

Tourism in Kenya

Background information

2000 1,036,628 visitors arrived in Kenya and tourism receipts totaled \$257 million. Between 2009 and 2010 tourism grew by 15% and after agriculture most of the population works in this industry.

Developments in transport (i.e. more/ cheaper/ faster planes and technology (better knowledge from internet etc.) have meant that tourism in Kenya is accessible to far more people. The Kenyan government also realize the importance of tourism so have invested in infrastructure.

Positives

- Biggest foreign exchange earner
- Money from tourism is used to protect the environment
- National parks (such as Amboseli) have been set up to protect the environment- entrance fee pays for management (the entrance fee in 2018 is \$60 and the park brings in approximately US\$2 million per year). They use the money for schemes such as digging ditches to keep tourists away from animals.
- Jobs created- primary working directly with tourists and secondary (i.e. larger market for tourists)- create a multiplier effect
- The Maasai sell their crafts to the tourists



Negative

- Water is being used for swimming pools etc.- this is a scarce resource in the area due to drought etc. Locals have to pay a high cost for the water.
- Wages are low (the average Kenyan tourist worker would have to work for 8 years to earn enough to have a week in one of the Kenyan resorts).
- Much of the ownership is by TNCs- leads to economic leakage
- People walk on the coral and damage it
- Tourism is vulnerable to external shocks (such as recession and terrorist attacks). If the Kenyan economy becomes too reliant on tourism it will suffer badly if visitors stop coming.
- In Amboseli the protection of the national park has led to overgrazing by animals leading to dust storms and soil erosion. This is also made worse by safari trucks. This has meant that wildlife has left the park and impacted farmers as the animals such as elephants are trampling their crops
- The nomadic Maasai herdsmen have had to leave the parks and have been forced to settle- this is having an impact on changing their culture
- The Maasai could be seen to be 'selling' their culture to tourists- zooification of culture.



Management

[Bamburi nature park](#) is located in the former Bamburi cement factory. They have used tourism money to re-develop the devastated landscape into an ecological reserve. Casuarina trees were planted which were the only species which could penetrate the reclaimed land and tolerate the saline conditions. This gives local children the chance to see wildlife and is a sanctuary for endangered animals.

[Olare Orok conservatory](#) Tourism in the Conservancy is limited to a maximum of 94 beds which equates to ratio of one game viewing vehicle for every 2,100 acres- this allows for a better view and less disturbance of the wildlife. This formula maximizes the client wilderness experience and minimizes the environmental impact of tourism. Built upon a partnership with local Maasai landowners, Olare Orok management has worked with the local people who agreed to move their homes and cattle, leaving the wildlife completely unimpeded. In the lodging the tents are powered using solar energy and are made to have minimum disturbance. The Maasai are employed as guides who help enrich experience by educating tourists about the local environment and culture.