrying out research, testing new approaches and initiating and promoting projects related in all aspects of eco-tourism
- Providing professional advisory and consultancy services in policy, research, planning and management of eco-tourism. And participating in educational and training programs and developing professional standards, certificates and licensing system in all sectors of eco-tourism.

Case Study 1; Kenya

Kenya is a tourist paradise with plenty to offer to those wanting a variety of tour packages. Find out what we have to offer. As African Safaris states, "In Kenya you will discover a diverse, modern, yet ancient land. A safari in Kenya encompasses more than just game viewing. Kenya is a land not only of magnificent wildlife but of amazing landscapes, beautiful lakes, a tropical coastline, strong ethnic traditions, hospitality and artistry. "Jambo Karibu," soft, warm voices greet you in Swahili everywhere in this friendly country. The distinct regions in Kenya vary in geographical configuration, habitats and unique species. Your Kenya Experience will definitely leave you with a lasting impression and tempt you to return again.

Safari in Kenya can start with a journey through the lush highlands, where Mount Kenya stands sentry over all or a rest and a round of golf at the Windsor Country & Golf Resort or at the Muthaiga Golf Club. The Windsor Golf and Country Club Resort is "an oasis of comfort" 15 minutes from the city centre. It "is set in its own 200 acre grounds surrounded by coffee plantations and with views to Mount Kenya and the sacred Maasai Buffalo Mountain in the distance". The Windsor offers one of - if not the - best 18 hole PGA championship golf courses in Africa where the Syke's monkeys offer an unusual "hazard". The ponds, lakes and forests are homes to indigenous wildlife. The property is also a natural sanctuary for birds such as Egyptian geese, black kites, egrets and of course the brown eagles soaring over the fairways. "The Windsor's soothing atmosphere and its visual beauty inspires great loyalty from its discerning visitors".

In the nearby country-side, Coffee and tea plantations line the road, small thatched villages dot the fields, colorfully garbed women trudge along your route and small boys tend herds of goats and sheep. On the wide-open rolling grasslands of the Maasai Mara, you see a wide variety of animals as well as the proud Maasai people. In Nairobi you experience a vibrant and growing city - a mosaic of many races and cultures. Shops of every kind sell almost anything you want - safari clothing, gemstones and jewelry, Akamba wood carvings, beadwork, Kiondo baskets, printed fabrics and many other local handicrafts. The markets are fun to visit and bargains abound. In fact, bargaining is a way of life, so don't be shy!".

Aberdares National Park - This small reserve (elevation 7000 feet) comprises mostly forest, and much of the Aberdare mountain range lies within its borders. The park is well known for sightings of elephant, rhino, hyena, baboon, buffalo, lion, several varieties of antelope, genet cat and bushbabies. The excitement begins at sunset, as the animals venture to the floodlit salt licks and water holes.

Amboseli National Park - In the heart of Maasai land, this park offers extraordinary views of Mount Kilimanjaro, only 30 miles away in Tanzania. The park is best known for its large elephant population. Also sighted here are baboon, herds of buffalo, giraffe, ostrich, lion, cheetah and impala. The swamps provide superb habitats for many species of birds.

The Great Rift Valley, one of the wonders of the world, contains the planets largest concentration of flamingos, the seven great lakes of Kenya, and overwhelmingly dramatic scenery. The Valley is actually the effect of a massive fracture-line below the earths surface, and runs over 5,000 kilometers from Lake Baikal in Ukraine in the north to Mozambique in the south.

In Kenya, the Rift Valley is so deep and sharply defined that it can be seen clearly from 90,000 miles out in space! The Valley is about 50 kms. wide, and as deep as 3,000 meters in the Central Highlands. Volcanic activity on the floor of the fault occurred as recently as 1966, when Ol Doinyo Lengai (near Naivasha) erupted. Longonot, Suswa and the Caldera of Menengai Crater are other volcanic sites. From the rim of Menengai Crater extends a panorama of the Northern Rift, and a dozen hill ranges which include the Mau and Aberdares Ranges, the Tugen Hills, the precipitous Elgeyo-Marakwet Escarpment, the Matthews Range, and the Cherenganis, which collectively offer the finest hill scenery in Kenya.

Close to Lake Nakuru, in the Nakuru National Park, is the first black rhino sanctuary, constructed as part of the government plan to save the rhino from extinction. At Lake Nakuru, more than a million pink flamingos may be seen feeding on the abundant algae. A few miles north of Nakuru lie the dramatic hot Sulphur Springs of Lake Bogoria, described by an early explorer as having "the most beautiful view in Africa." This is another haunt of both flamingos and large numbers of the greater kudu - the largest and most beautiful of the spiral-horned antelope.

Nakuru National Park - Home to thousands of flamingoes and other waterfowl, the alkaline Lake Nakuru shares its name with the park that surrounds it. There is a good possibility of spotting leopard. Rhino can be observed here as well as large populations of baboons and waterbuck. This is the only park in which Rothschild giraffe can be found. Lake Nakuru is world famous for, and was created a National Park to protect, its stunning flocks of lesser flamingo which literally turn its shores pink. Its birdlife is world renowned: a beacon for leading ornithologists' scientists and wildlife film-makers. The park spans an attractive range of wooded and bush grassland around the lake, offering wide ecological diversity, from lake water, woodland to the rocky escarpment and ridges.

Notable game within the lake includes hippo and clawless otters. On the shores roam waterbuck, Bohor's Reedbuck and zebra. The woodlands and forest are now home to both black and white rhino. In 1987 only two black rhino remained following the ravages of poaching. By creating a rhino sanctuary within the Park and reintroducing a breeding herd from Laikipia, the K.W.S. has now successfully reestablished rhino in the park.

Game viewing is relatively easy: buffalo, leopard, lion, Rothschild's Giraffe, White and Black Colobus monkey are plentiful in the forest. The bushlands offer eland, steinbok, impala, Chandler's Reedbuck and dik dik, whilst rock hyrax and klipspringer occupy the cliffs and escarpment.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN KENYA

Overview of Kenya Tourism Industry

Kenya lies along the East coast of Africa covering an area of 586,350 sq.km. with an estimated population of 26 million. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. Kenya is in the process of establishing a firm industrial base with import substitution and processing industries having been firmly established. The country aims at joining the newly industrialised nations status by the year 2020. Tourism is currently the second largest contributor to the economy after agriculture.

Tourism in Kenya dates back to pre-independence days and history has it recorded that as early as the 1930's, overseas visitors and explorers had started coming to Kenya mainly for big-game hunting expeditions while others came in search of solitude. These expeditions were locally referred to by the Swahili word "Safari" thus bequeathing to the travel world literature with a new vocabulary. Among the early visitors were Statesmen, Royalties and celebrities such as Theodore Roosevelt, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and Ernest Hemingway respectively.

At that time, there was already a relatively well developed but limited tourism infrastructure. The available accommodation was spartan but ideal for both the visitors as well as the settler community in Kenya. However soon after independence, the Kenya Government realised the enormous potential of the nascent tourism industry and hence undertook to upgrade the existing infrastructure and superstructure as well as investing in additional facilities. To achieve its goal, the Government encouraged local and foreign entrepreneurs to invest in the tourism and hospitality industries thus paving the way for the future development of the sector.

In spite of increased competition from other destinations, Kenya is still one of the foremost tourist destinations in Africa. Tourism in Kenya is mainly based on natural attractions which include wildlife in its natural habitats as well as idyllic beaches. Approximately 10% of the country has been set aside for conservation of wildlife and biodiversity. Game viewing is a very popular pursuit since most visitors to Kenya are predominantly interested in seeing "the big five" namely the Elephant, Rhino, Lion, Buffalo, and the Leopard, not to mention other lesser and unique game the Africa's savanna and forests. A Safari is such a popular product that has enabled the country to continue recording remarkable growth in the volume of visitors. Kenya registered well over 1,000,000 visitors arrivals in 1997 while the bed capacity rose to over 73,000 beds in classified hotels. The sector is a major employer as it currently employs approximately over 219,000. This figure represents about 11% of the total workforce in the country.

Evolution of the Industry in Kenya

Prior to independence in 1963, the country had appreciable tourism interaction. This state of affairs was fortunate for us since we did not have to start from a scratch like many destinations in Africa as we had a fairly good but limited tourism infrastructure and superstructure in place. The years that followed independence saw spectacular growth in the tourism industry which was characterized by strong government involvement and active partnership with the private sector.

In view of the proven potential of the tourism sector, the Government formulated Sessional Paper No.8 of 1969 on the Development of Tourism in Kenya which defined the growth targets that it hoped to achieve in the years ahead as well as outline the areas where the Government would participate jointly with the private investors in developing the tourist industry. The Government policy as outlined in this historic document covered the following main fields:-

- Type of tourism to be encouraged;
- Protection and development of Kenya's tourist attractions;
- Protection and development of tourist infrastructure and superstructure as well as other tourist facilities;
- Training and manpower development for the sector;
- Promotion and marketing in the tourist generating markets and
- Research.

The Government projected an average growth rate of approximately 20% each year in visitor arrivals. With the increase of package tours, tourists tended to stay

longer than was the case previously. The growth in demand for hotel accommodation and other facilities increased proportionately. It is worth noting however that the 20% average growth rate targeted then was somewhat over ambitious considering both internal and external factors that were to come into play in the future.

Why tourism?

As tourism has significant influence on the local host communities especially in developing countries, the government of Kenya took into consideration both positive and negative factors that would influence the diverse culture of Kenyans. The following factors were taken into consideration:-

- Tourism is a labour intensive industry which generates employment opportunities at semi-skilled, technical and managerial level;
- It consists of predominantly small scale businesses, inspite of the fact there was increasing investment and involvement in the sector by multinationals and local companies;
- It is a decentralised industry capable of diversifying regional economies.
- It is a relatively non-pollutant industry which if properly managed, can contribute to the conservation and promotion of our natural and cultural heritage;
- Tourism is an important vehicle for promoting cultural exchanges that enhance international understanding and goodwill among peoples of the world.
- It acts as a catalyst for the development of other sectors of the economy of many countries.

Types of Tourism encouraged

At independence the accent was on encouraging specialised groups from the upper segment of the market to visit the country for big game hunting expeditions and beach tourism. The focus later shifted to target the middle income segment of the market to visit our coastal resorts which today accounts for over 60% of visitors to Kenya. These tourists took advantage of the inclusive package tour arrangements to visit the country in large numbers giving rise to the on set of high volume tourism in Kenya. This resulted in over-concentration of tourist activities in some areas of the country, notably the Coastal beaches of the North Coast and Diani areas in the South Coast as well as in some National Parks and Game Reserves.

As a result of the aforementioned factors the Government felt there was need to harmonise tourism activities and investment with a view to fostering the growth of sustainable tourism in the country. Hence, this led to the formation of the current Kenya's National Tourism Master Plan which is in the process of being implemented. The Master Plan underscores the need to diversify the tourism product range and opening up of such new avenues as adventure , lake cruises, canoeing, incentive and conferences, sports and cultural pursuits. While implementing the current Tourism Development Master Plan, care has been taken to ensure that the envisaged developments are not carried out at the expense of environmental considerations.

Role of Tourism in the National Economy

The impact of tourism in the economy is felt mainly through forward and backward linkages expressed as demand for goods and services in the Agricultural, Textiles, Beverage, transport and entertainment sectors. Hence the tourist dollar has such multiplier effects that its absence would affect the general government revenue collection.

Employment in the Tourism Sector

Since tourism is essentially a service industry, it provides relatively more jobs than any other economic sector. The industry is labour intensive and hence its expansion generates more job opportunities than an equivalent expansion in other sectors of the economy. Besides, allied improvements in tourism infrastructure also catalyses other economic activities. It is estimated that well over 219,000 people are currently deriving their livelihood from tourism.

Tourism earnings, contributions to exports and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

YEAR	K. POUNDS MILLION	K.SHS. MILLION	US\$ MILLION
1988	249	6986	376
1989	432	8640	420
1990	533	10660	466
1991	594	11880	432
1992	713	14260	442
1993	1222	24440	421
1994	1405	28100	501
1995	1250	25000	486
1996	1280	25600	448
1997	1132	22640	388

TABLE 10: TOURISM EARNINGS (1988-97)

Foreign exchange earnings have been increasing steadily over the past ten years representing an appreciable growth rate. While tourism is sensitive to the level of economic activity in the tourist generating countries, it provides higher and stable earnings than those from primary products. Tourism earnings have tended to increase at a higher rate than earnings from other export commodities in a number of countries. The earnings incurred are in turn used to offset shortfalls on the visible trading account, and hence are of critical importance in the financial reckoning.

Tourism contributes greatly to Government Revenue through licence fees, customs and exercise duty, VAT on tourism services, landing fees, passenger service charge, entry fees to game parks as well as income tax levied on employees in the tourism industry. The generated revenues play a pivotal role in the overall development of the economy.

Tourism and Development of Infrastructure

The benefits accruing from investments in such infrastructure and superstructure as airports, hotels and restaurants, road network, communications, power and water supply as well as other related public utilities are widely shared with other sectors of the economy. Their development enhances the overall development at the local level and also encourages greater economic diversification.

It has been argued that tourism has a larger multiplier effects than any other sector since every unit of tourist expenditure goes through several rounds of income creation and expenditure before its effect is exhausted. For instance, money spent by a tourist on hotel accommodation, food and beverages, shopping, entertainment and transport, does not stagnate but provides an income to hotel staff, taxi operators, shopkeepers and suppliers of goods and services. They in turn spend part of this income on their daily requirements of goods and services. Hence money accruing from tourism circulates through numerous segments of the economy through the multiplier process.

Tourism and Regional Development

Tourism has been cited as a major promoter of international goodwill and understanding as well a prime means of developing social and cultural understanding on the local level. Accordingly foreign visitors are considered to be the best ambassadors of their respective countries. In view of the fact that we are living in a global village, thanks to advances in communication technology, the industry contributes significantly to international commerce and good relations among nations.

It is worth noting also that the development of tourism may serve as an important vehicle in promoting economic advancement of less developed areas that are not endowed with alternative resources. In this regard such developments play an important part in redressing regional developments and income distribution imbalances.

Shift of Focus in the National Tourism Development Policy

The Kenya Government has shifted its focus from over reliance on high volume low yield tourism towards the development of other alternative forms of tourism which contribute to conservation of the environment. In other words, whereas attention is still focused on tourism segments in which Kenya has comparative advantage, for example, wildlife, sun, sea and sand , special attention is now being given to the impact of the sector on the environment.

A new approach which is aimed at re-enforcing the universally accepted Eco-Tourism and other forms of alternative Tourism has been outlined in the Tourism policy framework and emphasized in the National Tourism Development Master

Plan. This document has chartered the way forward into the new millennium. Some of the salient factors considered in the new policy focus include:-

- Conservation and utilisation of tourism resources in a sustainable manner.
- Conservation of the environment and preservation of scenic beauty;
- Provision of visitor education pertaining to available resources and their interdependence without compromising our concern on biodiversity;
- Establishing active partnership with all stakeholders in tourism and at the same time respecting their rights;
- Equitable distribution of benefits accruing from tourism
- Respect and safeguarding of the local customs and culture;
- Harmonious development of the tourism sector in tandem with other economic sectors.

Tourism and the Environment

Mass Tourism and discriminating tourists, who are only pre-occupied with the "big five" mentality have in the past years contributed to the degradation of the environment and harassment of wildlife.

Thanks to the Eco-tourism concept which has been championed by the tourist destinations globally with a view to changing the big "five" mammal mentality and developing other environmentally friendly types of tourism. Eco- tourism is thus an important concept in tourism development. The latter incorporates a strong commitment to nature and a sense of social responsibility. In this respect, the present and future generations are urged to conserve the environment while the Government is committed to strengthening and enforcing anti-poaching and nature based conservation policies which will ensure the development of responsible tourism in the country.

It should be noted, however, that eco-tourists prefer the use of local resources and expertise which in turn translates into import savings. The use of local resources and expertise also translates into environmentally sensitive patterns and local participation in the travel industry.

Its emphasis on local resources and employment makes it attractive to developing countries, which though rich in natural resources are disadvantaged by rural poverty and lack of export earnings.

The value of biodiversity is more widely appreciated in the whole world. However, pressure on wildlife and their natural habitats is increasing due to

encroachment of human activities and intensified resource extraction. Accordingly conservation of biodiversity must be seen within the wider context of national economies, social goals and aspirations.

Tourism and Cultural Resources

Tourism has always been considered a vital medium for widening the scope of human interests. It contributes positively to the naturing and exploitation of cultural heritage of nations. It therefore serves indirectly to improve individual cultural understanding of both residents and foreigners while at the same time contributing to the Gross National Product. At the local level domestic tourism creates understanding and appreciation of the attractions thereby contributing to sustainable tourism development.

Eco-Tourism in Kenya – Case Study

Since independence in 1963 , Kenya has been a leader in the field of conservation of wildlife and biodiversity both aquatic and land based. The Kenya National Tourism Development Master Plan beyond the year 2000 focuses on better distribution of tourists so as to relieve stress on existing areas of visitation, thereby minimising environmental degregation. These aforementioned noble objectives will be achieved through:-

- Improved travel conditions to less visited touristic areas.
- incorporation of nature and culture as major considerations. In order to be compatible with the popular wildlife and beach attractions, laws pertaining to wildlife conservation reviewed to take the following aspects into account:-
 - Integration and sustainable conservation and management of wildlife.
 - minimizing human - wildlife conflict.
 - Developing and promoting sustainable nature-based tourism.
 - Maximizing community participation in tourism development.

The concept of Beach Management Programme has been implemented along the Kenya Coast so as to ensure that the beach is developed and managed as an integrated ecosystem for recreation and conservation purposes. This initiative is being realised through the consulted efforts between the Ministry of Tourism, Kenya Wildlife Service and hoteliers on the beach.

The programme is aimed at enhancing the conservation of the coral reef and other forms of biodiversity along the Coast. The beach management programme entails:-

- Control of population encroachment on protected areas.
- Regulation of commercial activities along the beaches.
- Ensuring visitor safety at the beaches.

To this end a multi sectoral commission of the Kenya Tourist Industry has been created whose terms of reference include:-

- Conducting a country - wide audit of eco-tourism resources and products
- Conducting the requisite environmental impact assessment studies
- Formulating appropriate policies and guidelines on:-
 - Land Tenure;
 - Types of development to be allowed;
 - Revenue sharing;
 - Planning and zoning:-
 - ❖ capacity building
 - ❖ Licensing and rating
 - ❖ Marketing Planning

Sustainable consumptive utilization and Eco-Tourism

The concept of sustainable consumptive wildlife utilization has been formulated so as to counter the negative trends that were inherited from the wildlife based tourism and wildlife management policies that existed during and soon after the colonial period up to late 1970's. By then, conservation and tourism policies overlooked the interests of the local people by emphasizing control and regulations while neglecting incentives that would contribute to the success of wildlife conservation and management programmes in the country. The local people were denied an opportunity to make their contributions towards wildlife conservation and management as they were kept off protected areas.

There was initially a lukewarm acceptance of the policy guideline that "Kenya had an obligation of protecting the country's fauna and flora for posterity" by the local communities in whose areas the attractions abound. Equally, educational approaches and extension efforts were not very successful as the local communities were not benefitting directly from those resources within their areas.

Empirical research however, indicated that direct sharing of benefits accruing from wildlife conservation and tourism were better appreciated by the local communities. These inadequacies which were inherent in the conservation policies of the 1970's thus led to the current concept of sustainable wildlife utilisation whereby economic sense and the utility of the product superseeds other considerations and in the process ensuring that the resource is managed on a rational and sustainable basis. The concept entails optimum resource management, efficiency in productivity as well as equitable sharing of the benefits.

The Kenya Government, through its conservation arm, the Kenya Wildlife Service has put in place measures that ensure co-opting the support and participation of land owners in the management of wildlife. This involves sensitization, mobilization as well as education of the stakeholders.

The Kenya Wildlife Service has also put in place appropriate measures which are aimed at capacity building by the relevant institutions in order that all the stakeholders become competent wildlife managers with adequate knowledge and skills regarding the contribution of wildlife vis-a-vis such alternative land uses as livestock keeping and agriculture. Optimum or sustainable consumptive wildlife utilisation therefore may only be achieved after area specific feasibility studies are carried out to determine its viability and compatibility with non-consumptive uses.

Another important consideration is the sensitivity to the disparity in culture, ecology, and topography in the context of changing technology pertaining to game cropping, culling, game ranching, game farming and sale of live animals. The concept also entails accommodation of public interest without necessarily compromising private and community interests.

Community Partnership in the Strategic planning for Sustainable Tourism Development in Kenya

The rich cultural diversity is an integral part of our tourist attractions since it is one of the main reasons why visitors travel to the outlying rural areas of Kenya. This product is therefore being developed and promoted as this type of tourism can strengthen a society's culture and create employment at local levels thereby serving as an incentive for young people to stay in rural areas rather than migrate to urban areas in search of employment.

It is with the foregoing in mind that made it necessary that sustainable tourism development be based on the ethics of care and respect for the respective

communities' culture. This approach ensures that the development is both people oriented as well as conservation based.

Sustainable tourism in other words, means, using tourism constructively so as to support the conservation of the environment, reinforcing the cultural heritage of indigenous people as well as enabling them to benefit directly from revenue accruing from tourism and related activities.

Kenya as a tourist destination has therefore adopted and encouraged sustainable tourism strategies in order to strike a balance between the needs of the industry and those of the local communities. Accordingly it has been found necessary to find ways and means of ploughing back the benefits accruing from tourism to the development of the local population. The main consideration here is to improve their living conditions, security, and their access to social services. Hence the important issues being addressed in this context include:-

- reducing vulnerability of exploitation of local communities by unscrupulous people and
- How to enhance retention of income accruing from tourism by the local communities to plough back into community based development projects.

Funding of the Kenya Wildlife service community Based Conservation Efforts

Apart from core financing and moral support from the Central Government; community based conservation effort in Kenya has also benefitted from donor funding and private initiatives. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

For instance in 1992, contracted with an American (U.S.) consulting company, namely "Development Alternatives, Inc". for the implementation of the Kenya Wildlife Service's Conservation of Biodiverse Resource Areas Project (COBRA) for a maximum investment by USAID of US\$7,000,000. The amount has since been raised to US\$8,500,000 and the time frame of the project has also been extended up to December, 1999.

The goal of the COBRA project is to promote Socio-economic development through conservation and sustainable management of Kenya's natural resources. The main objective is to increase the flow of socio-economic benefits to local communities living adjacent to Kenya's National Parks and Reserves through the sustainable management of wildlife and other natural resources. This project has

assisted in enhancing community awareness in conservation and wildlife management.

The Conservation of Biodiverse Resource Areas Project (COBRA) has assisted the Kenya Wildlife Service in institutionalising a community based conservation component namely "the Partnership Department", within the Organisation through the provision of salary support to professional staff, training of lower cadres and procurement of vehicles, computers, and the necessary field equipment.

The COBRA project has also assisted in the implementation of pilot community conservation programmes in three focal Districts; namely Laikipia, Samburu and Kajiado since 1993 as well as the coastal areas South of Mombasa.

Although the COBRA project has assisted communities in the planning and implementation of community based development projects such as the construction of schools, clinics, water tanks among others, the project's main thrust since 1995 has been focused on the support of enterprises related to eco-tourism, which depend directly on wildlife.

Development of Tourism Industry within Africa Region

Destinations in Africa enjoy a privileged position in relation to the major tourist generating markets due mainly to their unique features, history as well as a wide range of products on offer. The strong awareness for conservation of the environment and the demand for exoticism by potential travellers translates into increasing demand by an ever growing number of foreign visitors. Accordingly there is need for destinations in Africa to co-operate more closely in areas of product development, research, manpower development and training as well as exchange of tourism experts and tourism information. It is also necessary to harmonise travel formalities within the region so as to encourage free flow of visitors and maximisation of benefits accruing from tourism interactions within the region. Indeed such close co-operation can be forged and enhanced within the framework of the existing regional economic groupings such as the Common market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa), Preferential Trade Area (PTA), Sadacc, East Africa Co-operation, Indian Ocean rim association for regional co-operation. These economic groupings can play a pivotal role in positioning Africa to be a major force in the envisaged tourism growth.

In the development, promotion and marketing of our respective destinations we should always bear in mind the complementary nature of our products within the region. Secondly although by and large the countries within the region are

destination countries rather than tourist generating countries, there is a vast market for intra-regional tourism, which has not yet been fully tapped. This observation holds true for example for both the Republic of South Africa and Kenya, which incidentally share a lot in common. However the free flow of visitors from each country has been hampered by among others, travel formalities and failure to capitalise on our complementarity.

Conclusion

Most of Africa's Eco-system still remain intact and unspoiled thus providing a strong basis for a sustainable tourism development. All that is required proper planning and management of the available resources.

It should be born in mind that sustainable tourism cannot thrive if we do not take care of our fragile environment. In this context, therefore, we should always remember the cardinal point that we all have a duty to practice responsible tourism so that at the end of the day we shall be able to conserve our fragile environment and biodiversity for the benefit of mankind. To this end there is therefore, an urgent need to put the necessary legislations and codes of conduct in place so as to ensure balanced development of tourism in African tourist destinations. Exchange of information and experience among African National would also be vital in achieving the requisite results for the development of sustainable tourism in conservation of the environment.