Sustainable tourism practices in Kenya
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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
Since our inception, Ecotourism Kenya seeks to promote Kenya as a responsible and sustainable tourism destination. Tourism is a pillar of economic growth in Kenya and to ensure that the tourism industry in Kenya gains from it, Ecotourism Kenya encourages all tourism establishments to incorporate responsible tourism practices in their businesses. These are the practices that benefit the enterprise, the environment, and the local community.

Linking tourism, communities, and conservation is our mantra and we continue to do this through the Eco-rating scheme. During the last three months, three new Gold facilities have been certified, which is a sign that facilities are incorporating best practices in their facilities. Through KATO with support from CBI Netherlands, we are pursuing a certification scheme for tour operators in partnership with Travellife and Tourism Regulatory Authority. Such a partnership will strive to grow a generation of tour operators who incorporate best practices in their day to day business.

In this 6th edition of the Naturals Magazine, we focus on sustainable tourism practices in Kenya. The various articles feature a variety of best practices, such as perspectives from adventure tourism, which we see as an important aspect when it comes to tourism sustainability. We have taken the onus of showcasing Olarro Lodge - one of the newly Gold eco-rated facilities, on their best practices in responsible tourism. There are many more articles in this edition for one to indulge in and learn one or two things on what various green companies are doing to promote responsible tourism.

On behalf of the Ecotourism team, we hope you will enjoy this edition and include best practices in your various tourism endeavors. As we keep saying here at Ecotourism Kenya, "It is smart to be responsible." Thanks for your continuous support.

Grace Nderitu,
CEO, Ecotourism Kenya
According to The International Ecotourism Society, Ecotourism is now defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education” (TIES, 2015). Education is meant to be inclusive of both staff and guests.

About Ecotourism Kenya

As a membership organization, Ecotourism Kenya brings together individuals, community-based organizations (CBOs) and tourism businesses in a forum to learn about ecotourism standards, and how to incorporate these standards 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:

- Respect for the environment
- Respect for local people and their cultures
- Equitable sharing of responsibilities and benefits

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 ecotourism 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
REPLICABLE BEST PRACTICES at Olarro Lodge

Insightful ideas and thoughts have enabled to change the world. The charm of the tourism industry is that entrepreneurs are able to find something they love and turn it into a business. Despite this, it still remains a challenge to ensure consistency and quality in the development and delivery of these products and services in an industry that is very much dependant on very fragile natural resources. Globally, tourism facilities are recognizing the need to adopt quality standards to guide their businesses in implementing best practice programs. Many of these provide efficient guidelines for promoting responsible tourism. Olarro Lodge, is an award-winning facility recently voted as one of the ‘World’s Most Romantic Hotels’ and a ‘Top 50 New Hotel’ by Travel Leisure. In January 2015, it was awarded the coveted Gold Eco-rating Certification by Ecotourism Kenya for its outstanding and replicable best practices in business operations, conservation, local culture and community empowerment.
Olarro lodge is unique, artistically styled to blend with the natural surroundings within the Olarro Conservancy located approximately fifty-six kilometres from Narok town off the Narok-Maasai Mararoad and five kilometres to the Maasai Mara National Reserve. Founded on the principles of conservation, sustainability and community empowerment; a partnership with one hundred and fifty local Maasai land owners was formed to ensure that the land is not only managed efficiently but is a source of income for the local landowners. The Olarro Conservancy is a 7,500 acre piece of land that is part of the larger Maji Moto and Siana Group Ranches that has a 15-year lease with the land owners. The conservancy provides a critical wildlife dispersal corridor and plays a significant role in the greater Loita, Masai Mara and Serengeti ecosystem.

In regards to energy conservation, the lodge has employed the use of alternatives sources of energy specifically wind and solar, a move that has greatly reduced the facility’s environmental impacts. A total of 150 solar PV panels are fitted and fixed with power inverter systems. Two wind turbines with a power output of 1.5kW were installed to complement the energy for lighting, running the laundry machines, refrigerators and operating swimming pool filters, within the premises. Seventeen solar water heaters with a capacity of 600 litres each are installed for water heating. Heavy machinery is operated through a 22 KwAback-up generator whose fuel uptake is closely monitored to regulate consumption. The energy is metered at all the consumption points with the levels closely monitored and analysed on a bed occupancy. Energy saving techniques in place include: fixing energy saving bulbs and Light Emitting Diodes (LED) throughout the premises, briefing visitors upon arrival and sensitizing staff on the need to conserve energy by switching off unnecessary lights, and use of visual sensitization signage such as ‘turn off lights’ are fixed in strategic areas.

The main source of water for the facility is from a spring located within the conservancy. The water is solar pumped and stored in 136,000 litres reservoirs situated on a high altitude which allows water to flow to the premises via gravity force. Rainwater harvesting technology, serving three underground reservoirs of 100,000 litres, has been applied on the iron roofed structures to supplement the spring water. The water is metered at the source and sub-metering done at the main consumption points such as laundry and staff quarters. Daily meter readings are done to monitor usage and water data analysed on a bed occupancy. Regular maintenance and inspection schedules of the plumbing system is conducted to rectify any possible leakages. A pressure gauge has been installed in the water system to monitor water usage and detect any leakages. Water saving techniques applied includes: staff sensitization during departmental meetings, guest arrival briefings where they are also encouraged and sensitized through popular room cards ‘towel talks’ to re-use their towels. Other water efficient technologies employed include: dual flush toilet cisterns, low shower filter heads, and tap flow reducers (faucets) have been used to enhance water conservation. Use of visual watersaving sensitization signage is fixed within the main water user points, kitchen, staff quarters and laundry.

Olarro lodge has further employed the use of a Bio-box wastewater treatment system that manages both its grey and black effluent. The system operates in two stages; primary separation, digestion of organics and aerobic filtration. Effluent from the guest and staff kitchen flows through grease traps to remove grease and fats before draining into the Bio-box reservoirs for chlorination. Later, the treated water flows via gravity and is used for irrigating the lawns within the premises. The Bio-box system is an efficient method which should be employed by more tourist facilities as an efficient way of turning waste water into a useful resource.

As tourism expands, it’s mandatory for facilities to implement sustainability measures into their business not only to ensure the conservation of its resources but also to cut-down on costs in the long run. The Olarro Conservancy is an excellent case study replicating professional management of the natural land resources, promotion of private and exclusive tourism, and a source of income for the local land owners.
Probably one of the first tourism safari companies registered in Kenya was the Cottars Safari Service registered in 1919. The Cottars were renowned hunters throughout their history but also got very involved in filming, photographic safaris, and guiding famous personalities such as King George VI and the Queen Mother, Woolworth Donahugh, Martin and Osa Johnson of ‘I married adventure’ fame, and Paul Hoeffler who made the first color film in Africa dubbed ‘Africa speaks’.

It was during their photographic safaris in Kenya back in 1964 that they started their first tented camp: Cottars Mara Camp and Cottars Bush tops, now known as Siana Springs and Mara Bush-tops in Siana Group Ranch. Cottars 1920’s Mara safari camp was established in 1998 in Olderkesi Group Ranch adjacent to the Maasai Mara National Reserve (MMNR) in 1998. The camp was set up in line with the Cottars’ families belief that, putting lodges and camps outside the protected areas to help create buffer zones for wildlife; while at the same time avoid overcongestion of precious natural resources by setting up tourism developments within reserves.

Indeed, it is clear in the law that protected areas of Kenya including the Maasai Mara National Reserve were gazetted specifically for the protection of biodiversity and wildlife within their boundaries. However, this has not turn become for the enrichment of private sector investors which has unfortunately not been understood or respected by other camp operators and enforced by MMNR management despite the increase of many development moratoriums over the years.

The congestion of accommodation facilities has caused a dreadful brand image for the Mara and actual loss of wildlife within the reserve. Research indicates that most species have declined in numbers by between 60 to 90 per cent over the last 30 years. Given the terrible state of tourism from the cycle of election clashes, terrorism, Ebola scare, and further compounded by disabling government policies on tourism and taxation; Kenya has seen a steady erosion of its share on the African tourism market, and has projected drop in occupancy to 60 percent compared with 2014 as indicated by researchers.
What is the Cottar’s strategy for survival in this difficult tourism environment?

1. Marketing Tourism for Conservation: Cottar’s have aligned their marketing to promote the notion that visiting any of the Cottar’s accommodation facilities or any other lodge outside a national protected area that is paying lease fees for wildlife conservancy is beneficial for conservation. The guest will be contributing to securing more land for wildlife rather than adding to the problem of congested parks and reserves and inequitable distribution of revenue with the local communities.

2. Local and International Accreditation: It is part of Cottar’s commitment to meet every possible Eco-criterion in the country and to have the most number of accredited guides. They have managed to achieve the Global Environmental Retreat (GER) status; where Cottar’s is one of only twelve facilities in the world to have done so, as well as attained a Gold Level Certification from Ecotourism Kenya; and three of their guides have achieved Gold Level qualification from the Kenya Professional Safari Guides Association out of a pool of sixteen Gold certified guides in the entire country.

3. Sustained Community Service: Cottar’s has set up a trust, the Cottar’s Wildlife Conservation Trust that seeks to source for revenues and donations for social welfare projects including schools construction, bursaries, ambulances, and medical clinics. They also took part in the review of National Wildlife Policy and are also members of the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA) and the Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association (MMWCA).

Great thoughts speak only to the thoughtful mind, but great actions speak to all mankind. At the end of the day, the future of Kenya’s wildlife and tourism industries will depend entirely on conservation of the natural resources, equitable distribution of resources for the landowners to be a primary and reliable source of livelihood income. As you make plans on booking your next safari, only choose properties that actually lease land on private or communal wildlife conservancies and not inside National parks and reserves.
12th LMP Induction Training
Ecotourism Kenya received and trained twenty-three (23) students during the 12th intake of the Leadership and Mentorship program which was held on 20th and 21st January 2015 at the Ecotourism Kenya offices.
Following training, the students were posted to host organizations for industrial attachment from January to April at different tourism establishments within Kenya including:
• Lake Nakuru Lodge
• Salaton Safaris
• Nature Kenya
• Baobab sea lodge
• Statunga Ecotours
• Lumo Wildlife Sanctuary
• Exclusive Eco-Travels
• African Beads Safaris
• Mwanakafiri Funju
• Lumo Wildlife Sanctuary
• Milio Eco-Tours
• Ecotourism Kenya
• Kilimo Talii/ KENAFF-Kenya National Farmers Federation

The students were drawn from the following training institutions:
• Graffins College
• Gretsia University
• Kenya Methodist University
• Kenyatta University
• Maasai Mara University
• Moi University
• Mt. Kenya University
• University of Nairobi

2014 Eco Warrior Awards
The 2014 Eco warrior awards were held on 9th October 2014 at the Carnivore Grounds. The awards Gala was graced by Hon Phyllis Kandie Cabinet Secretary EAC Affairs, Commerce and Tourism. The gala dinner was attended by over 500 participants including high profiled delegates who were part of the annual Magical Kenya Travel Expo (MKTE). The gala was supported by Kenya Tourism Board (KTB), Tourism Fund(TF), Africa Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Fairtrade East Africa, The Carnivore Nairobi, Go Places, Chairmania, Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO), Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA), Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF), Kenya Wildlife Trust (KWT), Sun Africa Hotels, AFEW- Giraffe Centre; African Conservation Centre (ACC) and Mahali Mzuri. The Fourteen (14) winners were crowned for their remarkable and outstanding best practices in promoting ecotourism and sustainable tourism in Kenya.
**February**

**Kenyatta University Career Week**
Ecotourism Kenya took part in Kenyatta University Career week held on 5th and 6th February 2015 at Kenyatta University. The aim of the career week is to raise awareness to the students about the job market and enlighten them about the career choice. Ecotourism Kenya enrolled a number of students from the Exhibition for the May LMP Intake.

**Eco-Talk: Sustainable Product Development and Marketing**
Ecotourism Kenya’s February Eco talk on ‘Sustainable Product Development and Marketing’ was presented by Mr. Fred Okeyo the Product Manager at Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) on 19th February 2015. Mr. Okeyo highlighted on the need to embrace sustainability in business operations; the triple bottom line concept; he also gave examples on sustainable practices; and the role and place of marketing. This provided a better understanding for the participants on the importance of developing tourism Products which are not only good for the market but also sustainable for the future generations. The participants were drawn from EK and Nature Kenya’s membership as well as stakeholders from the industry.

**March**

**The Great Zebra and Giraffe Count**
Ecotourism Kenya participated in The Great Zebra and Giraffe Count at the Nairobi National Park on 1st March 2015. The Great Zebra and Giraffe Count was aimed at creating a platform that will allow the public to participate in a photographic census in order to estimate the population sizes of zebras and giraffes in Nairobi National Park. This was the first census of its kind to be conducted within Kenya’s parks, and marks the switch to the digital collection of scientific data. The EK team took part in this noble cause courtesy of Gamewatchers Safaris, who facilitated the transportation logistics.

**World Wildlife Day Celebrations**
Ecotourism Kenya took part in the World Wildlife Day Celebration at Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) headquarters on 3rd March 2015. The day was marked by using the #hashtag #tourismcrimeisserious. The celebration was officiated by H.E the President, Uhuru Kenyatta and the first Lady, Margaret Kenyatta. H.E President Uhuru Kenyatta gave a boost to the international fight against poaching by setting fire to more than 15 tonnes of elephant ivory tusks during the ceremony at the Nairobi National Park.

**Africa Travel Show**
The Africa Travel Show which was the first event of its kind in Kenya. The event was held from 4th to 8th March 2015 at Oshwal Centre Nairobi. With over 200 stakeholders who cut across the tourism industry exhibited at the event, including: tour operators, travel agents, hotels and resorts to airlines. The Africa Travel Show is now expected to be an annual event that seeks to promote a modern, dynamic and positive image of Kenya and present a promising platform for new business in the travel and tourism trade.

**Strathmore University Career Day**
Ecotourism Kenya participated in Strathmore University’s 11th Annual Career Fair on 13th February 2015. The fair saw participants drawn from different organizations from the following sectors: financial services, hospitality, tourism, IT, insurance, education and manufacturing industries. The fair was a great opportunity for students to know more about the employment opportunities available in the job market and further network with employers and professionals. This will help the students create a pool of contacts from which to draw leads, referrals, ideas, and information for job search and career progress.

**EcoTourism Meetings**
In the quest to strengthen partnerships with other stakeholders; Ecotourism Kenya has held meetings with various partners on different program areas that EK is seeking to improve and further grow a responsible tourism Industry.

Some of the meetings include: The review of the Eco-warrior Awards through a consultant in order to make the awards more competitive. A meeting with the International Trade Centre (ITC) was held to revise the Ecorating Scheme and upgrade to the ITC standards map.

Other meetings held with various stakeholders include: National Environmental Management Authority, Kenya Green Building Society, Africa Business Travel Association, Africa Wildlife Forum, Africa Wildlife Trust, Kenya Tourism Federation, National Accreditation Service and other partners.
Sustainability for the ADVENTURE TRAVELER
A Tour Operators Perspective

Over the recent months, the tourism industry has faced tough times. The industry has had its biggest downfall, that of perceived insecurity; yet it has stood the test of time. If music is anything to go by then - I was here - would be the hallmark of this industry. Hard times call for tough measures; it must be the cheapest. However, they also want the best. The beauty of such groups is that they are only looking to make new friends and bond with existing ones. In their minds, camping out of town, interacting over a campfire while devouring tantalizing nyama chama is the ideal safari.

Recognizing the trends of the current domestic traveler, we need to ask ourselves if their activities promote the sustainability of our tourism product. There are the primary reasons for putting effort into sustainability: firstly, it preserves our environment for future generations; secondly, it adds that extra dimension to the guest's interest and satisfaction, which in turn makes Kenya a more attractive industry; and thirdly, it saves costs and improves profitability.

Adventure travelers are categorized as those travelers who engage in hard or soft adventure sports as the main activity of their domestic or international tour. Adventure travel is an important tourism product, if well placed and marketed by a tourism enterprise, it has the potential to generate high returns. Although a high percent of adventure tourists prioritize their high-adrenaline activities in destination while non-adventurers choose friends and family as their top priority.

Adventure travelers are categorized as those travelers who engage in hard or soft adventure sports as the main activity of their domestic or international tour. Kite surfing, white water rafting and paragliding are considered hard adventure, while canoeing and hiking are a little softer. In this world, taking part in a local festival and walking tours is equal to sitting on the couch to watch a football match or movie.

The average adventure traveler is a single male around twenty-five to thirty-five years old with a four-year degree and an average income. Majorities are men and mostly single or never married. Women tend to only join if they are that brave or are dating one of them in the group.

Adventure and non-adventure travelers both agree that climate and natural beauty are two of the most important factors when choosing a destination. The difference in their travel styles lies in their third consideration: adventure tourists prioritize their high-adrenaline activities in destination while non-adventurers choose friends and family as their top priority.

Adventure tourism is an important tourism product, if well placed and marketed by a tourism enterprise, it has the potential to generate high returns. Although a high percent of adventure tourists handle activities on their own; they will choose the Internet over friends, travel agents, and travel programs as their primary source of information. They could be random plans for the weekend or something that has been planned for months to tick off their bucket list.

Non-adventure travelers are known to use professional services.

With that I have demystified where the market is most potential. However, to convince this kind of traveler you as a tour operator should recognize that price is key and also the activities that they engage in must have a very low impact on the environment.
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For many years, Nairobi city tours have always been a drive-by affair through the city where majority of the safari guides point out at various buildings that are iconic in Nairobi. With changing times and congestion within the city, it has dawned on many guides that these drive by tours are not sustainable and enriching to guests. In light of this, an elaborate walking tour through the streets of Nairobi was formulated.

The tour begins at the Nairobi Gallery ‘Point Zero’ - the exact point Sir Lionel Galton Fenzichose as his beginning spot when he pioneered Kenyan Roads. This spot is located opposite the General Post Office near the Nairobi Gallery is the reference point to present road distances in reference to Nairobi globally. The Nairobi Gallery is a gazetted monument that is managed by the National Museums of Kenya which is currently hosting the Murumbi African Heritage Collection that comprises of rare and precious works of art and a contemporary art exhibition for African artists. The building is 102 years old.

The development of the city of Nairobi is impressive. It began as a swamp where the railway engineers saw it as a perfect spot to set up a railway station in 1899 as the railway head reached mile 327 from Mombasa on its way to Port Florence now known as Kisumu. The Nairobi Heritage Walking Tour is an interactive and informative tour. Anyone who chooses to go for the tour gets to understand the full history of Nairobi as they walk through the streets of Nairobi and pass by monuments – be it open spaces, buildings or sculptures. Each city guide narrates the significance of each street name, the people that shaped the present day Nairobi, the struggles, and the culture of Nairobi all in an easy and relaxed walk through Nairobi city.

Value Added Heritage Walking Tours within Nairobi Central Business District

The National Museums of Kenya started developing the concept of Heritage Walking Tours since 2011 and actualized the concept by partnering with The GoDown Arts Centre and other stakeholders mid-2013. The implementation involved training City Guides who were taken through a thorough course on the history of the green city in the sun; Nairobi. The same guides effected the NAI NI WHO? festival held between June 2013 and August 2013 where over five hundred and twenty-five people participated in the three-month Nairobi City Walking Tour Festival. The festival involved sensitizing Nairobi residents to get to know their city and own it. The festival has now become an annual event.

Following the festival, the Heritage Walking Tours initiative has been ongoing daily. The Nairobi Heritage Walking Tour is an interactive and informative tour. Anyone who chooses to go for the tour gets to understand the full history of Nairobi as they walk through the streets of Nairobi and pass by monuments – be it open spaces, buildings or sculptures. Each city guide narrates the significance of each street name, the people that shaped the present day Nairobi, the struggles, and the culture of Nairobi all in an easy and relaxed walk through Nairobi city.
Tour Guide Information:

Felix Kipkoech Tiony is a Nairobi City Guide and you can contact him through The Nairobi Gallery.

Whether you are a tour operator, hotelier, student or generally interested in going for a City Tour, you can take part in any of the four tours outlined below:

**Tour 1:** Kenyatta Avenue Walking Tour – 90 Minutes: The tour begins from The Nairobi Gallery at anytime of the day. The tour takes ninety minutes walking through Kenyatta Avenue, Kimathi Street, Biashara Street, Muindi Mbingu Street and Banda Street. This tour showcases the input of the British and Europeans towards the development of the city and an introduction to the Asian influence.

**Tour 2:** River Road Walking Tour – 90 Minutes: The walking tour commences at the August 7th Memorial Park via Haile Selassie, tracing the origin of Nairobi City and the immense contribution of the Asian community to the development. The tour goes through Racecourse Road, Uyoma Street, Ronald Ngala Street, Tom Mboya and ends at Moi Avenue.

**Tour 3:** City Square Walking Tour – 90 Minutes: The walking tour starts from the Nairobi Gallery through Posta Road, Kaunda Street, Standard Street, Kimathi Street, Mama Ngina Street, Moi Avenue, City Hall Way, Taifa Road, Harambee Avenue and culminating at the rooftop of the Kenyatta International Convention Centre.

**Tour 4:** Harry Thuku Road Tour – 2 Hours: The walk begins from the Nairobi National Museum with a tour of the museum, this is later followed by walking down the Museum Hill through Harry Thuku Road. Major attractions include: Nairobi National Museum, Snake Park, Botanical Gardens, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, The Norfolk Hotel, Kenya National Theatre, Nairobi University, Jewish Synagogue, French Cultural Centre, Maendeleo ya Wanaume, Utalii House, Central Park, Jeevanjee Gardens, and the Stock Exchange at the Sarova Stanley marks end of the tour.

Sunday Morning is the most appropriate time to participate in the above tours as the city is not busy and few people are present. Next time you are free on Saturday or Sunday morning walk around the Central Business District and get to know your city.

Felix Kipkoech Tiony is a Nairobi City Guide and you can contact him through The Nairobi Gallery.
A perennial issue ingrained within the Maasai and Samburu culture is the marginalization of women, circumcision and early marriage; this often deprives girls of education opportunities as opposed to their male peers. Girls and women who are educated are far more likely to marry later, and have smaller and healthier families. Therefore we recognize that investing in a girl’s education is one of the most effective ways of reducing poverty.

Collaborative Partnerships at the West Gate Conservancy

Dr Lucy Obolensky, the founder of EGHO, (Exploring Global Health Opportunities) a small UK-based NGO, has worked in Kenya setting up rural clinics in remote areas since 2007. During this time she got to know many of the village communities, and through her interaction with the community elders, she learned about the difficulties that young girls face growing up. In response to their request for help, the concept of Team Talk was born.

Team Talk uses a combination of sport and workshops as a medium to encourage empowerment of girls and young women in Maasai and Samburu communities to considerably improve their sexual education and self-awareness. EGHO has partnered with the Tag Rugby Trust (TRT) to provide sport and sessions of the project. Tag Rugby encourages interaction between boys and girls, builds confidence and helps them to be more receptive to discussions and workshops that comprise the educational part of Team Talk.

The Safari Collection’s Sasaab Lodge, located in Samburu, hosts the project, providing logistical and financial support and ensuring that through their conservation partners, case in point the Ewaso Lions and the Kenya Wildlife Trust, the community also understands the importance of wildlife conservation in their area.

Westgate Community embraced the idea of Team Talk and welcomed the project and team into their schools. Fundamental to sustainable tourism is the support and contribution that organisations provide to the communities in which they operate. Team Talk was seen as a fantastic platform for tourism and local communities to come together to make a huge difference in the lives of the community.

Team Talk is structured around a five-day program of workshops which address topics such as self-esteem, self-worth, value and sessions of sports. Seeing perspectives and paradigm shift in the young minds was one of the most rewarding aspects of the project for the whole team.
The sports events are a major highlight for the children, both male and female, particularly the final tournament. The TAG Rugby, led by the local teaching staff, helps put everything that the kids have learned in the classroom into practice. There was some concern that the whole emphasis was focused on the Tag Rugby and that the ‘female empowerment’ aspect of the project had not made an impact at all. However, on talking to the principle of the school afterwards he had this to say:

“The girls played Tag Rugby with the boys—they were able to compete and they also won prizes at the end—this in itself is a big achievement.”

Team Talk has been taking place in Westgate since 2011, and during this time the number of girls staying in school until class 8 has steadily increased. As a result of the project, Sasaab now supports three girls through secondary education with scholarships.

The Tag Rugby Team have donated equipment and trained several of the teachers to coach and referee Tag Rugby, so that when Team Talk is not on the ground, the children can continue to play the game and gain the benefits of being involved in sports.

Scholastica
A TEAM TALKSUCCESS STORY

Scholastica is the first born of 8 children, she is the oldest at 15. She lives next to the Westgate primary school and has participated in Team Talk since its inception in 2011. She was selected to be a team leader and attended a youth leader training for a week in Nairobi in 2012 with The Tag Rugby Trust. In 2013, she travelled with four others students to take part in the first Team Talk project in the community adjacent to The Safari Collection’s Solio Lodge. During Team Talk, Scholastica spoke often of her dream to go to secondary school, and as the time approached she asked for Sasaab’s help to enable her to do that.

Scholastica worked really hard, and she graduated from primary school with a very respectable 299 points. Sadly her father decided that at this point she was ready to become a wife and he started planning her wedding. Scholastica called on Sasaab in complete panic for help. Combined efforts and negotiations with the family, the school headmaster and the community manager saw the potential Scholastica had and made it possible for her to get a 4 year fully funded secondary scholarship at Daraja Academy for girls. She is going from strength to strength and even leads the Tag Rugby program for girls at her school.

By taking part in the Team Talk, Scholastica was able to believe in herself, her own potential to stand up and change the course of her life.

Team Talk in Westgate Community is a testament to the enormous difference that can be made when tourism, conservation and social communities are brought together to better the lives of children. Through the partnership of The Safari Collection, Ewaso Lions, The Kenya Wildlife Trust and Team Talk we are reinforcing the importance of the three pillars – COMMUNITY, TOURISM AND CONSERVATION, and a more sustainable tourism model.

The Safari Collection www.thesafaricollection.com
EGHO www.egho.co.uk
Tag Rugby Trust www.tagrugbytrust.co.uk
Ewaso Lions www.ewasolions.org
The Kenya Wildlife Trust www.kenyawildlifetrust.org
Almost everything worthwhile carries with it some sort of risk, whether it’s starting a new business, whether it’s leaving home, whether it’s getting married, or whether it’s flying. In 2012, Airkenya finally found a school in the Masai Mara that would fall under its wings. In this respect, Airkenya was going to positively contribute for the long term and it was agreed that a world-class primary school should be built. The school would facilitate developing the capacity of the local people that would in turn elevate the community; create a new generation who would also protect and ensure the Masai Mara will last for many generations to come.

Education is the most powerful tool that can be used to change the world. Airkenya can attest to this. Over the years, they have seen education as a defining game changer for communities. Education has the capacity to alleviate poverty, create a deeper appreciation and respect for the environment, and provide a chance at a better future.

The Emarti Primary School was constructed in 2012 and was made up of two classrooms and a mabati (tin roof) classroom. The classrooms were so dark and it proved to be quite a challenge for the young students to appreciate their beautiful surroundings. Airkenya’s marketing team felt the need to do more; despite the many projects they are engaged in, it was impossible not to continue with what they had already started with Emarti.

Airkenya immediately commissioned a master plan to construct a world-class primary school.
As soon as the master plan was approved, Airkenya immediately embarked on the first phase and by the end of 2012, two new classrooms and a two-bedroom staff house was built and handed over to the Emarti Primary School administration. In 2013, two more classrooms were built and solar panels installed atop the school. In 2014, another two classrooms were built, bringing the total number of six (6) classrooms. In 2015, an ablution block together with a library will be handed over to the school.

The school’s population in 2012 was less than 60 students. Since then, the student numbers has grown in leaps and bounds and has seen children from the neighboring communities, schools and also the District Schools Commissioner attest that through Airkenya’s partnership, Emarti Primary School has become a world-class primary school.

The Emarti Primary School is three (3) kilometres from the Sekananigate. Emarti is not a school you can see from the roadside, but it’s a home where children long to be; as they know when it rains, the mabati roof provides cover and the solar lighting provides illumination in the classrooms. At night, the Emarti Primary School is the only building with light. During the drama festival, the school classroom housed students from neighboring schools. Airkenya is very proud of the students whose performance has been improving over the years.

Through education, the community will accrue knowledge necessary to understand the relationship with the environment and effectively co-habit for their own survival and the country at large through tourism.

Other projects that Airkenya is engaged in include: Environmental cleaning of Swafaa area in Lamu, where they partnered with Sifa FM, the County Council of Lamu and the local community in Lamu to conduct a cleanup exercise of the Swafaa area where their aircrafts’ fuel drums are recycled and turned into dustbins. Recently, Airkenya also reinforced their fight against poachers with donation of 12 drums of Avgas to the Tsavo Trust by providing aerial patrol over the Tsavo Conservation Area with a specific focus on monitoring the large ‘Tuskers’; Elephants.

Since its inception in 1987, Airkenya has been flying visitors into Kenya’s world-famous game parks and coastal resorts. Airkenya flies the tourist circuits and offers agents and visitors the opportunity to have combined flying packages across the country. The circuit can start from the South at Amboseli with connectivity to Kenya’s northern frontier, that is, Nanyuki, Lewa Downs, Samburu and Meru. Also, Airkenya offers three flights daily to the Maasai Mara that offers unique landscapes and ecosystems that make it a truly magical game reserve with some of the world’s greatest natural migration, astounding game viewing and warm Maasai people culture.
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WHO WE ARE
Tourism Fund is a body corporate established under the Tourism Act, 2011 which came into operation on 1st September, 2012 vide special issue Kenya Gazette Supplement No. 93 of 24th August, 2012.

OUR MANDATE
Mobilize resources to finance the development of a sustainable tourism industry in Kenya.

VISION
To be the ultimate source of funding for sustainable development of tourism industry in Kenya.

MISSION
To diversify the resource base for financing development of a sustainable tourism industry through innovation, service excellence and stakeholder engagement.

OUR CORE VALUES
- **TEAM WORK;** To create one family focused to deliver
- **CUSTOMER FOCUS;** Meet and surpass expectations of all our customers
- **INNOVATION;** To promote and reward creativity and embrace best practices in service delivery
- **INTEGRITY;** To uphold good conduct and ethics in all our operations
- **ACCOUNTABILITY;** Transparent and socially responsible
- **PROFESSIONALISM;** Committed to excellence through continuous improvement
- **EQUITY;** Committed to fairness in all our undertakings

OUR OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE
Include to finance:
- Development of tourism products and services;
- Marketing of Kenya as a tourist destination through the Tourism Board;
- Activities of the Protection Service;
- Tourism research, tourism intelligence and the national tourism information management system;
- Activities of the Tourism Sector Safety, Communication and Crisis Management Centre;
- Training and capacity development activities;
To mobilize resources to support tourism-related activities

OUR FUNCTIONS
The following are the core function of TF in accordance to the Tourism Act 2011
- Collect the Tourism Levy imposed under section 105 of the Tourism Act 2011;
- Establish equip and control such other tourism and hospitality training institution as it may be necessary upon approval by the Minister;
- Formulate sound policies for the regulations and management of the Fund;
- Determine the amounts of money payable for the purpose of the fund and formulate the conditions for disbursement and
- Establish a tourism training revolving fund among others
Over the years, I have found myself sharing a hearty laughter, moments of sadness, warm camp fires with guests, wildlife spectacles and close friendships that have been created and fostered while being in the bush as a guide. I have been mentored by the best gurus in the tourism and conservation industry and it is to these mentors who have helped become who I am today.

It seems like just the other day that I started guiding and I have just realized that time passes by so quickly; each guiding experience is different, unique and feels like the first day I guided my first safari. Being a tour guide is exciting and uncertain at the same time, for as guides, we know not the kind of clients we anticipate; we know not what they expect; we know not whether they will feel at home away from the comforts of their homes. We know not how each safari will be; we know not if the clients will appreciate an elephant sighting, the roar of a lion, a chirp or song of a rare bird, the croak of a tree frog, the colourful ladybird, the lush colours of a flower in bloom, the slither of a shiny reptile, or the shy handshake of a local child.

We know not if they will appreciate the five-star hotel they are about to spend their night or the five-million stars they will sleep under in a quiet campsite. We know not if they will appreciate that they will be confined in a tour van during a significant time of their stay, or that they will not get to spend a lot of time with the locals as they would like. We know not if they will appreciate a mirage or a lake or mountain. The only comforting thought is that, they probably are as uncertain as we are. And that’s a good thing, in that both visitor and guide keep an open mind. Most of them have ended up appreciating pushing the van in a muddy and rainy game reserve than game viewing. Every day, we are reminded that it’s the simple pleasures that make or break a safari. And Kenya as a destination has every bit of simple pleasures to offer.

Each of the safaris I have guided has had a profound effect on my personal and professional growth. Each client I have interacted with, from the toddler to senior citizen who are well advanced in age, has taught me, both subtly and not-so-subtly that keeping an open mind at all times is the way to go. Guiding has taught me to be a kid and a parent at the same time, to be a student and a teacher at the same time, to be a patient and a doctor at the same time, to be a guide and a visitor at the same time. It has taught me to understand and fulfill each individual’s expectations, needs, uncertainties and desires while on a safari.
Each safari is different and unpredictable, but nature always has a surprise to offer every day. The beauty of the natural world changes within minutes and for the keen observers, both visitors and locals, they get to watch nature as it unfolds before them. And the oohhss and aahhhhss of both are a marvel. It is not the good marketing or salesmanship that has kept visitors coming to Kenya; it is the natural resources that Kenya has to offer. It is the protected wildlife and positive footprints that international and domestic visitors have left in the destinations they have visited. It is the few and exclusive destinations that have not hit the marketing brochures and posters that have made visitors curious enough to visit Kenya. Ecotourism has played a major role in promoting the growth and sustainability of tourism in Kenya.

It is through interaction with different professionals that has honed my skills in professions that I haven’t studied. For instance, my conservation skills have been learnt in the field while working alongside knowledgeable professionals. My guiding career has not only helped me guided domestic and international visitors, but also work with school students and local communities while engaging in conservation of the environment.

Apart from guiding and conservation, I also give back to the community through the Rotary and Rotaract philanthropy projects while engaging in community service activities. Quite a number of these projects are also part of some tour firms and ecotourism. Community Service Program in the destinations they operate in.

I am grateful for the support from my fellow tour guides, naturalists, scientists, and other mentors in the industry and related industries; without whose professionalism and expertise, the safaris, conservation projects, community service projects and philanthropy projects would not be just another activity. Instead of being an authentic safari experience. I am grateful to the one-year-olds whose joy is to ride on my neck; to the three-year-olds whose joy is to teach me ballet; to the eight-year-olds whose biggest sadness is when their camera batteries die during a game drive; to the ten-year-olds who will comfortably take a nap during a game drive; to the twelve-year-olds who will happily insist that they are not children; to the twenty-to-fifty-year-olds who will happily jump out of a stuck van and push it in the middle of the wild; and to the over eighty-year-olds who will use a pit latrine simply because there is a hole down there. To all those who strive to make each safari experience worthwhile, let’s continue to share our amazing Kenya with the rest of the world.

To finalize my lady tour guide and conservationist musings, I will part with a quote from Gary K. Clarke, author of “I’d rather be on safari”, he says, “Yesterday’s safari is already history. To those who were with me — am glad you were. For those who keep saying they are going on safari someday — go now.” Make Kenya your next travel destination.

Martha Nzisa Mutiso is the author of Vultures of Africa, Coloring Book, 1; follow her safari stories on her blog http://ecoescapades.com

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The 10th edition of the annual Eco Warrior Awards by Ecotourism Kenya has been set for October 16th 2015; this glamorous event will be held in South Coast and the exact Venue will be communicated nearer to the date.

Ecotourism Kenya launched the Eco-warrior Award in 2005. The award provides the organization with an opportunity to recognize and reward innovations in sustainable tourism while supplying information on best practices. Among the values emphasized by the award are innovations that respect the environment, respect local people and cultures, impacts on local economies and empower local communities, practice of ecotourism, provide opportunities for linkages with local communities and promote good environmental governance. The winners must demonstrate innovation in any one or more of these areas. Only businesses and service providers based or doing business in Kenya can be nominated.
2014 Eco Warrior Awards

1. 2014 Conservancy of the Year Award – Private
   Borana Conservancy (Laikipia)
2. 2014 Conservancy of the Year Award – Community
   Ngare Ndare Forest Trust (Laikipia)
3. 2014 Ecotourism Enterprise of the Year Award – Lodge
   Severin Sea Lodge (Mombasa)
4. 2014 Ecotourism Enterprise of the Year Award – Tented Camp
   Sanctuary Olonana, Maasai Mara
5. 2014 Ecotourism Enterprise of the Year Award – Community Based
   Mililo Community Based Tourism Association (Taita Taveta/Malindi)
6. 2014 Ecotourism Enterprise of the Year Award – Tours and Travel
   UNIGLOBE Let’s Go Travel
7. 2014 Ecotourism Enterprise of the Year Award – Airline
   Safarilink Aviation
8. 2014 Eco-Rated Facility of the Year Award
   Kicheche Laikipia
9. 2014 Ecotourism Partnership of the Year Award – Community-Investor
   Westgate Community-Sasaab Lodge, Samburu
10. 2014 Ecotourism Guide of the Year Award
    Onesmus Irungu – Asilia Africa/Rekero Camp
11. 2014 Ecotourism Journalist of the Year Award
    Fleur Ng’weno – Nature Kenya
12. 2014 Ecotourism Student Innovation Award
    Umi Njoka – Kenyatta University
13. 2014 Ecotourism Training Program of the Year Award
    Dedan Kimathi University of Technology – Institute of Tourism & Hospitality Management (Nyeri)
14. 2014 Ecotourism Student Host Organization of the Year Award
    Mililo Community Based Tourism Association (Taita Taveta/Malindi)
Promoting Sustainability through Collaborative Efforts in the Tourism Sector

Sustainability has come into sharp focus in recent past with the realization that the Earth is indeed finite. Some destinations around the world are experiencing the effects of climate change where some are either gaining or losing biodiversity. A case in point is Southern Europe, which is expected to get hotter and will experience less severe winter conditions while Africa will get hotter, and island destinations will submerge into the ocean.

In Kenya, this change is indicated by frequent droughts, floods, and unpredictable weather patterns which has negatively impacted the survival of its ecosystem. Tourism has borne the brunt of drought, which has led to famine, resulting in the deaths of wildlife. Amboseli National Park is among the top tourist hot spots that reported a significant number of elephants deaths in 2009.

While there has been a lot of effort put in by individual organizations and associations such as Ecotourism Kenya towards promoting sustainable environmental practices within the tourism industry in Kenya; there is need for a common standard as destination. Kenya should have a bigger positive impact across the entire tourism value chain.

Kenyan approach that seeks to benefit communities across the country while accruing economic benefit.

At the core of a comprehensive destination approach is partnership. During the 2002 World Conference on Ecotourism, a comprehensive framework for sustainability at the local levels dubbed Local Agenda 21 was adopted for sustainability to work at destination level. For this work, there is need for active participation of all stakeholders and collaborative partnerships.

The Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) is the national destination marketing agency mandated to market Kenya as a destination. It seeks to provide a link between the destination (Suppliers) and the Source markets (demand) as far as sustainability in the tourism value chain is concerned.

Being a business to business agency, KTB highly depends on collaborations and partnerships with various stakeholders to deliver its mandate. In the current Corporate Strategic Plan, partnerships with both traditional and non-traditional stakeholders have been identified as a key strategy pillar in the destination marketing efforts in Kenya and in the source markets.

KTB, through partnership with Ecotourism Kenya and other like-minded organizations, has endeavored to market Kenya as a responsible and sustainable destination in the following ways:

- Establishment of a KTB Sustainability Committee with members drawn across all key departments. The Committee is guided by a comprehensive sustainability policy which places a focus on environmental conservation, education, and empowerment, social responsibility, and culture and heritage preservation.

- Diversification of the tourism source market targeted to ensure continuous flow of tourists into the destination.

- Distribution of the green directory in key tourist source markets.

- Promotion of Kenya as an ecotourism destination. In 2009, Kenya was voted the best destination for ecotourism in the world and the third best ‘Overseas Destination’ in the United Kingdom (UK) where Kenyan community and conservation initiatives are nominated or benefited. Other similar

Kenya has made great strides towards destination development and these can be leveraged to boost the industry’s sustainability.

Kenya has made great strides towards destination development and these can be leveraged to boost the industry’s sustainability.
initiatives included the Partnership with Just a Drop Charity organization in UK where two communities in Kenya were beneficiaries and Africa Travel Association (ATA) initiative during Indaba 2014 in South Africa

- Introduction of tree planting and the Camel clinic in Maralal during the annual International Maralal Camel Derby to entrench sustainable tourism practices in the county and benefit the bigger community whose livelihoods depend on the Camels.

- Collaboration with the Global Travel & Tourism Partnership (GTTP) – East Africa in their Mentorship program of Secondary School students keen on taking up tourism careers in the future.

Besides conservation and other community-based sustainability initiatives, there is a need for further dialogue aimed at sustaining the industry in the long term. Some of the issues impacting on tourism businesses and destinations that need to be addressed include and not limited to the following:

- Insecurity and sustaining the industry despite the crises
- Surviving beyond the 5 year election cycle
- Regular product innovation to cater for dynamic customer needs; for example, the Millennials, African and Asian markets
- Self-regulation versus Government regulation

- Sustainability in urban destinations; for example, Nairobi and Mombasa
- Enriching the visitor experience at the destination; the global market economy is moving beyond the service economy into the experience economy
- Incorporating County Governments into the sustainability agenda

Ultimately, collaborations with all stakeholders in and outside the industry will go a long way in ensuring Kenya’s tourism is sustained in the longer term for the benefit of Kenyans, tourists and businesses in the sector. The world is embracing sustainable tourism, and Kenya cannot afford to be left behind. And this explains KTB’s passion and concerted efforts towards promoting collaborations and partnerships among the stakeholders.
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 programs; 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
Advertising rates 2015

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To place an advert in the upcoming issue, send your art work 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 further information
Call 0726 366 080, 020 257 4059 or email pr@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 assessment 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.
Welcome Our **New Corporate Members** and **Eco rated Facilities**

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- Africa Wildlife Foundation
- Daah Safaris
- Wild Images Africa Ltd.
- Mount Kenya University

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"The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page." — Saint Augustine