“Green” What exactly is it?
Apart from a colour, it is also a common expression which means ‘taking care of the environment’ or ‘being eco-friendly’.

Travel agents and tour operators can review their business to determine what makes them ‘green’ and why a potential ecotourist would travel with them. Doing this brings many dividends in terms of reduced costs, wildlife conservation and cultural understanding. It’s a win-win situation for everyone!
Here are some guidelines to consider for a “green” travel agency or tour operator.

**Economic guidelines:**
- Choose a project that interests your company, such as rhino conservation or village water supplies, and set yourself a goal. In supporting the project, create the timeline with your staff and then inform your clients of your goal. Update everyone involved on your progress throughout the year. This way, part of the company net profit is returned to the local community and wildlife projects.
- Partner with credible companies/lodges which pay the community for their land in either a lease agreement, a per person fee agreement, entry fees, a percentage of profit basis and/or use local suppliers. This way you contribute to empowering communities by providing them with an income.
- Give your clients tips on what to purchase; where applicable, purchase local gifts to give your clients. This way you contribute to sustenance of culture and extend support to local handicraft shops in camps and lodges.
- Create a pre-departure information pack that provides helpful hints to clients on wildlife conservation initiatives and environmental issues on the areas to be visited. Emphasize what natural products to buy or not buy when visiting East Africa.
- Set policies on waste, energy and water and ensure your staff are aware of it. Perhaps you can create a competition for the office to use the least amount of paper or change your purchasing policy to minimize solid waste generation.
- Consider such ideas as building water catching pipes, planting indigenous trees or shrubs in the compound and installing solar panels.
- Contribute to debates and discussions on ‘green’ tourism by sharing your knowledge and experience through articles in newsletters, magazines, e-zines, e-groups and websites. It’s free publicity for you while educating travelers at the same time.
- Offer your clients insights into local conservation issues for travelers by educating them on the ‘dos and don’ts’ of wildlife watching. A good example is the KWS park regulations.
- Share vehicles when convenient to reduce pollution; introduce a car pool system for your staff. Encourage your clients to enjoy game walks instead of game drives where possible.
- Ensure that your drivers don’t drive off the road in national parks to reduce the environmental impacts of your tours. Explain to your clients the potential damage of off-road driving and ask them to help protect the parks by not asking the driver to do so. Employ qualified drivers; better still employ KPSSGA certified drivers.
A pre-requisite to participating in the project will be agreement by the facility to invest in cost-effective measures suggested by the energy audit team, and which have been mutually agreed upon with the facility.

Once the facility begins to implement its management plan, the energy audit experts (EAA) will make several follow up trips, over a period of six months, to each facility to provide back-up support and to monitor the progress and the results of the measures taken. In addition, representatives from Ecoforum and ESOK will visit the facilities to document progress and to interview the facility staff to see how the energy management improvements have helped. Ecoforum will use these case studies to promote practical sustainable energy management practices, and will publish results in its widely-circulated magazine. ESOK will disseminate positive lessons learnt among its membership. It will also use the project to leverage further programmes that stimulate efficient use of energy by the tourism sector, and to encourage the provision of professional and reliable energy support and technical services to the sector.

Funding has been made available to substantially subsidise the cost of these energy management packages. These subsidies will only be available to facilities who are ESOK members, and who are willing to be industry leaders in the establishment and promotion of good energy management. If you are interested in this limited offer, please contact ESOK for details.

Being Green keeps you out of the Red – Cont. from Pg. 1

• Your staff should be well versed with your eco-policy. Select one of your staff to mentor your company's eco-policies and ensure all new staff are appropriately briefed on these policies.

• Start looking for partners that will help you, help themselves and protect the wilderness areas at the same time!

Social responsibility:

• Create pre-departure information that provides helpful hints on how to visit local cultures. Give background information on cultural 'dos and don'ts' for each area your client is visiting.

• Work with camps and lodges to create cultural talks and tours as part of the itinerary. Allow clients to spend time with the local tribes while traveling.

• Working with local citizens gives you the local information that you and your clients need. Employ local citizens!
From Pastoralism to a Market Economy: Northern Kenya community lodges chart a new course

by Judy Kopher-Gona

The Maasai and Samburu communities of northern Kenya have been pastoralists since time immemorial. Most remarkably, genuine nomadic herdsmen still exist in this part of Kenya in the 21st Century. The nomads still live in their manyattas in open landscape. But harsh climatic conditions characterised by unreliable rainfall and coupled with a growing population has demonstrated that pastoralism cannot sustain these communities. The struggles for survival resulted in human wildlife conflicts and poaching, reducing wildlife populations in many unprotected areas. But things are changing for these northern Kenya communities, thanks to ecotourism.

Today, a number of exciting community ecotourism projects are demonstrating that it is possible to reverse the loss of wildlife habitat and bring benefit to the community by embracing this new style of tourism. Il Ngwesi, Sarara and Tassia, are community lodges found in Northern Kenya. These exquisitely designed eco-lodges are located in pristine country with increasing wildlife numbers and panoramic views. But these lodges are not just another wilderness experience for tourists. Profit from the lodges is divided amongst the local community and helps to support households, schools, dispensaries, cattle dips, water supplies and other community activities, including conservation.

Threats & Challenges
Many challenges still exist for ecotourism development in Northern Kenya. The largest threat is perhaps not from tourism itself, but from pressures associated with transition to a market economy. Inappropriate entrepreneurial skills, poor understanding of the dynamics of tourism, self-interest and contradicting land policies are just but a few problems. Benefit sharing is the other challenge facing community ecotourism. Suffice it to mention that these problems are not unique to Northern Kenya community lodges, but to ecotourism in Kenya and to the world at large.

The future
Northern Kenya ecotourism opportunities are great despite the challenges. The future depends on how well the destination successfully maintains its living cultural heritage, upholds the interest of the ecotourist and contributes to the conservation of the biodiversity found in the region.

For more details on these lodges or reservation contact:

Let’s Go Travel
P.O.Box 60342 Nairobi
E-mail: info@letsgosafari.com
Tel: 447151/ 441030, Fax: 441690
The International Year of Ecotourism

Preparations are at an advanced stage in planning for a regional ecotourism meeting in readiness for the World Ecotourism Summit (WES), to be held in Quebec in 2002. ESOK is working together with the African Conservation Centre (ACC) and Eco-resorts to plan for this regional meeting. The meeting is scheduled to take place in Nairobi from 20th - 23rd March 2001 and participation will be drawn from the three East African Countries.

Networking

ESOK is now a member of the Kenya Tourism Federation (KTF) and a board member of the newly created Tourism Trust Fund (TTF). The TTF is a joint initiative of the European Union and the Kenyan government to support sustainable tourism and ecotourism. Renewed contacts by ESOK with other conservation organizations like IUCN, WWF and Friends of Conservation has been established and it is hoped that these interactions will benefit membership and ecotourism growth in Kenya.

ESOK/UNDP Project

With the help of a consultant, a draft survey report of areas with potential for ecotourism has been prepared. The survey, which covered some of the poorest populated districts of Kenya, will provide a basis for ESOK to identify three areas with greatest potential and proceed with plans to implement suitable nature based enterprises with the communities. ESOK’s partners in implementing this project are EAWLS and Nature Kenya. A working group comprising of KWS, EAWLS, Nature

Ecorating Scheme

According to the schedule presented at the October 2000 Eco-rating workshop, the scheme should have been implemented by December 2001. ESOK had anticipated funding support for this initiative, but the expected funding has been delayed. But all hope is not lost, ESOK has proceeded to do some ground work and is hopeful that a scheme for at least one of the sectors will be ready by March 2002.
Maumo is our new Community Projects Officer while Joseph Kathiwa is a Projects Assistant. Aggrey previously worked for Kenya Wildlife Service while Joseph has just completed his Masters degree course on ecotourism from Nairobi University.

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**Ecotourism Database**

Our ecotourism database will soon be published on the ecotourism pages of the website. The information being compiled includes location maps showing community wildlife conservation areas as well as areas with potential for ecotourism. This database will be used to promote community ecotourism to travelers, but will also be useful to investors, tour operators, researchers and students interested in ecotourism.

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**Education**

As part of awareness campaigns, ESOK is targeting the youth in schools to promote conservation. To this end, ESOK recently sponsored **Hillcrest School Environment Club** to a tree planting and clean-up mission in the Maasai Mara. The mission, dubbed ‘the Mara Clean-up 2001’, saw the students from Hillcrest School and their counterparts from Nkoilale Primary School in the Mara, plant more than 300 seedlings near Sekanani gate, around Sun Shade Camp and at Nkoilale primary School. They also collected 40 bags of waste at Sekenani gate. Such clean-up campaigns are aimed at sensitizing the local community on their role in sustaining their environment and to encourage early involvement of youth in conservation.

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**Our Logo**

Here is our logo, a new identity for ESOK. Our members can use this logo on their brochures and other literature.

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**Moving offices**

Effective January 2002, we will move offices to Upper Hill - KATO premises. The property is on Longonot Road, opposite Shelter Afrique Centre. Our e-mail address and post office addresses remain the same. We shall inform you of the new telephone numbers in due course. Please find enclosed a map to the new offices.
Sustainable Urban Environment

The role of waste collection companies

Keen Kleeners Ltd. is a Kenyan private company incorporated in 1994 with a license to operate as an environment and garbage management agent. The company’s main operation area has been Mombasa where for many years, residents have been inundated with huge piles of garbage and litter in the town. The level of environmental degradation has been worrying with sights of huge piles of stinking garbage behind office blocks and the discharge of raw untreated effluent into the ocean being a common occurrence.

KKL currently focuses on garbage collection and disposal targeting households, hotels, industries, schools, hospitals, and other commercial. However, in order to add value to its business, KKL is also involved in gardening and landscaping services. The objective of these additional activities is to improve the general aesthetics of the environment with a view to promoting outdoor activities.

KKL identifies the challenges facing waste management in urban settings as:

- Fast growth in urban centres which has resulted in slum dwellings without proper sanitation amenities
- Lack of responsive capacity by local authorities whose equipment are largely obsolete and the human resource is not well trained to effectively handle urban environmental issues
- Lack of concern by private individuals on the effects of environmental degradation,
- Commercial enterprises not seriously weighing environmental issues since this does not always form the core of their business. Any effort geared towards environmental conservation are measured purely in economic terms according to present or future profitability without taking into account the inherent ecological value of the environment. Their bottom line is cents whether this makes environment sense or not.

KKL encourages partnerships that can help it realize its objectives of a clean environment for all. In this regard, as a member of ESOK, Keen Kleeners is assured of the necessary support in creating awareness for the need of a sustainable clean urban environment.

Cleaner Production

What is it?

Kenya now has a “cleaner production” centre, the Kenya National Cleaner Production Centre (KNPC). Cleaner production can be described as a management approach that aims to produce more with fewer resources and less pollution. It is synonymous to concepts such as waste minimization, green productivity and eco-efficiency.

The basic significance of Cleaner production is quite simple: increase production efficiency while at the same time eliminate or at least minimize wastes and emissions at their source rather than treat them after they have been generated. Traditionally, industries have responded to environmental problems by ignoring, diluting or controlling the problem. It is now being realised that it is better to adopt a preventive approach i.e. reduce the generation of waste rather than take care of waste after generation. This is Cleaner Production.

ESOK has already established a working relationship with the centre in a bid to extend cleaner production principles to hotels and lodges. At a workshop held in Mombasa on —

July 2001, participants were introduced to the concept of cleaner production, the relevance of cleaner production under the newly published Environment Coordination and Management Act, and energy efficiency methods among other issues.

ESOK wishes to commend Heritage Hotels and Severin Sea Lodge for participating in this workshop.

For more details, contact:

Judy Kepher-Gona
or
Jane Nayakango

KNPC, Kapiti Road, KIRDI South C Complex
P O Box 30650, Nairobi. Tel: 604870 / 504866
E-mail- kncpc@africaonline.co.ke
BCP (Biodiversity Conservation Programme) is an innovative and pro-active approach to natural resource management. This Ksh 400 million programme is a demand driven, multi-window funding mechanism to support conservation initiatives mainly through local community institutions. It aims at promoting biodiversity education and awareness, supporting conservation-based revenue generating projects, enhancing initiatives that minimize conflicts between people and biodiversity, and strengthening efforts that reduce threats to biodiversity conservation.

The programme recognizes the need to involve local communities in planning, management and making decision related to resources within their jurisdiction to ensure that social, cultural, economic and political issues are not peripheral to conservation, but central to every successful effort. The programme aims at creating positive support for biodiversity conservation by raising the quality of human life. The projects supported by BCP recognize the need to improve biodiversity conservation through a framework that integrates conservation and sustainable development, within a suitable enabling environment, increased social democratization and alleviation of poverty in rural communities.

All projects are implemented in accordance with appropriate national policies, institutional capability and technical capacity of the stakeholders.

The programme encourages stakeholders to participate more actively in conservation activities by offering them necessary financial and technical support to make this possible. Recognizing the substantial investment required to address the enormous threats and challenges to conservation of biological resources, the funding mechanism provides grants of up to Ksh 14 million to successful applicants. All public and private agencies that support long-term biodiversity conservation initiatives qualify for funding under this facility. Key among them are community wildlife associations, ranches, community based organizations among others.

The projects activities are stakeholder oriented and demand driven. Only proposals from legal entities with competent, non-political implementation committees and adequate stakeholder representation are considered. Participatory project planning is mandatory and, where applicable, a land use management plan will be a pre-requisite. Applicants are required to contribute between 10% & 25% of the project budget either in form of cash, labor or materials. Maximum project period should be 3 years.

There are several projects under implementation since BCP was launched. Ecotourism projects include Kalama Wildlife Conservancy in Samburu, LUMO Community Wildlife Conservancy in Taita and Shompole ecotourism project in Magadi. These projects have received funds to improve the road network, build eco-lodges, set up radio communication networks, purchase 4X4 vehicles, hire core staff and for product promotion. It is projected that nearly 20 ecotourism development projects will be supported through BCP in the next 12 months.

For details, contact the Programme Manager at BCP offices:
Josem Trust House
Bunyala / Masaba Road,
P O Box 62199, Nairobi
Tel: 710999, 710956, 723606
Fax: 723496
Nature tragedy as the Great Ruaha is reduced to a trickle

Tanzania may soon lose one of the world's precious heritages, the Ruaha National Park if action is not taken to address critical issues related to the sustainable water flow of the Great Ruaha River.

According to the Tanzania National Park (TANAPA) ecologist Mr. Emmanuel Gerreta, the park's natural splendour is already being pushed over the edge as the Great Ruaha River flow continues to shrink.

“As the Great Ruaha River continue to be reduced to a trickle by rice irrigation activities upstream, there is no way we can sustain the Ruaha National Park,” the ecologist lamented while making a presentation on the Ruaha National Park status at the Rufiji Basin Downstream-Upstream Workshop held in Morogoro recently.

Mr. Gereta, who appealed for a closer collaborative management approach that will work in harmony and inspirations of both national and local interests, further added that already many wild animals are dying causing a big concern not only to the Tanzania government but also to the global conservation community.

Sympathizing with the park’s tragedy, one participant said: “Although we all appreciate the upstream economic and development activities which are helping the community to pull out of poverty strains, it is a shame to Tanzania’s cherished conservation efforts if we will let nature at Ruaha diminish at our own hands.”

Ruaha National Park is Tanzania’s second largest after the mighty Serengeti. Covering 12950 sq. km. The park gets its name and its life from the Great Ruaha River that flows in the south-eastern section of the lowest section of the Rift Valley. The river was originally known as Lyambangari but foreigners renamed it Ruaha, a corruption of the word luvaha, which means ‘river brook’ in the local Hehe language.

Gratian Luhikula, Information and Liaison Officer, Tanzania Coastal Management Partnership, P.O.Box 71686, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Tel:255 51 667589/666190, Fax:255 51 668611 Email:gluhikula@epiq.or.tz

There is great concern over the numbers of the cheetah in the world famous Maasai Mara Reserve. It is feared that the population of the Cheetah has dwindled over the years as a result of a combination of factors and that the cub mortality rate for the cheetahs in the Mara could be as high as 90%.

At a recent launch of ‘The Maasai Mara Cheetah Conservation Project’, Mr. Bernard Ngoru of Kenya Wildlife Service lamented that amongst other factors, tourism activities had contributed to the falling numbers of Cheetahs in the Mara. The cheetah, a daylight hunter, when surrounded by tour vehicles, is unable to hunt and tracks created by off-road driving expose their cubs to unnecessary danger-(other predators). The result is death through starvation or predation. Other threats to the cheetah include disease (lack of genetic variation), human wildlife conflicts and habitat loss brought about by change in landuse patterns.

But all hope is not lost, thanks to the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and Eco-travel, who are supporting an 18 month study on the cheetahs to establish their numbers, distribution, levels of harassment and provide treatment to ailing individuals. The results of the study will be used to set up guidelines for tourism management in the area as well as management plans.

For more information please contact:
International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), or
Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS)