Greetings!

How to ensure that your travel is sustainable

Blessed with jaw-dropping landscapes, a wide array of wildlife species and one of the planet’s most sought after and photographed event—the Great Migration just to mention a few, Kenya boasts unparalleled natural beauty, and rightly belongs on every adventurer’s bucket list. As tourism begins to pick up following the ease of COVID-19 travel restrictions, travelers are keen to travel to protected areas such as national parks, reserves and conservancies. The aim is to view the beautiful wildlife in the wild as nature intended. However, it is crucial that this is done in a sustainable way.

What is sustainable travel? This is an important question that perhaps could be in most travelers’ minds. Sustainable travel does not mean scaling back on comfort or enjoyment, but rather travelling in a manner that protects wildlife and its habitat, supports community livelihoods and preserves the local cultures. Therefore, this week we will highlight some of the specific measures with a focus on wildlife and habitat protection that travelers, tour companies and accommodations are encouraged to adopt in ensuring that travel is sustainable.

Minimise disturbance to animals

Game drives are perhaps one of the most exciting activities offered by tour companies and accommodations in various tourist destinations in Kenya. It’s also worth mentioning that it is every nature lover’s dream to take a good photograph while on safari, and this comes with the urge to move closer to the animals. However, wildlife are very sensitive to abrupt movements and noise. Usually, when they are surrounded by several vehicles or vehicles come too close to
them they become distressed. It is therefore recommended to keep noise to a minimum, and never try to attract the wildlife’s attention so that you can be able to see as many as possible.

**Stay inside your vehicle at all times**

One of the most important actions you can take as part of your sustainable travel is staying inside your vehicle during the game drives. Certain behaviors such as standing on the roof of the vehicle or hanging out of the windows are highly discouraged. This is because doing so provokes the animals, putting everyone at serious risk. The picture below is of guests enjoying the view of a lion while inside their vehicle during their safari to Kenya with Gamewatchers Safaris.

![guests enjoying the view of a lion](image)

**Never feed animals**

Sometimes out of excitement or by seeing the friendly behavior of wildlife, guests might try to feed them. In addition, they might also throw the remaining food in a park. However, this can turn out to be the biggest mistakes one can do. Feeding animals makes them dependent on these edibles, hampering their natural skills of hunting or finding the source of food on their own. For this reason, travelers are encouraged not to feed animals.

**Keep to designated roads or tracks**
There is overwhelming consensus that off road driving in protected areas has adverse impacts on vegetation and wildlife habitat. When off-roading, vehicle’s wheels roll outside the road affecting the immediate vegetation. Damage to the immediate vegetation aside, this practice also leads to soil compaction. The compacted soil neither allows infiltration nor penetration of plant roots. If the off road driving continues, then the area completely changes its outlook, and looks like a road, and even much worse gullies can be formed which exacerbate soil erosion. Drivers of tour vehicles are therefore encouraged to keep to designated roads or tracks, so as to protect the pristine environment in the wildlife protected areas. See the picture below of a tour vehicle being driven on designated track.

Source: https://www.goaheadtours.com/guided-tours/kenya-wildlife-safari

We hope that through this article, you have been enlightened on some responsible practices to adopt as part of sustainable travel. By leaving as light a footprint as possible, and influencing others to be responsible in their daily actions too, we can make a real and lasting contribution to leaving our world a better place!