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Ecotourism Kenya’s Magazine Editorial Policy

The following editorial policy acts as a guideline for publishing Naturals magazine primarily for EK members. Naturals aim is to promote ecotourism knowledge and best practices in support of responsible and sustainable tourism in Kenya. The editor welcomes editorial submissions on interesting and pertinent topics. The articles should not exceed 1,000 words and must clearly show the names and postal contacts of the author/contributor.

Contributors are encouraged to write on issues that interest, inform and empower the target audience. Writers are welcome to consult Ecotourism Kenya at any point during their writing. Appropriate photographs can be included to the accompanying articles, with permissions and photos credits clearly shown. Use of facts, figures, illustrations and examples is greatly encouraged. The language used should be for the average reader; highly technical or academic language, plagiarism and clichés must be avoided.

The Editorial Committee has the right to decline and refuse to publish contributions or advertisements deemed racial, derogatory, defamatory or injurious to any person, known or unknown. The editor also reserves the right to review, edit and/or reject articles for reasons of content, quality, length or post-deadline submission. All editorial contributions will be published in English.

Submissions to the EK Magazine should be sent to the Editor at info@ecotourismkenya.org

Disclaimer

The opinions and views expressed in articles published in Naturals magazine are the respective author’s own and do not necessarily reflect those of Ecotourism Kenya, which seeks to publish a diverse range of perspectives on given issues. Authors are fully responsible and are legally liable for their own work. Ecotourism Kenya assumes no responsibility or legal liability, express or implied, for the content of any work by authors. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of all the information contained in this magazine.
The Kenyan tourism industry has demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of numerous challenges this year. This has been attributed to increased partnerships between the local communities and the public and private sectors. This is what has informed the theme of the 2014 Eco Warriors Awards and the 5th edition of Naturals magazine: “Responsible tourism is #WhyILoveKenya.”

Every year we gather to celebrate individuals and organizations that have made exceptional achievements in the practice of responsible tourism, and the selection of this theme – borrowed in part from the current tourism industry’s online campaign – is meant to foster patriotism within Kenyans from all walks of life. The Kenya Tourism Board’s continued commitment to promoting ecotourism ethos partnered with Ecotourism Kenya to include the Eco Warrior Awards as part of the Magical Kenya Travel Expo (MKTE), an annual exhibition that has garnered increased participation from organizations in Kenya and around the world.

The articles in this issue of Naturals demonstrate that responsible tourism is only possible when cooperation is inherent and evident among the local communities, tourism enterprises and other stakeholders in the industry. For instance, under the Commendable Commitment section read on how Kicheche Camps, the first chain of accommodation facilities to have two of its camps attain Ecotourism Kenya’s Gold certification within a year, have heavily invested in education, family and health care through the Kicheche Community Trust. Under Community Conserved Areas section the staff of Gamewatchers Safaris, who also run the multiple award-winning Porini Camps, teach the children from Ol Kinyei Conservancy that wildlife is important not only for the environment but also for the sustenance of the tourism industry. Ol Pejeta, a privately-owned conservancy in Laikipia gives emphasizes on sustainability through investment in agriculture and education, with the ultimate aim of increasing the community’s income-generating potential in the long run.

We look forward to receiving your views on these articles so we can work together to continue spreading the gospel of responsible tourism, like our renowned national spirit of Harambee (coming together), as this is only possible if everyone is actively involved.

On behalf of the Ecotourism Kenya Secretariat and editorial team, I wish all readers to adopt the theme: Responsible Tourism is #Why I Love Kenya.

Grace Nderitu,
CEO, Ecotourism Kenya

Despite the challenges that the Kenyan tourism industry has faced, 2014 has been an incredibly significant year: it marks the third anniversary of one of the most renowned environmental warriors the late Professor Wangari Muta Maathai; the Born Free Foundation celebrates 30 years of existence, the First World War took place 100 years ago and it was a year where we saw the largest area under wildlife conservancies both private and community that Kenya has ever had!

The recently concluded 2014 World Tourism Day with the theme “Tourism and Community Development” continues to raise international awareness on the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, political and economic benefits. Bringing this back home, we need to ensure these important points are communicated, valued and encouraged because sustainable tourism can be a major driver of poverty alleviation and in a way that allow communities to retain their identities while reducing inequalities. Furthermore, the tourism supply chain has a significant cross-cutting impact on many of the other key drivers of our economy such as: agriculture, infrastructure, communication and manufacturing; in addition to the vital role it can play in protecting biodiversity by helping to secure and protect the habitat in partnership with the local communities.

Kenya as one of the global leaders of ecotourism, continues to pave the way in pioneering sustainable tourism models and initiatives; this year’s Eco Warriors Gala Awards will be a night to celebrate the leaders and ambassadors of best practice! I congratulate everyone that had the courage to apply, those that were shortlisted and the winners who are our 2014 Eco Warriors! My wish is that these winners will inspire us to greater heights of sustainable tourism for the long-term benefit of our children and country.

I hope this edition of Naturals will enrich your knowledge on the importance of the community in the tourism industry not only in Kenya but also around the world because, as borrowed from one of Ecotourism Kenya’s most popular stickers, “Local people know best – ask them!”

Dr. Mohanjeet Brar
Commercial Director, Gamewatchers Safaris
Ecotourism Kenya defines the term ‘ecotourism’ as, “The involvement of travelers, tourism operators and stakeholders in supporting natural and cultural conservation values linked to local communities, through equitable sharing of social and economic benefits accrued from tourism activities at local destinations.”

As a membership organization, Ecotourism Kenya brings together individuals, community-based organizations (CBOs) and tourism businesses in a forum to learn about the ecotourism standard, and how to incorporate that standard into tourism businesses, conservation initiatives, and community development.

The organization conducts its activities through five programme areas:

- Awareness Creation and Information Sharing
- Enterprise Development Program
- Leadership and Mentorship Program
- Research and Consultancy
- Standards and Best Practices

Ecotourism Kenya is guided by the following principles:

**VISION:** To be a leader in the knowledge and practice of ecotourism.

**MISSION:** To effectively link tourism, communities and conservation for sustainable tourism development in Kenya.

**GOAL:** To promote tourism practices that will conserve Kenya’s natural environment and improve livelihoods of associated communities.

**VALUE STATEMENT:** At Ecotourism Kenya, we promote sustainable utilization of resources for sustained livelihoods. Our policy is to ensure incorporation of sound environmental and social practices in new and existing tourism enterprises. We seek to increase recognition of environmental and social issues in the development of tourism in Kenya and in all works that we undertake. We do this by putting emphasis on:

- Respect for the environment
- Respect for local people and their cultures
- Equitable sharing of responsibilities and benefits.
Wildlife feeding or baiting can be defined as humans giving food materials to wild animals or putting out food stuff for wildlife to trap or entice them for recreational viewing or for any other purpose such as hunting (Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 2014). It is considered as artificial feeding because naturally wild animals are able to obtain their own food independently without human influence.
Baiting is widely practiced to attract wildlife for better viewing opportunities, which is important to commercial tourism operators who base their business on wildlife in order to maintain their financial feasibility. Wildlife and natural resource scientists regard this behavior as unethical and irresponsible tourism.

In Kenya, feeding wildlife is prohibited under the Kenya Wildlife Service’s Park, Wildlife and Marine Codes:

"Don’t feed the animals, it upsets their diet and leads to human dependence." -Wildlife Code

"Hand-feeding of fish is discouraged. It disrupts normal feeding patterns." -Marine Wildlife Code

Ecotourism Kenya also forbids wildlife baiting under its Kenya Safari Code, and Eco-Rating Code of Conduct:

"Never feed wild animals. Feeding wild animals can upset their diet and lead to an unnatural dependence upon people."

"A certified member will lose their Eco-rating certification if they bait any wildlife."

Feeding wild animals is highly discouraged because in the long run it does more harm than good. Here are some of the reasons why:

1. Feeding wild animals alters their natural behavior patterns

Feeding wild animals alters their normal migration patterns, causing them to stay in areas where food is provided. They spend less time foraging and hunting which leads to increased breeding activity. This may result in a localized increase in population and competition, which is unusual under natural conditions. Feeding also compromises the ecological balance of species in particular areas and can manipulate reproduction — for example, female birds can lay their eggs early, or have their reproductive ages reduced altogether, due to supplemental feeding.

2. Feeding wild animals causes dependency

The ability to hunt and forage is a learned behavior in wild animals. The more they do this, the more efficient they become. However, if an animal is fed so frequently that it no longer needs to forage/hunt for itself it may lose the ability or skill to do so, and thus it becomes dependent on human assistance. For example, the feeding of dolphins by tourists in Tangalooma, Australia appeared to have altered their natural foraging activities when compared with non-fed dolphins in the area. In addition, many wild animals especially mammals learn how to hunt from their parents; if these wild animals become human-dependent their offspring fail to acquire these skills, which are important for their survival.

3. Feeding makes wild animals lose their natural fear of people

Feeding can make potentially dangerous animals become too comfortable around humans. They can end up being a bother or, worse, a safety risk. For example, monkeys or baboons used to being given food hand-outs by humans can prompt the former to break into cars, homes, offices etc. in search of food. Such unnatural conditions encourage fighting and injury amongst animals. They can also increase spread of diseases, some of which can also be spread to humans.

4. Human food is not always good for animals

Nature provides sufficient nutritious food for wild animals. Human foods may not be nourishing enough for animals and can cause serious health problems. Research has shown that food such as bread, popcorn and nuts may not be healthy for birds according to the Humane Society.

5. Feeding wildlife near vehicles can be dangerous for animals, humans and property by causing injuries or spread of disease

Wild animals may try to gain access to tourist facilities, recreational or residential areas in search of food, causing potential danger to humans and property. Animals can also get knocked down by moving vehicles if they are too close.

Crowding and competition often occurs in areas where wild animals get supplementary food. Such unnatural conditions encourage fighting and injury amongst animals. They can also increase spread of diseases, some of which can also be spread to humans.

6. Aggression

There are cases where wild animals fed by humans become abnormally aggressive towards people due to regular feeding. In cases where such animals detect food but have their feeding time denied or delayed, they can go as far as attacking people. For example, chimpanzees and baboons in Tanzania were found to be more aggressive toward people as a result of food provision.

In conclusion, continuous research shows that feeding wild animals has long-term negative impacts on the biological and social impacts of wildlife resources. The government and policy makers concerned should make a concerted effort to inform and educate the public about the potential dangers of baiting and feeding wildlife. They should also encourage the replacement of baiting practices with habitat conservation and wildlife management practices so as to improve habitat productivity for local wildlife populations.

Dr. Irene Amoke is the Projects Coordinator - Kenya Wildlife Trust and Joyce Kiruri is the Project Officer – Standards and Best Practices, Ecotourism Kenya.
Kicheche camps

Kicheche Camps define ecotourism as the way they do things. All its four luxury safari camps embrace the ecotourism principles elaborated below and are summed up in the company’s mission statement that states: “To promote the conservation and preservation of the cultures and ecosystems in which we operate whilst minimizing our impact upon them. To encourage cultural traditions and support local communities through employment and out trust activities. To set new benchmarks in service and care of our guests by providing them with the best possible exposure to the wildlife and ecology of the area.”

**Principle 1: Minimize Impact**

Every business, no matter how green, has an impact on the environment within which it operates. Behind every decision taken in the operations of Kicheche Camps, consideration is taken on how to minimize their impact on the environment while figuring out the most sustainable solution. Cost although a consideration, cannot be the sole determining factor. This is manifested in its green energy, water usage, waste management, supply chain management, vehicle use and maintenance policies.

All Kicheche Camps are solar-powered through ‘Solar Trees,’ solar panels designed to track the sun throughout the day. Most of the hot water is heated using solar water heaters, and charcoal boilers fueled by chardust briquettes. The kitchens have two types of ovens: those that run on sustainable charcoal from African Forest are used for baking, whereas other kitchen preparations make use of LPG-powered ovens.

All roofs have gutters installed to harvest rainwater for use. Guests at Kicheche Bush and Kicheche Mara use bucket showers which limits their water usage to 25 litres per shower. Water used in the laundry is then used to wash the camps’ vehicles.

All Kicheche Camps have an on-site waste separation centre where waste is separated and then sent on to recycling centres in Nanyuki, Nairobi and Aitong, the last of which was principally set up by the Kicheche Community Trust.

Due to the remote areas in which they operate, all camps except Kicheche Laikipia receive their supplies from Nairobi, with one supply truck servicing the other three camps once a week.
Kicheche Camps place a very high importance on keeping their vehicles at optimum maintenance level; this not only improves their service to the staff and clients but also reduce emissions. They intentionally have fewer vehicles and try as much as possible to literally reduce their footprint.

**Principle 2: Build Environmental & Cultural Awareness and Respect**

Three of the Kicheche Camps are located in conservancies bordering the main Maasai Mara National Reserve: Mara North, Olare Motorogi and Naboisho. These conservancies are answering the animals’ need; as a result and they are solely sustained by revenue derived from tourism activities. Kicheche Camps’ managing director, Greg Monson, is on the board of each of these conservancies and is a director of Olare Motorogi Conservancy.

The local communities’ involvement in running these conservancies has raised their awareness of the symbiotic relationship between human and wildlife activities. It has also helped to change the attitude of the Maasai towards wildlife; rather than seeing them as a threat to be done away with, the people now view wildlife as a resource to be protected. This appreciation also extends to the camps guests when they are briefed upon arrival, of Kicheche Camps’ ethos and practices, and also as they visit the local villages and observe firsthand the lifestyle of the Maasai.

**Principle 3: Provide Direct Financial Benefits and Empowerment for Local People**

Each of the conservancies in the Mara Region within which three of the Kicheche Camps operate is leased directly from the local Maasai community. As members of these conservancies, Kicheche Camps guarantee the landowners a fixed monthly lease payment not affected by fluctuation in tourist numbers; for the privilege of operating game drives on their land. In addition to the lease payment, Kicheche Camps pays a bednight fee, similar to a conservancy ticket, for each of its clients.

Kicheche Camps strives as much as possible to hire qualified staff from within the local community, and only looking outside the community when they cannot find individuals who meet their standards. In addition, Kicheche Camps provides medical cover to their staff, and continually provides training in English, computer packages, cookery, bakery and guide training courses amongst others.

Kicheche Mara Camp established a SACCO, Kicheche Mara Camp Co-operative Savings and Credit Society Limited in 2005, out of a need to provide staff with a means to affordable money. The criteria for joining the SACCO and borrowing are simply being a permanent member of Kicheche Camp Ltd. Despite being named after Kicheche Mara, the SACCO is open to all staff members of Kicheche and its sister company Chameleon Tours.

Each camp has a gift shop which in addition to stocking Kicheche - branded items, stocks crafts and curios purchased from the women of the local communities.

Established in 2004, the Kicheche Community Trust has become a reliable source of funding for projects in and around the conservancies where they operate. The trust strives to encourage the preservation of the environment whilst improving the welfare of the community through improved health and education facilities. The Trust is built on four corner posts of Community Welfare: Education, Environment, Health and Family Care, and Community Empowerment.

**Principle 4: Provide Positive Experiences for both Visitors and Hosts**

Kicheche strives to provide a memorable experience for its guests, below are a few comments:

“There are not enough superlatives to describe how much we have enjoyed our six nights at Valley Camp. We have loved every minute of it. We wouldn’t contemplate staying at any other camps apart from Kicheche, everything about them is perfect. We can’t wait to return next year.” Derek & Susan Rankine, UK - KVC Mar 14

“While the camp managers were indeed special, the various guides were absolute ‘stars.’ They were committed to showing us the very best their Conservancies had to offer and were eager to answer questions and provide information about the many species of game and birds; and were so very warm and friendly. I also appreciated the opportunity to visit an educational Discovery Center, Medical Clinic, and hear about the various community programs that Kicheche supports. It is a beautiful thing, and it adds to the special quality of Kicheche Camps.” Jan Hauer, Colorado

**Principle 5: Raise Sensitivity to Host Countries’ Political, Environmental, and Social Climate**

Tourism by its very nature contributes to raising sensitivity as it opens up the host country to individuals who otherwise would have no desire or knowledge to learn more about it. Kicheche Camps clients are from all over the world and for those who have never been to Kenya; Kicheche Camps is a great place to gain knowledge about the country. The camps’ guides are certified by the Kenya Professional Safari Guides Association, with 89% of them being Silver-certified. This makes them a veritable point of contact for guests seeking to know more about all aspects of Kenya.

Dominique Berger is a marketing consultant, and Melanie Wood is Kicheche’s operations manager.
As part of its ongoing work to improve the relationship between wildlife and communities, Gamewatchers Safaris and Porini Camps recently invited 42 students from neighbouring schools to the Ol Kinyei Conservancy situated in the Maasai Mara, to visit the Porini Mara Camp and to experience a game drive in the conservancy.

Gamewatchers Safaris is a pioneer of community-owned conservancies in Kenya, with land being leased from Maasai communities and set aside for wildlife habitat. Following the establishment of Selenkay Conservancy in Amboseli in 1997 and Ol Kinyei Conservancy in 2005, the company has strived to strengthen the relationship between Maasai communities and wildlife.

Maasai bomas (livestock enclosures) outside the Ol Kinyei Conservancy have suffered immensely from lion attacks in the past. Due to the heavy rains that cause scattering of the wild plains animals, the lions’ natural prey, resident lions sometimes stray beyond the conservancy and prey on livestock belonging to Maasai cattle herders, causing them substantial loss. Because of this, a few of the aggrieved Maasai threaten to take action by killing any lions which attack their livestock.

In recent years the lion population has been diminishing largely due to this sort of human-wildlife conflict, as well as loss of suitable habitat. Their numbers have decreased from 20,000 to a staggering less than 2,000 in the entire country. With human-wildlife conflict on the rise due to growing human populations encroaching on wildlife territories, exposing children to wildlife and allowing them to understand the importance of wildlife and habitat conservation is of paramount importance to the security of Kenya’s flora and fauna.

Many of the children visiting Ol Kinyei Conservancy and Porini Mara Camp during the month of April had never seen elephants, lions or cheetahs before, with many of the Big Cats being viewed in a negative light due to attacks on their treasured livestock. However, after going for educational excursions through game drives and being educated by Gamewatchers’ and Porini’s skilled local Maasai safari guides and spotters, the children have begun to appreciate and understand the importance of conservancies as a wildlife sanctuary and also as employment creation opportunities for the local population.

The children usually go for game drives, and tours around the camps. They are given talks by the guides, chefs, waiters, room stewards and the camp manager for them to understand and explore possible future career options. Land owners also elaborated the benefits of conservancies as they are involved in the entire process of managing the conservancies, thus enriching the talks and making them more authentic and real to the children.

Exposing the youth to wildlife allows them to understand why Kenya is one of the world’s best tourism destinations; how and why responsible tourism has become the preferred form of travel experience. Next year, Gamewatchers and Porini hopes to have many more students and community members visit the conservancies, with the expectation that through frequent game viewing excursions it will foster a greater need to conserve the flora and fauna within the conservancies.

Chantal Migongo-Bake is the Conservation and CSR Manager at Gamewatchers Safaris and Porini Camps.
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MARCH

Ecotourism Kenya held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 20th March 2014 at the AMREF Training Centre. The following individuals were elected to serve on the Executive Board in 2014:
1. Dr. Mohanjeet Brar - Gamewatchers Safaris and Porini Camps (Chairman)
2. Ms. Elizabeth Kimotho - Exclusive Eco-Travels (Secretary)
3. Mr. George Kamau - Lake Nakuru Lodge (Treasurer)
4. Dr. Mordecai Ogada – Carnivore Ecologist
5. Ms. Edith Bosire – EED Advisory
6. Ms. Anu Vohora - Safarilink
7. Ms. Jacinta Nzioka-Kenya Tourism Board
8. Mr. Herbert Mwachiro - Institute For Education in Democracy (IED) and the Environment Institute of Kenya

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APRIL

Ecotourism Kenya joined the Directorate of Tourism, Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA), Miss Tourism Kenya, Domestic Tourism Council of Kenya, Tourism Fund Corporation, Kenya Association of Hotel Keepers and Caterers (KAHC) among other organizations in preparations for the UN World Tourism Day/ Kenya Tourism Week that was held on 23rd to 27th September 2014 at Taita Taveta County. The theme for this year’s World Tourism Day was ‘Tourism and Community Development’.

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MAY

Ecotourism Kenya took part as one of the association partners of the second Kenya Hospitality Trade Fair and Hotel Summit East Africa from 14th to 16th May 2014 at the KICC. Construction & operation of green hotels, the state of the safari industry in the region and trends in architecture and hotel designs were among the sessions at this conference, which provided participants with a crucial platform to gain insights to the industry, develop robust perspectives, network, consolidate partnerships while embarking on the journey to invest in the region’s thriving hospitality and travel industry.

On May 16th 2014, Ecotourism Kenya joined Africa Point and East Africa Wildlife Society in a tree planting event at Hombe, in Mt. Kenya forest under the “Tupande Pamoja Initiative”. This joint venture between Africa Point, the East African Wildlife Society, Kenya Forest Working Group, Nature Kenya, Ecotourism Kenya and several environmental agencies seeks to rehabilitate Kenya’s forests through tree planting and promotion of responsible consumer practices. Tupande Pamoja has pledged to plant as many as 100,000 seedlings in the near future; 5000 seedlings were planted upon the launch in 2011, and 5000 more were planted this month.

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AUGUST

As part of an ongoing partnership with the Kenya Private Sector Alliance’s (KEPSA) Kenya Youth Empowerment Project (KYEP), Ecotourism Kenya received its first set of interns: Veronica Wangui, an Environmental Sciences graduate from Makerere University, and Mirriam Mbinya, a Business Management graduate from Makerere University. They came in to gain more knowledge about EK’s programs, particularly the Eco-Rating and the Awareness Creation & Information Sharing.

Ecotourism Kenya held its first joint Ecotourism Talk with Nature Kenya at the Nairobi National Museum on 21st August. The guest speaker was Judy Kepher-Gona, who gave a presentation on local & global trends in sustainable tourism. The joint talks are a product of a partnership between EK and Nature Kenya to provide a networking platform for their members while sharing ideas on various aspects of ecotourism.

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August 2014,

Ecotourism Kenya in partnership with Seniorer uden Graenser (SUG), a Dutch non-governmental NGO, organized a 4-day training workshop for the Shamba Farming and Ecotourism (SFE) Farmers Group in the Mt. Kenya region. The workshop’s objectives were: to create awareness on ecotourism, using the ‘10 Stepping Stones to establishing an Ecotourism Enterprise’; to build the capacity of the SFE Board members to be Trainers of Trainees (TOTs) to their groups in assessing, developing, marketing and maintaining ecotourism products and services.

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Ecotourism Kenya received its 10th Leadership and Mentorship Program (LMP) intake on 27th and 28th August, 2014. Thirty-four students from 13 tertiary institutions took part in the induction training at the EK offices in Upper Hill, Nairobi, and were received as interns by 23 EK member organizations.
**JUNE**

Ecotourism Kenya attended the three-day annual East Africa’s premier Karibu Travel market in Tanzania from the 6th to 8th June 2014. The second largest tourism show in Africa after South Africa’s Indaba, the 3-day event organized, by the Tanzania Association of Tour Operators (TATO) attracted regional in-bound tour operators, tourist boards, camping and safari companies, wildlife lodges and hotels, local and regional airlines as well as equipment manufacturers and services, supporting the travel and tourism trade. This year’s theme was ‘Sustainable Conservation’, in line with TATO’s policy that highlights the need to focus on wildlife conservation and security. Over 100 copies of the Ecotourism Kenya 2014/15 Guide that contains the profiles of EK members were distributed at the event.

‘How to promote your ecotourism enterprise through Social Media’ was the topic for June’s Ecotourism Talk, held on 26th June 2014 at the EK Offices. The Guest Speaker was Mr. Muriuki Murithi, Asst. Product Manager at the Kenya Tourism Board, who provided a better understanding on the important role that social media marketing and viral marketing plays in developing an overall low-cost promotional strategy for tourism businesses. He also talked about the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) launch of the online media campaign on tourism recovery which is part of a strategy to reassure tourists of Kenya’s safety. Participants were drawn from EK membership and stakeholders from the industry.

The Kenya Association of Hotelkeepers and Caterers 12th Annual Symposium took place on 26th-28th June 2014 at the Sarova Whitesands Beach Resort and Spa. Ecotourism Kenya among other Industry stakeholders gathered to assess the achievements, challenges and share ideas on the way forward in regards to the Tourism Recovery programme. Speaking during the symposium, hoteliers said that it is time the government gave the industry the seriousness it deserves as it serves as the key pillar of the economy and stressed on funds to be channeled to Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) to roll out its marketing and reassurance campaigns for the recovery initiative.

Ecotourism Kenya attended Strathmore University’s 10th Graduation ceremony that took place on 27th June 2014. This year, the graduation list had a total of 898 students; 750 diploma and undergraduate students, 146 postgraduate students and 2 doctoral candidates.

**SEPTEMBER**

Ecotourism Kenya joined other tourism and conservation stakeholders in Kenya at the Mara Stakeholders Forum, hosted by Narok County Governor Hon. Samuel Tunai, at the Windsor Golf and Country Club on 10th September. The forum was held to address outstanding issues on the management and future of the Masai Mara National Reserve: wildlife conservation, safety and security, the Masai Mara’s reputation, road infrastructure, congestion issues, and guiding and driving protocol.

The 21st World Travel Awards saw Kenya win awards in various categories: Kenya Tourism Board (Leading Tourist Board), Sarova Whitesands (Leading Eco-hotel), Sarova Shaba Game Lodge (Leading Eco-lodge), Porini Safari Camps (Leading Tented Safari Camp), Finch Hattons (Leading Safari Lodge), Kenya Airways (Africa’s Leading Airline – Business Class), Diani Beach (Leading Beach Destination) and the Masai Mara National Reserve (Leading National Park).

Ecotourism Kenya joined other tourism players in commemoration of the World Tourism Day on 27th September, at the Xplore Residents Travel Fair. The fair, which took place at the Karen Blixen Museum on 27th and 28th September, brought together over 60 key actors in the tourism industry, from high-end lodges, restaurants, food & beverage suppliers, community tourism organizations as well as service providers.

The 4th E-Tourism East Africa Conference took place on the 29th and 30th of September at the Intercontinental Hotel, Nairobi. Facebook presented for the first time in Kenya at the conference, alongside global online experts such as Trip Advisor, Expedia and Google. There was also a special session on Crisis Communication with a step by step guide on managing a crisis online, with case studies from around the world.

**OCTOBER**

The 8th Eco Warrior Awards will be held at The Carnivore on 9th October, 2014. The theme of this year’s gala dinner is “Responsible Tourism is #WhyILoveKenya,” and will be part of the Magical Kenya Travel Expo (MKTE), a high-profile exhibition organized by the Kenya Tourism Board. This year’s MKTE brings together over 100 local exhibitors alongside over 150 buyers from Kenya’s source tourism markets around the world.
Hope for Ecotourism Diversification in Kenya?

Destination branding is a set of marketing activities that support the creation of a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that readily identifies and differentiates a destination. It consistently conveys the expectation of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination.

The first ever national ecotourism workshop was held in Nakuru in 1992, where the need to develop other ‘neglected’ parks was identified by Kenyan tourism stakeholders. Over a decade later the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) embarked on the park branding exercise from 2005, whose objective was to give each protected area a unique identity as well as open up most conservation areas to ecotourism-related activity. Through this, the KWS chose to convey the message that Kenya is a land of diversity.

The branding exercise culminated in the re-launching of tourism offers found within the conservation areas in Kenya. For example Saiwa Swamp is now described as “Secluded tranquility” while the Kakamega Forest is referred to as “Canopy of natural beauty”, taglines that would appeal to nature enthusiasts.

Such descriptions given to conservation areas serve to:
1. Persuade the tourists that their ultimate destinations have identifiable appealing character e.g. the dolphin and the flamingo logos at Kisite-Mpunguti and Lake Nakuru parks, respectively.
2. Identify the principal attraction of the conservation areas – Roan Antelope, Oribi (Ruma), Lava, Springs, Man Eaters (Tsavo West), Kilimanjaro (Amboseli).

3. Announce the tourist experience likely to be obtained in these areas – Sheer Adventure… (Mt. Longonot), A walk on the Wild Side… (Hell’s Gate), Complete Wilderness…. (Meru)

4. Complement the vagueness exhibited in the previous use of names like "Kakamega", "Malindi", "Mombasa", "Nairobi" or "Nakuru" National Park.

For instance, Nairobi Park announces that it is the "The World's only Wildlife Capital…" while Malindi Marine portrays itself as "Africa's oldest Marine Park….

5. Make distinction between similar phenomena – the case of Marine Parks – through different communication messages: Magic Islands and Zebra fish – the case of Malindi Marine, dolphins for Kisite Mpunguti and marine turtles the case of Watamu Marine Park

Branding is therefore not about creating a new product; rather it is presenting the product in the most appealing way for the client to get attracted. The branding exercise is therefore expected to increase visitation levels in the Kenyan parks as well as enhance the magnetic power of poorly visited natural areas in Kenya. For instance, Longonot may attract adventure seekers (Sheer adventure) while symbols such as the "Sitatunga, Roan Antelope, and Impalas" can simply attract part of the tourist market previously ignored.

It also aims at improving the Kenya Wildlife Service’s corporate image by improving staff welfare and enhancing good relations with communities living adjacent to parks. By clustering the parks according to their potential, the previous former categorizations of "A, B, C and D" were replaced with more marketable clusters such as premium parks, wilderness parks, urban safari, mountain climbing, scenic and special interest, accompanied with a review of the pricing structures. This is lauded as a progressive step in diffusing the ecotourism activities towards the less visited destinations through price differentiation.

Dr. Bonface Odiara Kihima is a lecturer at the School of Hospitality and Tourism. His full paper titled “Unlocking the Kenyan Tourism Potential through Park Branding Exercise” was presented at the 2012 National Ecotourism Conference, and published in 2014 in the "Tourism Recreation Research Journal," Vol. 39(1), pp 51-64.
ELEPHANT PEPPER CAMP

Set in a prime yet secluded game viewing area in the heart of the award-winning Mara North Conservancy (MNC), Cheli & Peacock’s Elephant Pepper Camp is one of Kenya’s most authentic and exclusive tented safari camps. Nestled in a grove of Elephant Pepper trees (Warburgia ugandensis), the camp was established by Stefano and Liz Cheli in 1990.

With both resident and transient populations of lion, leopard, cheetah, hyena, giraffe, wildebeest and elephant, just to name a few, as well as over 450 bird species, the vast fertile plains surrounding the camp are dense with game all year round. Elephant Pepper Camp has a resident leopard as well as two resident lion prides, one of which is called the Cheli & Peacock pride comprising of over 25 individuals. The grass around the camp is very high in salts and natural springs form in the wetter times; these attract elephant herds who love to roam around the camp, especially at night.

Elephant Pepper Camp “combines rustic simplicity with unquestionable luxury” (Tatler magazine). Its 10 brand new spacious canvas tents are luxuriously-appointed with original Campaign Furniture, featuring in-suite bathrooms and private verandas with hammocks. Located away from other tents are the two luxurious Honeymoon Tents (also used as Family Tents), both of which have large private verandas offering complete privacy and sweeping panoramic views.

Elephant Pepper Camp is a magical place that takes you back to nature, a return to starlit nights sat around the campfire, an “authentic bush camping experience” (Travel News magazine). Guests can participate in one of the most unique wildlife experiences in the world, enjoying activities that are not allowed in the majority of Kenya’s National Parks and Reserves such as guided bush walks, exhilarating day and night game drives in the best 4x4 vehicles, day trips and picnic lunches to the Mara River, cultural visits to local schools and villages, delicious bush breakfasts and some of Kenya’s most spectacular sundowners. The camp also has a brand new private viewing deck – a little ‘Treetops’ if you like – that is ideal for relaxed game viewing, sundowners and romantic private dinners.

Elephant Pepper Camp brings people back to nature - no traffic, no permanent structures, just the sights and sounds of the African bush!

Elephant Pepper strives to achieve environmental best practices, combining old-fashioned safari camp know-how with cutting edge technology. The camp is one of only 13 Gold Eco-rated camps in Kenya – in recognition of its excellent and exemplary level of environmental responsibility - and in 2013 it won the Eco Warrior Award for ‘Best Tented Camp’. The camp also runs on 100% solar energy which, together with Cheli & Peacock’s Tortilis Camp and Kitich Camp, avoids somewhere in the realms of 100 tonnes of CO2 emissions every year.

Since the very first days of Cheli & Peacock’s mobile safaris in the early 1980s at Elephant Pepper Camp, Liz, Stefano and their staff have worked extensively with the local Maasai community. The creation of the Mara North Conservancy came about as a result of many years of work preserving this vital wilderness and
Stefano is today extremely proud to hold the position of Chairman and Director. Working on the principle of ‘parks beyond parks’ and the knowledge that the majority of wildlife in the Mara ecosystem roam in the increasingly populated areas outside the Masai Mara National Reserve, Stefano and Liz Cheli decided to focus on involving the community in the conservation of the wildlife-rich area bordering the Reserve’s northern section. They worked alongside other like-minded safari operators in the 1980s to found Campfire Conservation Ltd, the first organization to catalyse the formation of a Maasai Landowners Committee, ensuring that the communities received direct, fixed and transparent revenue from tourism and conservation.

The 373,000-acre Maasai Mara National Reserve is only a fraction of the Greater Mara-Serengeti Ecosystem, much of which falls under the ownership of Maasai pastoralists. Some of the ecosystem’s prime game viewing lies within the Mara North Conservancy (MNC). Covering 70,000 acres from Aitong to Musiara, MNC is one of the largest community and private sector owned conservancies in the world, bordering the National Reserve to the north.

After the community land surrounding the Maasai Mara was divided up into individual parcels in the 1980s and 90s, Stefano Cheli was instrumental in setting up the MNC, a non-profit public company. Today the conservancy’s 12 member camps have signed lease contracts with over 800 Maasai landowners and continue to pay them over US$ 1.004 million per year in fixed lease payments, guaranteeing stable revenues, transparent financial management and the preservation of the ancient balance between wildlife and traditional pastoralism.

Long before the inception of MNC, Elephant Pepper Camp played an important role in developing philanthropic initiatives in partnership with the community. The camp employs over 80% of its staff from the surrounding communities and sources as much of its fresh produce as possible from local entrepreneurs.

With a focus on maternal child health (including cervical cancer screening and family planning), nutrition and dentistry, the Cheli & Peacock Community Trust runs a biannual Medical Camp in Aitong, Maasai Mara. The main aim is to provide free expert health care to this marginalised community as a benefit for their support in our conservation efforts, while also building the capacity of the staff clinicians. To date the trust has run 3 successful camps and over 1,200 patients have received free health services provided by Kenyan volunteer specialist consultants, including the top Ob/Gyn consultant in the country.

**FACT FILE**

**Name of destination:** Elephant Pepper Camp  
**Location:** Mara North Conservancy  
**Access:** Daily flights available to Mara North Airstrip by Air Kenya, Safarilink, Fly 540 (from Nairobi), Mombasa Air and Blue Sky (from Mombasa, Ukunda and Amboseli). Private charters from anywhere.  
**Attractions:** Day and night game drives, guided bush walks, children’s activities, bush breakfasts and lunches, sundowners, separate library tent for private dinners, excursions to the Maasai Mara National Reserve (and Mara River), a private game viewing deck.

**Other Useful Info**

**Accommodation:** 10 Luxurious Ensuite canvas tents (8 doubles/twins), 2 ensuite Honeymoon/Family tents, all exquisitely furnished with Traditional Campaign Furniture

**Utilities:** Running water, flush toilets and private verandas

**Power supply:** Solar panels, LED lighting. All tents have 24/7 power but no sockets – charging points are available in the main areas and the Camp Manager’s office. Guests advised to bring converters and universal plug adapters.

**Payment options:** Cash (US$, Euro, Sterling, Ksh)

**Altitude:** 5500-6400 feet

**Rainfall:** approx. 760mm p.a.

**Malaria:** EPC’s high altitude (over 4000 ft.) renders the area malaria-free.

For more information visit the Elephant Pepper Camp website: www.elephantpeppercamp.com

**Contact Details**
Cheli & Peacock Safaris / Elephant Pepper Camp  
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Julia Mut is the Marketing Manager at Cheli & Peacock
Kenya’s Marine Big Five

Ask any tourist to name the Big Five of Kenya and they will no doubt give you the usual list of animals: lion, elephant, buffalo, leopard and rhino. Although visitors to the Kenya coast may be aware of its beautiful beaches, coral reefs, fishes and sea turtles, how many know that 17 different species of dolphins and whales have been identified in Kenya? Put together whales, dolphins, sharks, billfish and sea turtles and we have the alternative, the “Marine Big Five.”

In 2010 the Watamu Marine Association (WMA) started a Dolphin and Whale Conservation, Research and Ecotourism Program, the first of its kind on the north coast. Since then WMA have joined hands with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), the Kenya Marine Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) and Global Vision International (GVI) based in Kisite-Mpunguti National Marine Park and Reserve to form the national Kenya Marine Mammal Network (KMMN). The KMMN was set up in 2011 to collect data from researchers and other marine users including dive operators and fishermen. This helps create more awareness at the national and international levels, and ultimately will help form a national marine mammal conservation plan for Kenya. This information is not only important for conservation but also to attract visitors to the coast who can expect to see the more common species: the humpback whales, spinner dolphins and the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins.

The East African humpback whales are a special sub-population from the South West Indian Ocean. Interestingly Watamu sports fishermen say that they have only been seen in Kenya in the last 15 to 20 years, possibly due to previous threats from hunting and the whaling industry in the South West Indian Ocean before it was banned by international law in 1986. Each year they are first sighted along the coast of East Africa in early June as they make their annual migration north from Antarctica to Kenya.

It is believed that the whales travel to warm tropical shallow coastal waters for protection from predators and to enable them to breed and give birth to their calves, which remain with the mothers for about two years, suckling milk until weaned. They then make the return journey in October, swimming over 4,000km to the cold food-rich seas of Antarctica, their main feeding area. These magnificent marine mammals can reach a length of 15 metres and weigh around 30 tonnes, about six times the weight of an elephant!

Reports of humpback whales in Kenya waters skyrocketed in 2013, with up to 25 whales per day spotted between July and September in the Malindi-Watamu Marine Reserve alone. Assisting the research work of the WMA, local and sports fishermen have been especially helpful in reporting these
sightings, with over 550 whales seen during the peak season by fishing boats. The GVI research team on the south coast reported similar numbers at the Kisite-Mpunguti National Marine Park and Reserve.

Watching these whales in their natural environment leaping out of the water, sometimes in pairs, or larger family groups, is an unforgettable sight. To quote recent visitors to Watamu, the experience is “more exciting than great white shark watching in South Africa”, while “watching these magnificent animals with young calves leaping out of the water is a natural beauty to behold.” They can sometimes even be seen from land in Watamu, as you sip a cold beer at the bar of Ocean Sports or Hemingways hotels overlooking the Marine Park.

Visitors can expect to see bottlenose and occasionally humpback dolphins inshore while spinner dolphins are mainly found in deeper offshore waters. Spinners are known to be the most acrobatic of dolphins with their breathtaking high-spinning leaps, hunting in groups of up to 1,000-strong. Sports fishermen sometimes describe the ocean as being “black with dolphins” when sighted.

WMA and GVI have been recording the dolphin hotspots along the coast: so far 104 individual bottlenose dolphins have been identified in Watamu Marine Reserve, and 138 individuals in the Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Reserve. The dolphins live in family groups of up to 25 individuals.

With resident populations in certain areas, dolphin-watching boat excursions have become a popular tourist activity in Watamu and Kisite over the last 20 years. These trips are organised in Watamu by local community boat and tour operators such as Watamu Marine Excursions and the Watamu Safari Sellers Association. More recently, whale-watching tours during the humpback whale migration season in early June have also become a very popular tourist attraction. This helps WMA market Watamu as a destination of international distinction, combining sustainable tourism, community based ecotourism activities and conservation efforts. In 2012 Hemingways Watamu was the first coast hotel to offer whale watching excursions and in 2013 Watamu sports fishermen also followed suit.

To ensure the safety and welfare of our marine mammals when dolphin- and whale-watching, WMA and GVI have created best practices and guidelines which also enhance the guest’s experience of watching these amazing animals naturally in the wild. The two organizations also provide training to the local community operators to increase their knowledge of dolphins and whales, encourage them to follow good ecotourism practices and develop their tour guiding skills.

Look out for the next issue of NATURALS as we look into sharks, billfish and sea turtles.

Jane Spilsbury Dolphin and Whale Identification Photographer and Management Team at WMA; and Steve Trott is a marine zoologist and Chairman of Watamu Marine Association.
Experience a private and exclusive safari adventure with Basecamp Explorer

Eagle View | Wilderness Camp | Basecamp Masai Mara
GUIDING
Ethics and Conduct

In the first part of this series I gave an overview of the guide’s roles, and his/her briefing procedures to clients before they set off for game drives and walks. In the second part I shall elaborate the etiquette expected from guides and guests during these excursions.

A guide is expected to act a certain way while on safari with paying guests. Each Park/Reserve/Conservancy has a set of rules or a code of conduct in place. As the guide, you are honour-bound under the auspices of your KPSGA certification to follow those guidelines and to clearly explain them to each set of clients that you guide.

These guidelines are put in place for a reason. Failure to follow them could jeopardize the integrity of the ecosystem, the safety of your clients and, ultimately, your career. Hopefully the points below will help to explain why each of the guidelines is important. Many of these points must also be explained to your clients before your safari so that they are less inclined to push you to do something you are not comfortable with.

- Observe Park/Reserve/Conservancy speed limits. Be aware of smaller animals on the road that could get run over if you are speeding, such as snakes, lizards, birds or tortoises.
- Wildlife ALWAYS has the right of way. Do not push wildlife off the road. Explain to your clients when waiting for an animal to cross so they too may understand the importance role that wildlife plays in Kenya.
- Do not discard litter outside the vehicle. Provide a litter bag or bin in the vehicle for your clients’ waste.

Educate your clients about the problems Kenya faces due to carelessly discarded litter. Litter poses health problems to both humans and wildlife. It has no place in a natural wildlife area. As a guide, you are completely responsible for your clients’ actions and attitude towards the areas they visit with you. Similarly, if you are camping, never leave campfires or cooking fires unattended. When leaving the campsite unattended for any length of time, ensure that your fires have been completely extinguished. Unless this is done, stray sparks can be carried by the wind and can start bush fires. Always remember, you are trying to MINIMIZE your impact.

- Do not give sweets and money to children on the roadside. Most rural children do not have any access to dental services and handing out sweets will only cause their teeth to rot.

In high-density tourism areas such Sekenani gate in Masai Mara, many of the children have developed irreversible tooth decay, and a generation is growing up with an increased risk of developing diabetes. Many tourists have not thought this through, and will come to Kenya with their luggage full of sweets to hand out to all the children they come across. Your guests must be made to understand that
what they are doing is very detrimental to the health of the children. Similarly, handing out money at random is not helpful. There is no accountability for this kind of apparent generosity, and it is not a sustainable way to help the local communities. Should your guests be interested in making a donation, please point them in the right direction to deserving, sustainable institutions; there are numerous government agencies, NGOs and charities that would greatly appreciate donations from your more socially-conscious clients.

- Keep a respectable distance from wildlife. All animals, like humans, have a comfort zone and different levels of alertness relative to proximity. Do not invade this comfort zone and alter their behaviour. Wildlife should ideally be aware of your presence, but not alarmed, afraid or aggressive because of it. Your clients are paying lots of money to see African wildlife in their natural habitat and to observe their natural behavior. Do not take this away from them. DO NOT purposely try to alter the animal’s behavior by throwing things or making loud noises. Resting animals NEED their rest and recuperation. Alert hunting animals NEED their full concentration. Do not take this away from them. We all know that clients will sometimes pressure us to get closer to the animals than is safe or healthy. However, as KPSGA guides and custodians of our wildlife, it is important to educate our clients by helping them to understand why harassing wildlife is wrong.

- Do not crowd wildlife. If you see that there are already many other vehicles at a sighting, you can communicate with the other guides to allow you to come in for a good vantage point after 10 minutes. If you see another vehicle waiting patiently to view the sighting, you can wait a few minutes and then back off to let the other vehicle in. If there are too many vehicles at a sighting, often the experience of solitude and peace will be spoiled for your guests and you may choose to continue driving to find another animal elsewhere. Too many vehicles can also distress wildlife and cause mothers to be separated from their young, or predators from their prey. This type of interference with the natural balance is unethical and should be avoided. As above, use this opportunity to educate your guests and explain what is happening so they do not become impatient. They will respect you for it.

Zarek Cockar is the Operations Manager at Encounter Mara Camp.
The Eco-Warrior Awards recognize the efforts, innovations and exceptional achievements that promote sustainable tourism and enhance tourism sustainability that’s directed at environmental conservation linked to communities through mutually beneficial & equitable partnerships.

Over 50 tourism enterprises and stakeholders applied for nomination and appointment of the winners of the 15 awards during the 8th Edition of the awards, held in 2014. Each applicant exhibited unique, exceptional and remarkable achievements worthy of the Awards. However, only a handful of applicants were selected by the panel using the rigorous nomination criteria.

The following is a full list of nominees for the panel to decide on the eventual 15 Eco Warriors to be presented at the gala dinner at The Carnivore:

1. Conservancy of the Year – Private
   a) Borana Conservancy
   b) Ol Pejeta Conservancy

2. Conservancy of the Year – Community
   a) Namunyak Wildlife Conservation Trust
   b) Ngare Ndare Forest Trust
   c) Oldeerkesi Wildlife Conservancy
   d) Selenkay Conservancy
   e) Westgate Conservancy

3. Ecotourism Enterprise of the Year – Lodge
   a) Keekorok Lodge
   b) Severin Sea Lodge
   c) Tawi Lodge

4. Ecotourism Enterprise of the Year – Tent Camp
   a) Encounter Mara Camp
   b) Kiboko Luxury Camp
   c) Kicheche Mara Camp
   d) Kilima Camp
   e) Porini Mara Camp
   f) Sanctuary Olonana

5. Ecotourism Enterprise of the Year – Community Based
   a) Milio Community Tours and Safaris
   b) Ngare Ndare Forest Trust

6. Ecotourism Enterprise of the Year – Tour Operator
   a) Easy Go Safaris
   b) Gamewatchers Safaris Ltd
   c) Kobo Travels
   d) Milio Community Tours and Travel
   e) Selective Safaris/Albatros Travels
   f) The Safari Collection
   g) UNIGLOBE Let's Go Travel

7. Ecotourism Enterprise of the Year – Airline
   a) Aiikenya Express
   b) Safarilink Aviation

8. Eco-Rated Facility of the Year
   a) Basecamp Masai Mara
   b) Encounter Mara Camp
   c) Kicheche Laikipia
   d) Kicheche Mara
   e) Medina Palms
   f) Porini Amboseli Camp
   g) Sanctuary Olonana
   h) Sasaab Lodge
   i) Turtle Bay Beach Club

9. Ecotourism Partnership of the Year – Community-Investor
   a) Kobo Safaris
   b) Medina Palms
   c) Ol Kinyei Conservancy
   d) Sasaab-Westgate Community

10. Ecotourism Guide of the Year
    a) Daniel Kasoo – The Safari Collection
    b) Henry Gathura – Selective Travels
    c) Micah Kaleku – Kicheche Camps
    d) Onesmus Irungu – Rekero Camp
    e) Wilson ole Kasaine – Porini Safari Camps

11. Ecotourism Journalist of the Year
    a) Fleur Ng’weno – Nature Kenya
    b) Nyambega Gisesa – Standard Group

12. Ecotourism Student Innovation Award
    a) Frankline Mogoi – Kenyatta University
    b) Rodgers Kisiang’ani – Dedan Kimathi University
    c) Ummi Njoka – Kenyatta University
    d) Vincent Ontita – Kenyatta University

13. Ecotourism Training Program of the Year
    a) Dedan Kimathi University – Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Management
    b) Maseno University – Dept. of Ecotourism, Hotel & Institution Management

14. Ecotourism Student Host Organization of the Year
    a) LUMO Community Wildlife Sanctuary
    b) Milio Community Tours and Travel
The Ol Pejeta Way: Conservation That Touches Lives

For rural people in Kenya the heavily protected wildlife, which bring tourists indescribable pleasure, are a frequent source of frustration and anguish. Not only are they competitors for living space but also known to cause damage to crops, the lifeline of our agrarian economy. This man versus wildlife situation is the main hurdle to be overcome when inspiring the rural communities to the cause of environmental conservation. The naïve assertion that their involvement should be organic as they have a vested interest in the preservation of their heritage ignores that the communities normally view the wildlife as a competing interest.

East Africa’s largest black rhino sanctuary, Ol Pejeta Conservancy, recognises that it is also impossible to carry out the work of protecting endangered species while excluding the communities as they form the front line in the fight against the poaching menace. We rely on them for information that is vital in stopping poaching before it happens. It is with this view that our approach has always been to marry both the human and wildlife interests so as to work in a mutually beneficial way.

It is in respect of this simple principle that Ol Pejeta has consciously chosen to invest in building long-term community relationships. This commitment forms the core of our operations, so much so it made it to our mission statement;

The Ol Pejeta Conservancy works to conserve wildlife, provide a sanctuary for great apes and to generate income through wildlife tourism and complementary enterprise for reinvestment in conservation and community development.

Key to “the Ol Pejeta way” of community development is the avoidance of hand-outs, a system we believe would not only encourage but also nurture dependency. We aim for long-term empowerment by way of community development.

At the individual level we provide employment. More than 60% of our employees are recruited from the local community. Moreover, as far as possible, supplies for the lodges and hotels within the conservancy are sourced from local farmers and businesses. Our suppliers and employees in turn support entire families which form a network of people with a direct connection to Ol Pejeta. Everyone knows someone who in one way or the other works for Ol Pejeta as such our success is of immediate relevance to them.

When empowering communities we seek to address the social-economic shortcomings of the region. The Kenyan government faces significant challenges in providing basic services in the Laikipia area. This coupled with Laikipia’s semi-arid climate means that water shortage and food insecurity are commonplace. Ol Pejeta’s neighbouring communities constantly contend with the extremes of poverty. The conservancy’s dedicated community development department works to identify and address their needs. Guided by regular socio-economic surveys we are engaged...
in improving the quality of life of our neighbouring community in the long term.

To address persistent famine and drought Ol Pejeta runs an agricultural project that distributes 2,300-litre tanks for capturing water during the short-lived rainy season. These tanks also regularly maintain existing dams and boreholes. The conservancy also employs two agricultural extension officers, who teach farmers “conservation agriculture” using both dry-land farming methods and drip irrigation. This enhances their food security as they are no longer reliant on traditional rain-fed agriculture.

The inadequate provision of health care in the region is a result of the dual challenges of access to medical facilities and the capacity of existing facilities. To address this, Ol Pejeta develops and maintains the roads in the area. Also, medical facilities in the region such as dispensaries and hospitals have been refurbished and equipped. In some cases this has meant purchasing equipment such as ambulances and beds while in other instances such as that of Withare Dispensary it has meant building the hospital from scratch.

However we remain acutely aware of the temporal nature of these measures. It is in education that a more permanent solution lies. In Laikipia, many talented students are often excluded from secondary school because they are unable to pay the required school-fees. Even when they can afford it the schools often lack the necessary equipment and facilities.

To tackle these problems, Ol Pejeta started a bursary fund which has to date benefitted over 1,000 students. The first group of these students is just now joining university; a fete previously thought unachievable. These university admissions have gone a long way in boosting morale among the younger students because for them the glass ceiling has been shattered. The conservancy has also, through donor support, provided crucial support and help to improve the learning environment in the neighbouring schools. Since 2005, 22 schools in Laikipia have received new classrooms, school uniforms, laboratories, libraries, water tanks, biogas stations and even dairy cows. In last year’s national exams one of the schools, Thome Boys Secondary School, emerged tops in the country.

To ensure that donor funding is channelled to the designated projects we strictly adhere to the principle of sustainability. Ol Pejeta generates all funds required to run the organisation rather than relying on donor funding to cover their running costs. This allows a measure of stability and continuity for the work we do.

Over the last five years Ol Pejeta has disbursed more than five million dollars on our community projects. Our success can be proved by the fact that the Ol Pejeta Conservancy model is increasingly recognized and used by donors as a means to achieve effective community development and poverty alleviation. However the truest proof that our approach is yielding fruit for conservation lies in the community. Lepapa Yasoi, a form 2 student at Endana Secondary School, when tasked to explain why his community no longer killed predators responded, “Everyone in my village knows that Ol Pejeta pays my school fees. Ol Pejeta conserves the wildlife which tourists pay to see and so it is a benefit to us to have the wildlife.”

LWF has taken a holistic approach to conservation, which is reflected in the coverage of the programmes and the way it works. Conservation in the LWF is broad based, and covers essential natural resources and clearly links the well being of people to the health of the natural environment. People are as much a part of nature as other forms of life, and their lives and livelihoods depend on the natural environment being healthy; this is something many people forget or possibly don’t know!

Success in conservation depends on how ready people are to do conservation; conservation cannot be left to conservation organisations or “conservationists”. The task at hand is to turn everyone into a conservationist in the broadest sense, because conservation is far more than about wildlife. Even if one is concerned about wildlife, as we are in the LWF, we realise that conservation success for wildlife also comes down to a healthy functioning natural environment, which people need as well. However, it is clear that people’s readiness to do conservation differs, and their readiness (or preparedness) is determined by a number of things, such as understanding, knowledge, motivation, organisation, quality of governance, leadership and so on. Conservation interventions, or the things people do to enhance or increase other forms of life and natural processes that support life, differ in complexity, with the work needed for us to succeed probably being significantly more complex (socially and behaviourally) than currently being attempted.

The Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF), which is the member based environmental conservation organisation belonging to and serving the people of Laikipia, takes a holistic approach to conservation.

LWF supports Water Resource User Associations on 24 rivers, Community Forest Associations in 10 forests, and community conservancies and grazing management committees in 13 pastoralist group ranches. LWF provides extension services and market links for 21 producer groups working with honey and indigenous plants (fair trade and organic certified), and are one of eight global sites helping to develop sustainable wild harvesting protocols for selected indigenous plant species.

The secret to Laikipia being a modern-day wildlife conservation success, is the people and their attitude, their willingness to experiment and take risks, challenge conventional wisdom, break down barriers, and to work together and lend support across the different boundaries in this physically and ethnically diverse landscape.

For more information visit www.laikipia.org or www.laikipiatourism.com
Join the ecotourism Spirit

How do I join Ecotourism Kenya?
To apply, visit the EK website, click on the Get Involved tab and download the appropriate application form. Fill in the form and either scan & send to membership@ecotourismkenya.org, or drop it off at the Ecotourism Kenya offices.

What obligation do members of Ecotourism Kenya have?
All members of Ecotourism Kenya have a responsibility to protect and enhance the natural and cultural environment in the areas where they operate. Joining Ecotourism Kenya implies that one has undertaken to: be proactive and innovative in environmental programmes; to minimize waste and pollution of natural resources; to safely dispose of all wastes generated without injury to the environment; to participate in the management of the natural areas where one operates; to comply with relevant environmental legislation; to educate visitors about the natural areas and local cultures; to observe the Kenya Safari Code and the Coast Code; to actively participate in programs developed to promote sustainable tourism, including voluntary certification; to have clear environmental goals and develop programs to achieve these goals, and to develop effective linkages with local communities.

Membership
Membership is open to all individuals, groups and organizations that promote sustainable tourism in Kenya. These include students, professionals, academic institutions, tourism and conservation organizations, government departments, tour operators, travel agents, hoteliers, community-based tourism organizations, among others.
There are three categories of membership:
• Corporate - Ksh.10,000 a year (January to December)
• Community Based Organizations (CBOs) - Ksh.1,000 a year
• Individuals Professionals – Ksh.2,500 a year
• Students – Ksh. 1,000 a year

Ecotourism Kenya Membership Benefits
Joining Ecotourism Kenya provides you with the following opportunities:
• EK membership certificate (corporates and CBOs) or card (individuals)
• Use of the EK emblem in adverts and publications
• Free access to teaching and training resources
• Listing on the EK website (corporates and CBOs)
• Monthly e-newsletters containing the latest news in tourism, and special offers for members. The biannual Naturals Magazine and the biennial EK Guide.
• Full voting rights at the AGM
• Discounted rates at EK events such as the Annual Ecotourism Conference, and the Eco Warriors gala dinner
• Networking opportunities
• Attachment and internship opportunities

Ecotourism has been hailed as a tool for economic development and environmental protection through funding conservation and scientific research, protecting fragile and pristine ecosystems, benefiting rural communities, promoting development in poor countries, enhancing ecological and cultural diversity, instilling environmental awareness and a social conscience in the travel industry.
Welcome Our New Corporate Members

Ecotourism Kenya is proud to welcome the following organizations. We are proud to be associated with you.

- 67 Airport Hotel
- Enduata Sidai Christian Tourism & Conservation
- Global Association of Homestay Tourism operators (GAHTO)
- Intercultural African Homestays
- Kendirita Tours & Travel Ltd
- Kenya Association of Women in Tourism
- La Crane Homestays
- Mililo Community Tours & Safaris Ltd
- Somak Travel Limited
- Technical University of Kenya
- Twiga Car Hire & Tours Ltd
- Leisure and Travel Guides East Africa Ltd
- Sustainable Travel & Tourism Agenda

* Members and Eco-Rated Facilities as at September 2014
Advertising rates 2015

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<th>Size</th>
<th>Placement</th>
<th>Cost in KShs.</th>
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To place an advert in the upcoming issue, send your artwork in full color on a CD saved as Tiff, EPS or JPEG with a minimum resolution of 300dpi and accompanied by an actual size color proof in order to maintain color quality standards. If your artwork is not supplied with the color proof, EK will not be held responsible for color variation of any kind.

For Booking and artwork submission:
Call 0726 366 080 or 020 257 4059
Or email info@ecotourismkenya.org

About EK Publications

**Green Directory:** This is a publication that showcases producers or suppliers of green products or services. This includes recycled or 100% natural materials, people or facilities undertaking environmental impact assessments and audits or consultancy services for tourism and environmental related projects. Charges per listing are Ksh 250.

**Ecotourism Kenya coast guide and ecotourism Kenya guide:** The guide profiles EK members, eco-rated tourism accommodation facilities and community based organisations. EBook version can be accessed at the EK’s website. EK members are entitled to a free basic listing in the guide.

**EK Naturals magazine:** This is a quarterly publication which is the mouthpiece on issues affecting the tourism industry in areas relating to ecotourism and sustainable tourism.

**Ecotourism stickers:** EK produces stickers bearing messages on responsible tourism and the community. These can be obtained from EK offices in upper hill at no cost for members and other interested parties.

**EK website:** The website is EK’s face to the world. It outlines all EK programs and activities as well as all its members and eco rated facilities. Visit www.ecotourismkenya.org for more details.
African Conference on Sustainable Tourism

The African Conference on Sustainable Tourism (ACoST) will be held at Strathmore University from 23rd to 25th October 2014. The conference, whose theme is ‘Sustainability in Tourism: Making Tourism Count to Communities, Ecosystems and Businesses’, is a collaboration between Strathmore and the African Fund for Endangered Wildlife (AFEW)-Kenya that brings together academia, trade professionals, students and other industry experts. EK will be exhibiting at the conference, for more information visit the ACoST page on the Strathmore University website.

Waldorf Eco Fair

The 2014 Waldorf Ecofair will be held on the 1st and 2nd November at the Waldorf School in Karen, Nairobi. The aim of this year’s fair is to raise money for the Waldorf School while promoting a healthy lifestyle for body and mind. For more updates visit the Waldorf Ecofair Facebook page; visit EK at our stand during the Ecofair.

Leadership and Mentorship Program – January to April 2015 intake

Under the Leadership and Mentorship Program (LMP), Ecotourism Kenya offers students internship opportunities that complement the students’ learning experiences and offers mentorship on careers aimed at developing professionals. Under this program the students gain invaluable experience at host institutions derived from EK’s membership, and also gain academic credits worthy enough to fulfill course requirements. Application for the January 2015 intake is ongoing. The deadline for application is 30th November, 2014. For more details visit the Leadership and Program section of the EK website, email mentorship@ecotourismkenya.org or call 020 257 4059 or 0726 366 080.

2015 Ecotourism Partnerships and Investment Symposium

Ecotourism Kenya is planning an Ecotourism Partnership and Investment Symposium which will be held in March 2015 in Nairobi; this will be followed by the EK Annual General Meeting, dates will be confirmed and communicated to members and other stakeholders. Branded under the theme ‘Forging Ecotourism Investment in Communities,’ this interactive forum invites all interested parties and stakeholders including: tourism investment firms, private and community conservancies, tour operators, hotels, camp operators, community development agencies, community-based tourism enterprises, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, marketing and consultancy firms, the media among others. The aim of the forum is to promote ecotourism standards through the development of partnerships and investment opportunities in Kenya and beyond. The activities for the forum will range from workshops and exhibitions, presentations, business meetings and plenary sessions. Further information will be provided later. For more details contact EK via email at info@ecotourismkenya.org or call 0726 366 080 or 020 257 4059.
EXPLORE OUR BEAUTIFUL KENYA

LAKE NAKURU LODGE

Facebook: LakeNakuruLodge Twitter: LakeNakuruLodge

www.lakenakurulodge.com

The Lake Nakuru Lodge is situated in a Wonderland which lies in the heart of Kenya’s most densely animal populated wetland National Parks (Ramsar Site), only two hours leisurely drive on First class roads from Nairobi, through some of the most exciting scenery to be seen anywhere in Africa.

Situated in the south eastern ecological niche of the park is the Lake Nakuru Lodge, an oasis of comfort and excellent services with commanding views of the lesser flamingo interspersed with the Greater flamingo for which Lake Nakuru is justly famous. It is another world for the visitors, where one easily forgets the hustle and bustle of the city. The lodge blends in well with the surroundings and the animals often browse peacefully close to the lodge and environs, much to the fascination of the visitors.

"For the Visitors of Lake Nakuru Lodge, this is Kenya at its very best and the memories will linger for a lifetime ...

Mr. Joseph Muya
Lake Nakuru Lodge

LAKE NAIVASHA CRESCENT CAMP

Facebook: CrescentCamp

www.crescentcamp.com

Our luxury camp is constructed using canvas, all tents have en-suite bathrooms with hot and cold running water with flushing toilets. The tents have an ambiance and style decorated to give those traditional tent look with all the comforts of a home.

Lake Naivasha Crescent Camp is located on the shores of Lake Naivasha at the heart of the Kenyan Rift Valley, only 90 minutes drive from Nairobi.

The camp is constructed using canvas and has a capacity of 20 luxury tents. The tents are well furnished, have wooden floors and adequate space generously created to allow free movement inside and outside at the guests’ comfort.

We are proud of our cuisine which gives an appetite even to those on diet. We give this credit to our highly trained personnel who offer friendly service with a natural smile.

"To drive just a little bit more than one hour from Nairobi and to experience this magical side of Kenya’s Wildlife away from the hectic capital, is definitely one of the most amazing places I visited in Africa ...

Mr. Daniel Maina
Entrepreneur in Nairobi
AWF congratulates all the 2014 Eco-Warrior Award winners!


Across Africa, African Wildlife Foundation has worked with communities to establish community-owned lodges that conserve lands, protect wildlife and ultimately better people’s lives. Learn more at awf.org/conservationtourism

AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION®

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+254 20 2765000 | africanwildlife@awf.org | awf.org