



SUSTAINABLE  
TOURISM  
REPORT 2016





# INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is no longer a distant phenomenon but a reality that destinations the world over must face. Climate change, bulging populations, diminishing natural resources, terrorism, seasonality of demand as well consumerism and consumer trends dictate that destinations must adopt sustainability practices across the tourism value chain.

Kenya is one of the leading destinations in Sub-Saharan Africa mainly known as the home of the original Safari and the iconic world marathon champions. For decades, millions of visitors have taken Safaris, meaning a journey to various wildlife habitats to experience the nature, witness the wildlife spectacle, open wilderness, and interact with the indigenous communities. Over the years, Kenya has evolved into a modern & diverse destination offering a variety of travel experiences and cityscapes with rich, authentic wildlife, cultural and nature experiences within easy reach. Kenya's tourism is over 80% nature based with the revenues generated going back to protect its base resources. Sustainability is therefore paramount for destination Kenya as it is with all other destination around the world.

In this inaugural report, KTB takes you through Kenya's sustainability journey where you will encounter Kenya sustainability champions, the milestones covered, and the mechanisms in place to help the industry in implementing the sustainability practices at the community, organizational and destination. The report concludes with the Kenya's commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals which provide a framework for sustainability futures in Kenya's Tourism Industry.

Finally, as travelers, host communities and the travel trade, we have a collective responsibility and our destinies are intertwined. Let's collaborate for sustainable future, a win-win for all.

Karibu!

*Jacinta Nzioka-Mbithi*

*Ag. CEO, Kenya Tourism Board*

# THE KENYA TOURISM BOARD TELLING KENYA'S STORY

## GOVERNANCE:

The Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) is the national destination marketing agency for Kenya working closely with the Kenya tourism private sector in the source markets and in Kenya, the public sector, NGOs, the media and other partners to promote Kenya as the destination of choice locally, regionally and internationally for the benefit of Kenya citizens. KTB has been voted 5 years in a row as the leading tourism board in Africa by the World Travel Awards. KTB aspires to make Kenya the leading destination in Sub-Saharan Africa.

We believe there is need for a responsible and sustainable tourism industry to ensure that tourism businesses continue to thrive, communities get direct benefits from tourism, rich experiences for the travelers and that the base resources for the industry are protected. To support its mandate and make a contribution towards a sustainable destination, KTB has established a Sustainability Committee which is made up of 12 members drawn from various

departments. The Committee's decisions and initiatives are guided by the KTB Sustainability Policy developed in 2014. The policy focuses on the following areas:-

- a) Environmental conservation
- b) Education and empowerment
- c) Social responsibility
- d) Culture and heritage preservation

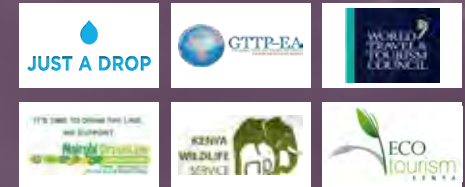
We promote Sustainable tourism at the various platforms available to us such as the International Travel Fairs, Conferences, use of eco-rated facilities during familiarization trips for the international media and travel trade. We have also used local platforms such as the MagicalKenya Travel Expo Seminars to engage the travel trade on sustainability matters with international speakers from renown green destinations moderating the session.

## STAKEHOLDERS:

In-line with its mandate, KTB is pursuing a diversification strategy which focuses on product diversification that enables the spread of the tourism pie across different parts of the country and across the value chain; and market diversification to ensure a continuous flow of travelers throughout the year to ensure the industry continues to thrive.

In the past, we have worked with various stakeholders to implement various sustainability

initiatives. They include Ecotourism Kenya, Kenya Wildlife Service, Nairobi Green-line Project, Friends of Karura Forest, Global Travel & Tourism Partnership –EA, Just a Drop and World Travel & Tourism Council(Tourism for Tomorrow Awards).



## KTB SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

As a destination marketing organization, we believe we have a key contribution to make towards Kenya becoming a sustainable destination by being a link between hosts and guests. This mainly includes communicating Kenya's sustainability story with partners and travelers from around the world and sharing market intelligence on the sustainable tourism consumption and trends with suppliers in Kenya to enable them to continuously innovate. Some of the initiatives undertaken so far with various partners include:-

- Capacity building for the Committee – training and forums to network with leaders in the industry

- Educating the industry at various local and international forums e.g. Monthly Eco-Talks by Ecotourism Kenya, Annual Ecotourism Forums, Ecotourism & Sustainable Tourism Conference (2013) and the Annual Green Summit, distribution of the Green Directory at International Fairs.
- Celebration of achievement by organizations and destination through sponsorship of award categories such as Eco-warrior awards and Tourism for Tomorrow awards.
- Charity begins at home. The Committee has undertaken various awareness program for staff including “Think Green, Keep it on the Screen” campaign and water bottles to help save on plastic cups used in the office.
- Support for conservation and community initiatives e.g. International Maralal Camel Derby in Maralal, Beach Clean-up, Tree planting at Karura Forest, Aberdare National park and Mau Catchment area, Centre for Pro-Poor Tourism, World Environment day celebrations among others.
- Mentorship of Students in the industry as part of creating a sustainable human resource base for the industry through the Eco-Tourism Leadership and Mentorship programme; Global Travel & Tourism Partnership Program (GTTP) tourism career around the country
- MKTE2016 – Sustainability and other topic aimed to educate, challenge and inspire that industry n topics such as sustainability , consumer trends

## TOURISM, A BOOST FOR KENYA’S ECONOMY

Tourism sector in Kenya recognizes the need and significance of sustainability in tourism. Across the sector, stakeholders are undertaking a range of programs and initiatives to mitigate negative impacts of tourism and enhance the positive impacts. With a shared recognition that being a sustainable destination requires collaboration, inclusion, integration, skills, and evaluation, the industry has continuously strived to improve performance. Today, as demonstrated by actions of the sector stakeholders, sustainable tourism practice in Kenya has moved from being an external compliance process to a business culture. This means tourism is no longer engaging in sustainable

Tourism for recognition but as a demonstration of global citizenship and consciousness towards global challenges as outlined in the sustainable development goals.

The tourism sector earns Kenya an average of USD 1 Billion per year and also contributes significantly to the country’s GDP. In 2015, tourism contributed 9.9% of the Country’s total GDP and this is expected to grow at the rate of 5.8% per annum to reach 10.1% by the year 2026. The sector is also a leading employer, accounting for 9.3% of total employment in Kenya, which is 0.3% higher than global statistics. In terms of investments, Kenya attracted KES 83.6 Billion

worth of tourism investments in 2015. This is forecasted to rise by 5.2% per year over the next decade years to KES146.8 Billion in 2026 according to the World Travel and Tourism Council 2016. A report by W Hospitality Group, a member of Hotel Partners Africa has indicated that there are 40,000 hotel rooms planned for construction on the African continent and 1,437 are to be put up in Kenya by 2017

Kenya recently won 23 out of 57 awards in the 23rd Edition of the World Travel Awards, among them being Africa’s leading destination 2016 and Africa’s leading Beach Destination 2016. The Country has 6 World Heritage sites, a variety of cultural groups, beautiful natural landscapes and has over 190 conservation areas protecting some of the world most endangered flora and fauna species.

# SUSTAINABILITY & SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

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Sustainability in tourism encapsulates all the terminology that is commonly used to refer to ethical practice in tourism like responsible tourism, ecotourism, and sustainable tourism. Like with other economic sectors, sustainability in tourism has attracted global attention since 1992 when UNDP released Agenda 21 for Sustainable Tourism in response to recommendations of the Rio Earth Summit of 1992. Since then, the significance of sustainability in tourism has been defined and redefined by several occurrences and events among them the formation of The International Ecotourism Society, followed by United Nations declaration of 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism. The apex manifestation of the sustainability movement was the formation of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). The evolution of the sustainability movement and the engagement of diverse disciplines have proven that sustainability is more diverse, of a

larger scale and perhaps more novel than it had first appeared.

While the most publicized aspects of sustainable tourism have to do with green/ efficient technology, cleaner productions, environmental protection and community engagement, there are emerging developments that make sustainability part of the bigger circular economy. Today human rights, sustainable consumption, equity in benefit sharing, indigenous people's rights, responsible consumption and production, procurement, and choice of place have become part and parcel of sustainability. Yet with projected growth of tourism, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), shrinking land, population growth and insecurity; sustainable tourism must enter a new phase. It is in this sense that this report speaks of “sustainable futures”

# SCALE OF SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM

In Kenya, all segments of tourism are engaged in sustainable practices. However, the depth and breadth of engagement varies. Sustainability practice is widespread among tourism accommodation facilities mainly, followed by tour operators and recently destinations. The long-term and visible engagement of accommodation facilities can be attributed to the long-term existence of the Eco-rating Scheme, a certification tool for the accommodation sector established in 2002. In 2015, when efforts were put to develop a tool for assessing destinations and to adopt a tool for assessment of tour operators. To date there are more than 100 eco-rated facilities in Kenya. Following the signing of an agreement between the Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO), EK, and Travelife in 2015, Tour operators now have a certification and already 10 companies are involved in the pilot program. By end 2016, Kenya will have its first Travelife certified tour operators. The choice of Travelife as opposed to developing a national program has several advantages because operators in Europe are familiar with the program and some are already demanding that their Kenyan partners apply for this certification.

As with tour operators, there are a number of green conscious destinations. This was achieved, despite Kenya not having a national scheme to assess sustainability in destinations. Destinations like Ol Pejeta Conservancy, Lewa Conservancy, and Naboisho Conservancy have won prestigious global and regional awards for being sustainable destinations. In 2015 Naboisho conservancy received award from WTM Africa for being the Best Conservancy in Africa in terms of governance, wildlife protection, sharing benefits with Community and involving community in management of the destination. The good news is that Ecotourism Kenya;

in collaboration with the industry players have concluded a process of developing ‘green destination guidelines’ for recognition of “Green Destinations” in the country. From 2017 destinations will be accredited using these newly developed guidelines.



# WHO IS BEHIND THE MOVEMENT?

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The Kenya tourism private sector has been on the forefront of promoting sustainable tourism, while

Government has provided support and an enabling environment for this to thrive. In particular, Ecotourism Kenya, the industry association that specializes in ecotourism and its members have been great advocates. Other players include Kenya Community Based Tourism network (KECOBAT) and the Federation of Community Based Tourism Organization (FECTO) who promote community based tourism. Other organizations such as the Northern Rangeland Trust are engaged to helping Communities set up conservancies and carryout thriving tourism business that supports communities and conservation and Sustainable Travel & Tourism Agenda (STTA) who are providing training and advisory services to businesses to move sustainability from being a process or means to achieve recognition towards creating sustainability as a business culture.

Within private sector, a few visionary businesses have supported the growth of sustainable tourism. These businesses have pioneered aspects of sustainable tourism that have become part of the criteria for assessment of sustainable tourism. Through partnerships with host communities, they have supported the development of community conservancies and trained local people with no formal education to become lodge managers, chefs and They have also supported wildlife research and conservation, investing their resources to ensure that pristine places are protected, local people are engaged and empowered and that travelers get a rich experience. The visionaries have been instrumental in the movement.

NGOs and international development partners in Kenya have supported and continue to support communities to develop destinations (Community Conserved Areas-CCAs) and to build lodges and camps. These investments,

collectively known as conservation enterprises, are designed to promote sustainable tourism and integrated natural resource based development. Several destinations in Kenya, especially conservancies in Northern Kenya can be credited to efforts of NGOs. One significant contribution of NGOs in promoting sustainable tourism was the establishment of Koiyaki Guiding School (KGS), a school that was dedicated to train Maasai Morans to become guides. This school did not only open opportunities for local Maasai Morans in Mara to get employment in tourism camps/lodges, but also broke cultural barriers by training the first female Maasai guides.

Graduates of KGS have transformed guiding from a service to an experience that guests look forward to. The school is owned and managed by Maasai landowners of Koiyaki Lemek in the Mara.

Last but not least, the Government has provided support through collaboration and recognition of Ecotourism Kenya(EK) and other agencies, and through formulation of polices and laws that support sustainable development. The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) has an MOU with Ecotourism Kenya that recognizes the certification scheme and also allows EK to review Environmental Impact Assessments for tourism development. This MOU is a preventative measure and ensures development happens in ways that are not harmful to the natural and social environment. Other collaborations are with Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA) in classification of hotels to ensure sustainability issues are considered in the ratings.





# WHAT IS DRIVING THE MOVEMENT

Sense of responsibility to the environment and socioeconomic wellbeing of local communities among tourism operations.

61.53% of respondents said that they practiced sustainable tourism because it was their responsibility to protect the environment and its resources for future generations while another 53.84% were engaged in sustainable tourism practices for the socio economic benefits it provided to the local communities

Global consumer trends:

The demand of ecotourism is growing at a rate of 20% per annum according to UNWTO. The Millennial market forms two thirds of global travelers that they are more conscious of sustainability and demand for sustainability not only in the product but across the tourism value chain.

Various studies and tourism market surveys have linked this trend to the change in the consumers' attitude towards travel. These studies have shown that travelers have started to make their travel choice not only on the price, brand, quality and convenience but, on the social, cultural and environmental issues relevant to the destinations they visit. Various studies and reports compiled by Center for Responsible Travel on consumer behavior indicate that;

- More than One third of travelers favor environmental friendly tourism and spending on ecotourism is increasing six (6) times more than the industry rate(UNEP. 2011).
- 61% of U.S. tourists feel that travel experiences are better when the destination is a well-preserved natural, historical, or cultural site (TIA and NGT, 2002) and 83% British tourists indicate that dirty beaches and a polluted sea “mattered a great deal” in choosing or recommending travel destinations (Goodwin, 2001)
- 55% of Travelers want their spending and giving to help the places they visit (Tourism Cares. (2015).
- 47% of global travelers visited destinations because of the people and culture of specific countries (Trip Advisor December 14, 2015).
- 42% (25 million) of German tourists “think that it is particularly important to find environmentally- friendly accommodation (ECOTRANS, 2002)
- 66% of consumers are willing to pay more for sustainable brands that showed commitment to social and environmental values (The Nielsen Company. (October 12, 2015)
- 95% of business travelers believe the hotel industry should be undertaking ‘green’ initiatives (Deloitte, 2015)
- 38.56% of tourism operators practiced sustainable tourism because of travelers increasingly demand for authentic and responsible holidays. Global reports reveal

that 66% of consumers around the world say they prefer to buy products and services from companies that have implemented programs to give back to society, according to a 2012 Nielsen Wire Survey.

Reduction of operation costs and improvement in profitability:

23.07% of respondents said they were engaged in sustainable tourism practices because it reduced operational costs and improved on profitability. 7.69% further added that integrating sustainable tourism best practices in their operation gave them a competitive advantage.

The need to safeguard Kenya's tourism:

30.67% of respondents practiced sustainable tourism because of the economic contribution of tourism to the

Country's GDP while another 23.07% said that it was the only way to preserve the tourism resources that make up Kenya's tourism product.



# HOW WE DO IT

In Kenya, we have in place reliable instruments to enable the practice of sustainability across the value chain and across all types and sizes of organizations in the industry. Our building blocks comprise of the following:



# WHY WE BELIEVE

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Over the years, Kenya has developed a number of voluntary programs to support and demonstrate its commitment to sustainable tourism. Most of these instruments have been developed and driven by private sector with recognition by public sector through policy and/or endorsement. The following voluntary instruments define our sustainable tourism landscape.

## THE ECO-RATING SCHEME

The Eco-rating Scheme is a sustainable tourism certification program that aims to promote ecotourism & responsible tourism in the accommodation sector Kenya. The focus of the eco-rating scheme includes recognizing best practices in business practices, conservation, Community and cultural performance by tourism accommodation facilities. The accommodation facilities that apply and meet the criteria set are awarded Bronze, Silver or Gold certification based on their performance. The criteria is aligned to the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC) formed under the umbrella of

the United Nations (UN) but is adapted to suit Kenya's local context. So far, there are over 100 eco-rated facilities.

“Eco-rating refers to a systematic approach for verifying a tourism organization's environmental, economic and socio-cultural performance when evaluated against an agreed set of criteria.”

Travelife: Certification for Tour Operators

Travelife is a leading training, management and certification initiative for tourism companies committed to reach sustainability. It is dedicated to making holidays more sustainable. They work with travel businesses around the world to help them improve their social, economic and environmental impacts. Specifically, the tour operator service works with travel organizations to help them improve the sustainability of their operations – from energy and water, to staff contracts and working with suppliers. Businesses that prove they meet the Travelife sustainability criteria become Travelife certified, helping them easily promote their achievements to others. Travelife has signed an MOU with Ecotourism Kenya and Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO) to provide certification support for Tour Operators and Travel Agents. There are ten companies participating in the pilot phase 2016/2017 out of which six(6) have been awarded the Travelife certification. They include Uniglobe Lets Go Travel, Eco Adventures Safaris, Gamewatchers Safaris, Pollmans Tours & Safaris, Timeless Tours and Travel and Remy Safaris.

## THE ECO-WARRIOR AWARDS

The annual Eco-warrior Awards recognizes and celebrates outstanding contribution to eco-tourism practice in Kenya. It is aimed at motivating winning ventures/ operations and industry at large to embrace practices that are ecologically and ethically sustainable in order to compete with the best in the world. The overall goal is to transform destination Kenya to a sustainable tourism destination.

Being a winner of the Eco-warrior Awards means:-

- Positively working towards being sustainable through having relevant policies, compliance with legislation, partnerships, documenting, sharing and innovation
- Working constructively with communities to minimize negative social impacts of tourism
- Tourism & optimize opportunities provided by tourism
- Commitment to best practices in energy, water and waste management
- Commitment to protect resources that support tourism
- Working to portray Kenya as a conscious destination

# THE GREEN DESTINATIONS GUIDELINES

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According to these guidelines, a destination of “a physical space in which a visitor spends at least one overnight, that actively manages its resources in such a way that ecological, economic, social and aesthetic integrity of the area is sustained, and takes full account of current and future impacts, by adopting a recognized set of guidelines and reporting frameworks.”

These green guidelines, developed between 2015 and 2016 mark the beginning of another chapter

of Kenya's quest to become a sustainable destination. The guidelines have been tested through a pilot program and reviewed through several stakeholders meetings in selected counties across the country to arrive at consensus on relevance of focal areas and key indicators for measuring compliance. It is worth noting that these guidelines are anchored on reputable destination guidelines from Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), but have been adapted to suite Kenya's socio-cultural, ecological, legal, and operational realities in management of destinations. The scheme will start receiving applications in 2017.

The advantage of being recognized as green destination is acquisition of a premium identity which requires no explanation because green is a global language. There are many tangible and intangible benefits that can

be measured through monitoring. More so, we must care for the universe because there is only one planet and 7 billion consumers, we need to be responsible consumers. More information can be found here: <http://www.ecotourismkenya.org/page.php?id=85> Under these guidelines a destination includes, but not limited to, the following:-

**National Park:** an area of land or sea dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal and other effective means. Managed by Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS).

**Marine Park:** a protected marine area where no fishing, construction work, or any disturbance is allowed. Managed by KWS.

**National Reserve:** an area of land declared to be a national reserve. Managed by County Government or KWS.

**Marine Reserve:** a marine protected area where subsistence fishing is permitted. Managed by KWS, Fisheries and co-managed with Beach Management Units.

**Wildlife Sanctuary:** an area of land or water set aside for the protection and conservation of one or more specific species of wildlife. Managed by KWS or County Government.

**State Forest:** all forests on un-alienated government land or land purchased by the Government. Managed by Kenya Forest Service, or KWS; can have co-management with Community Forest Association.

**Local Authority Forest:** a forest that is on land under the jurisdiction of a local authority. Managed by County Government, can have co-management with a Community forest association.

**Sacred Forest – (e.g. Kaya)** a grove or forest with religious or cultural significance to a forest community. Managed by National Museums of Kenya with community participation.

**Wildlife Conservancy:** an area of land set aside by an individual landowner, body corporate, group of owners, or a community for purposes of wildlife conservation.

**Wildlife Sanctuary:** an area of land or water set aside for the protection and conservation of one or more specific species of wildlife.

**Game Ranch:** An area of land where wildlife is kept under natural extensive conditions with the intention of engaging in wildlife conservation, recreation and trade (game ranching classified as a wildlife user-right; but not a specific land use).

**Game Farm:** An area of land where wildlife is reared in an enclosed and controlled environment for wildlife conservation, trade, or recreation (game-farming classified as a wildlife user-right; but not a specific land use).

**Private forest:** any forest owned privately by an individual, institution or body corporate

**Locally Managed Marine Area:** Coastal and marine areas defined for management by local communities.

**Protected Wetland:** land with important habitat for wildlife declared as a protected area by the Cabinet Secretary in consultation with the National Land Commission, KWS

and legal owner.

**Beach -** A narrow, gently sloping strip of land that lies along the edge of an ocean, lake, or river. Materials such as sand, pebbles, rocks, and seashell fragments cover beaches (National Geographic).

**World Heritage Site -** A place (such as a building, city, complex, desert, forest, island, lake, monument, or mountain) that is listed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as being of special cultural or physical significance.

**Cities:** a place where people live that is larger or more important than a town : an area where many people live and work e.g. Nairobi, Mombasa, Nyeri, Kisumu, Nakuru

**Built Landscapes -** theme parks, amusement parks, cultural villages etc.



# LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

There are several legislation and policy papers that support sustainability in the tourism sector. The legal requirements are the minimum requirements that tourism businesses participating in Eco-rating scheme, or eco-warrior awards or Travelife certification must first comply with.

## Vision 2030

Vision 2030 is Kenya's long-term national planning strategy to achieve economic growth and provide high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030 in a clean and secure environment. Six sectors were identified on the basis of their potential to contribute to the 10% GDP growth and tourism was selected as the lead sector towards the growth and transformation of Kenya's economy by 2030. This required repositioning tourism in Kenya through development of resort cities in the Kenyan Coast and Isiolo; and revamp of under-utilized parks; diversifying Kenya's current tourism offer to include new high value niche products and value addition to business-visitor offering. Six strategic flagship projects were initiated for this purpose and they are currently at different stages of development.

## Constitution of Kenya, 2010

Kenya through its current constitution acknowledges the importance of the environment to its development and encourages the country to evaluate its current development activities, and how these can be aligned to sustainable development. Article 42 of the Kenyan Constitution 2010 starts by defining the importance of sustainable development as a legal human right that is protected by law.

"Every person has the right to a clean and healthy environment, which includes the right –

(a) To have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations through legislative and other measures, particularly those Contemplated in Article 69..."

Article 69(a) of the Constitution highlights the role of the state in ensuring sustainable development as well as the importance of equitably sharing benefits derived from the environment. The article states that,

"The State shall ensure sustainable exploitation, Utilization, management and conservation of the environment and natural resources, and ensure the equitable sharing of the accruing benefits".

The Article further states in Article 69 (d)

"The State shall encourage public participation in the management, protection and conservation of the environment" and continues on to say in Article 69 (c) that "The State shall protect and enhance intellectual property in, and indigenous

knowledge of, biodiversity and the genetic resources of the communities".

These statements recognize indigenous knowledge systems and acknowledge their role in the conservation of biological diversity. Article 69 (a), (d) and (c) promote the "participation of local communities in the management of natural resources as well as encourages equitable sharing of benefits that arise from such management."

The second part of Article 69 of the Constitution 2010 recognizes that it is everybody's responsibility to be responsible. The Article states that,

"Every person has a duty to cooperate with State organs and other persons to protect and conserve the environment and ensure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources"

To ensure that the tourism development in Kenya does not go against article 49 and 69 of the Kenya's Constitution, Article 69 (f) of the Constitution states that,

"The State shall establish systems of environmental impact assessment, environmental audit and monitoring of the environment".

## The Tourism Act, 2011

This is an Act of Parliament to provide for the development, management, marketing and

regulation of sustainable tourism and tourism-related activities and services, and for connected purposes. The Act provides for the formulation of a national sustainable tourism strategy that is to be revised after every 5 years. It also provides for the establishment of agencies that will regulate, promote, finance, train and inform sustainable tourism development in Kenya. The Agencies handling tourism include Tourism Directorate , Tourism Regulatory Authority, Kenya Tourism Board, Tourism Fund, Bomas of Kenya, Tourism Finance Corporation, Utalii College, and Tourism Research Institute.

### **The Tourist Industry Licensing Act**

An Act of Parliament to make provision for regulating the tourist industry with a view to promoting its well-being and development.

### **Employment Act 2007**

An Act of Parliament to repeal the Employment Act, declare and define the fundamental rights of employees, to provide basic conditions of employment of employees, to regulate employment of children, and to provide for matters connected with the foregoing

### **The Environment Management and Coordination Act (EMCA,1999)**

EMCA, 1999 is an Act of Parliament to provide for the establishment of an appropriate legal and institutional framework for the management

of the environment and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto. The law reinforces Article 42 and 69 of the Kenyan Constitution 2010 through the regulations on environmental impact assessment, waste management, water Quality, conservation & biological diversity and resources, management of wetlands, riverbank, lakeshores and sea shore ; and occupational safety and health Act.

### **Forest Act 2005**

The Act provides for the establishment, development, and sustainable management including conservation and rational utilization of forest resources for the socio-economic development of the country/ Forests will be protected for its environmental services.. The Act states in part 41(1) that among others

“All indigenous forests and woodlands shall be managed on a sustainable basis for purposes of:-  
(d) recreation and tourism.

### **The Wildlife Conservation and Management Act, 2013**

The Act provide for the protection, conservation, sustainable use and management of wildlife in Kenya and for connected purposes. The law prohibits offences against wildlife such as poaching, sport and bush meat hunting, introduction of invasive species or handling of biodiversity genetic material without a permit.

### **Fisheries Act (Cap 378)**

The Act (Cap 378) is an Act of Parliament to provide for the development, management, exploitation, utilization, and conservation of fisheries and for connected purposes. The law outlines accepted methods of fishing and illegal methods of fishing. This statement encourages hotels to purchase from responsible suppliers.

### **Water Act, 2002**

An Act of Parliament to make better provision for the conservation, control, apportionment and use of the water resources of Kenya.

### **Land Act, 2012**

An Act of Parliament to give effect to Article 68 of the Constitution, to revise, consolidate and rationalize land laws; to provide for the sustainable administration and management of land and land based resources, and for connected purposes.

The National Museums and Heritage Act 2006

An Act of Parliament to consolidate the law relating to national museums and heritage; to provide for the establishment, control, management and development of national museums and the identification, protection, conservation and transmission of the cultural and natural heritage of Kenya.

# PILLAR'S UNDERPINNING KENYA'S SUSTAINABILITY STORY:

If sustainability is not sustainable, we end up with green-washing. Kenya has relied on Five Pillars to avoid the green washing trap. They Include: -

## Pillar 1 - Leveraging the Might of Giants / Benchmarking

We have learnt to stand on shoulders of giants and not re-invent existing practical tools. As a result, we continuously benchmark our initiatives against the world's best. This has helped the destination to remain competitive and a leader in the region and to avoid challenges of complacency, and green-washing. In setting up its programs, in particular, the eco-rating scheme, Ecotourism Kenya looked up to CAST of the Caribbean and Ecotourism Australia. These were considered sustainable tourism champions in the 1990s. Currently, the EK Eco-rating Standard



is uploaded in the International Trade Center (ITC) Standards Map, a platform that enables its users to identify voluntary sustainability standards, generate comparisons between standard content requirements and to assess their business' sustainability roadmap to sustainable trade. It provides online access to ITC's most detailed database on private or voluntary standards developed by non-governmental entities, industrial associations and companies among others with the view to promote sustainable trade. In June 2016 the Global Sustainable Tourism Council gave Kenya's eco-rating standards "conditional recognition" status for meeting a large percentage of the GSTC Criteria.

This means Kenya is on track and upon reviewing few areas in its criteria, it will be at par with global GSCTC standards. In July 2016, Ecotourism Kenya and FTT signed a Mutual Recognition Agreement, which will see EK's Gold Eco-rated facilities marketed under the FTT holiday's platform. At business level, Kenyan tourism businesses continue to participate in global sustainable tourism awards like:-



- a) WTM World Responsible Tourism Awards
- b) SKAL Ecotourism Award
- c) WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards
- d) Green Key Global
- e) World Travel Awards
- f) Africa Responsible Tourism Awards
- g) Travelife

### **Pillar 2 - Broad & Inclusive Sustainability Guidelines**

Our sustainability initiatives have been broadened beyond environmental concerns. This emerges from recognition that tourism also has social, cultural, and economic impacts. Additionally, we strive to align with global trends in sustainability. In recent years, there is increased interest to encourage operators to look at the practices of service providers in their supply chains because this is drawing interest globally and is becoming central to sustainability.

The MDGs and now the SDGs are all focal areas alongside other human rights issues like child labor, fair wages. Our sustainable tourism programs and instruments for assessment (eco-rating scheme, green destination guidelines and codes of conduct) are continuously updated to reflect global realities.

### **Pillar 3 - Education & Specialization**

#### **Role of Private Sector Industry Associations**

Private sector in Kenya has been at the forefront of promoting sustainability in the tourism sector. They have done this in two ways. First by organizing themselves into associations to encourage specialization and to monitor members to ensure ethical business practices that protect our visitors, our environment and promote compliance with legislation. There are seven active private sector associations under the umbrella of Kenya Tourism Federation (KTF).

Each association focuses on a segment of

tourism. They include KATA, KATO, KAHC, EK, KAAO, MCTA, and PERAK. Notably, the existence of KATO, established in 1978 and KAHC in 1944 are front-runner industry associations in Kenya and their worked have shaped the industry for decades.

Members of KAHC and KATO recognized the importance of conservation, protection of the environment from early days as evidenced by number of their members who have supported and continue to support organizations like East Africa Wildlife Society, Nature Kenya, Friends of Nairobi National Park, Friends of Nairobi Arboretum, and Museum Society among others. The entry of Ecotourism in 1996 elevated sustainable tourism practice in the industry.

In addition to programs of the associations, there are three signature annual sustainable tourism conferences that provide opportunities for industry to interact with each other and with experts from other parts of Africa. These are learning forums. They include:





- The Annual Ecotourism & Sustainable Tourism Forum (National) by Eco-tourism Kenya
- The Annual Green Summit(Regional) by Sustainable Travel & Tourism Agenda and
- The biennial Africa Conference on Sustainable Tourism (ACOST) by Strathmore University School of Hospitality and Tourism.

#### **Pillar 4 - Recognition of Champions**

Kenya has run the eco-rating scheme and Eco-warrior awards for 14 and 10 years respectively. These two programs have been central in spreading the awareness on sustainable tourism best practices through recognition of champions. The three levels of certification under the Eco-rating scheme create a competitive environment for industry players. The Eco-warrior Awards are edging towards being “the Oscars of Sustainable Tourism in Kenya”. Since 2013 Ecotourism Kenya has partnered with KTB to elevate the Eco-warrior awards by making them part of the MKTE events. The quality and number of participants continues to increase. The winners receive

publicity and leverage on the award values to set themselves apart as responsible businesses.

#### **Pillar 5- Partnership / Integration**

Collaborations, through different type partnerships have been key in driving sustainability in Kenya. These partnerships have encouraged integration of community development, and conservation into tourism development. Three types of partnerships stand out :-

##### **a) Private/Community Partnerships**

This involves private sector (lodges/tour operators) working with communities to develop community conservation areas as sustainable destinations. This growing phenomenon has seen the emergence of more than 15 community conservancies in Maasai Mara and several others in Amboseli and Laikipia/ Northern Kenya. The destinations are commonly referred to as community or private conservancies. These conservancies pay land rents to individual landowners, share bed night fees with landowners, employ local people, have empowerment and social development programs



and promote environmental protection and wildlife conservation. Most of the conservancies are sustainable tourism champions with several winning global awards and recognition. In 2013 Naboisho Conservancy in Maasai Mara, a partnership between Maasai Landowners and tourism partners became the first destination in Africa to participate in the GSTC early adapter program for destinations. It has gone ahead to win Africa's most Sustainable Conservancy in 2015 at the Africa Responsible Tourism Awards. Lewa Conservancy was recognized as a World Heritage Site in 2013 and Ol Pejeta was a winner in 2015 Responsible Tourism Awards and has received recognition being one of the last male white Rhino. Suffice to say a large percentage on eco-rated facilities are found in conservancies

### **b) NGO/Community Partnerships**

It is the observation of AWF that entering into partnerships are vital for sustainability of community conservation enterprises. Some of Kenya's award-winning lodges and prime destinations have been supported through conservation enterprise partnerships between host community and conservation NGOs. Several USAID and EU funded programs can be credited with the growth to ecotourism through support to community eco-lodges, capacity building, and conservancy development. Among the leading NGOs in supporting conservation enterprises is AWF. Ilngwesi Lodge was Kenya's first community owned and managed eco-lodge in a



community conservancy. It remains an icon of community-based tourism in Kenya. Many more have since emerged in the north, including the Sanctuary of Olentile and, Shompole in Amboseli areas.

### **c) Private/ Community/ NGO Partnerships**

The Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) is a perfect example of how tripartite agreements benefit communities, conservation, and tourism and promote sustainable tourism, and sustainable community development. This local NGO, with support from international agencies like USAID and others has transformed community group ranches in Northern Kenya into safe havens for host communities and wildlife and opened the areas for tourism. There are 33 conservancies under NRT protecting 43,000 SqKm for people, nature, and wildlife. Within these conservancies are 3 community owned lodges and several under development. Tourism in this area can be aptly described as “high-value-low impact” tourism. Community ownership, equitable sharing of tourism benefits and community participation define tourism in these areas.

# WHAT DO WE CARE FOR?

Defining elements of sustainable tourism in Kenya can be grouped under the following broad headlines.

## Care for People- Community & Culture

We recognize that the places we call destinations are homes for other people. These people have rights to development and basic rights. As the custodians of these destinations, tourism can foster sustainable development through social investments, advocacy, empowerment, integration, human rights and by being accountable. Well designed sustainable community programs have led to local prosperity, social equity, local people control, cultural revitalization and preservation, and community well being

## Care for Planet - Conservation & Environment

Environment was top of MDGs and remains key in the SDGs. We recognize the significance of healthy environments. We believe we cannot have healthy environments if we do not have healthy communities, and tourism cannot thrive without healthy environments. The evolution of sustainable tourism or sustainability in tourism is closely associated with environmental protection and conservation. In the earlier years following the advent of ecotourism, advocates of ecotourism were referred to as "treehuggers". Our sustainability standards are still heavily focused on environmental best practices to maintain healthy environment. As such green / clean energy, waste management, wise water use and protection of sources, safeguarding of habitats, protection of species, adoption of green technology and payment for ecosystem services are important to us.





## Care Profit - Commerce

We recognize that first and foremost tourism is an economic activity/ a business/ an investment and therefore must give economic returns. Sustainable tourism business should also be economically viable. However we remain cognizant of the fact that uncontrolled profit motive can be dangerous to people and the environment. Sustainable business culture ensures the businesses produce, consume and offer services responsibly and reinvest in people and planet to create favorable business environment.

## Our Sustainability Safari Continues...

Kenya's journey towards being a sustainable destination has been rewarding and a lot has been achieved. However, sustainability remains a challenge internationally and there is still a lot of work to be done. There have been great learnings along the way that has led to innovations in the industry to ensure a balance in environmental, social and economic dimensions of tourism development.

The Kenya sustainability safari continues and as we move forward as a destination, the Sustainable Development Goals provide a good framework for prioritizing areas for Sustainability initiatives for individuals, organizations and destinations in Kenya.

The tourism industry, both private and public sectors, have a key role to play. With global adoption of these goals, creating job opportunities, promoting local cultures, products and experiences, and developing & implementing tools to monitor the sustainable development impacts of tourism will be an ongoing focus for the Kenya tourism industry. Sustainable tourism is specifically mentioned in three of the goals as follows:

- Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and productive patterns

- Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

Besides the above goals, others that the Kenya tourism industry can make a big contribution include

- Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well being for all at all ages
- Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.
- Goal 13 Take urgent actions to combat climate change and its impacts.

Going forward, the challenge for the tourism industry in Kenya and the world over is to make sustainable tourism mainstream rather than niche as well as making an impactful contribution towards achievement of the sustainable development goals as indicated above given the multiplier effect brought about by the vertical and horizontal linkages between tourism and other sectors of the economy. For this reason too, tourism is one industry that can help transform economies from brown to green. The responsibility is enormous hence requires collaborations across sectors.

With the vision for destination Kenya well spelt out, join us in our sustainability journey to not only make Kenya a leading destination in sub Saharan Africa but also a leader in sustainable tourism offering rich, diverse authentic experiences that generate employment and income for Kenyans and ensure that tourism businesses thrive throughout the year, every year.

Useful links

- The Eco-rating scheme; Codes of Conduct, Green Destination Guidelines among other resources: <http://www.ecotourismkenya.org/page.php?id=7> -
- Global Code of Ethics for Tourism: <http://ethics.unwto.org/en/content/global-code-ethics-tourism>
- Sustainable Development Goals 2030: <http://www.un.org/>

[sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/)

- Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC).
  - o Criteria for Destinations: <http://www.gstccouncil.org/en/gstc-certification/gstc-criteria/criteria-for-destinations.html>
  - o Criteria for Hotels & Tour Operators: <http://www.gstccouncil.org/en/gstc-certification/gstc-criteria/criteria-for-hotels-and-tour-operators.html>
- Global Reporting Initiative( GRI) <https://www.globalreporting.org/standards/resource-download-center>
- Kenya professional Safari Guides Association: [www.kpsga.org](http://www.kpsga.org)
- Sustainable Travel & Tourism Agenda: [www.sttakenya.org](http://www.sttakenya.org)
- Northern Rangeland Trust: - <http://www.nrt-kenya.org/>













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