

# TOURISM

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Isaac Sindiga<sup>†</sup>

## ABSTRACT

*Although tourism is an important economic activity at the Kenya coast, its contribution to the development of the region is rather small. Most of the large tourism enterprises are owned, managed and controlled by foreign or national interests with little participation by the indigenous people. As tourism proceeded at the coast without planning, it has weak backward and forward linkages with the local economy. Also, tourism has generated a myriad socio-cultural and environmental problems. Sustainable tourism development must address these problems and encourage local people in the business.*

## INTRODUCTION

This review discusses the contribution of tourism to development at the Kenya coast. Specifically, it examines the participation of the local people in tourism. As an economic activity, tourism is expected to provide foreign exchange earnings and employment opportunities and to stimulate other sectors of the economy such as agriculture and manufacturing. These forward and backward linkages with the regional and national economy lead to increased incomes and a rise in the standard of living.

Kenya's tourism, which generated US\$493 million in 1996, is geographically concentrated in certain areas of the country. Although the tourism industry developed on the basis of wildlife in the country's fine system of national parks in the interior, beach tourism at the Indian Ocean has become equally important. The coast has the largest share of accommodation facilities comprising of about 52% of the national total of nearly 20,000 beds (Japanese International Cooperation Agency/ Kenya 1995), which includes hotels, guest houses, apartments, villas, cottages and private houses (Sindiga 1994).

Allowing for fluctuations in certain years, the number of tourist beds at the coast grew at an average annual rate of 13% between 1970 and 1995. The bednights available increased from about 1,504,600 in 1970 to 3,794,000 in 1980 and 6,416,000 in 1995 (Kenya 1976;

1982; 1996b). With this expansion in bed space, the share of its demand among tourists increased from 36% of all bednights in 1973 to about 45% in 1985 with Nairobi accounting for 30% (Kenya 1986: 158). During the 1993-1995 period, about 65% of all bednights occupied in Kenya were at the coast (Kenya 1994a: 176; 1995: 165; Table 1).

*Table 1* Hotel bednights occupied by country of residence, 1995 ('000s)

Country of residence	Coast	Nairobi	Lodges	Others	Total
Permanent occupants*	15.5	70.3	3.3	10.1	99.2
Germany	1060.2	54.2	64.1	22.9	1201.4
United Kingdom	706.2	143.6	92.6	42.2	984.6
Switzerland	264.9	18.9	22.1	6.1	312.0
France	191.6	45.3	45.9	27.3	310.1
Italy	255.1	25.7	19.4	5.5	305.7
Scandinavia	40.1	28.8	9.8	7.6	86.3
Other Europe	164.6	73.2	36.0	15.2	289.0
Kenya	332.8	161.6	33.5	161.4	689.3
Other East and Central Africa	26.9	74.2	2.9	9.0	113.3
Other Africa	39.0	101.6	5.3	7.3	153.2
U.S.A.	75.9	106.4	53.0	30.6	265.9
Canada	8.1	32.5	6.3	4.7	51.6
South and Middle America	8.9	3.8	1.2	1.1	15.0
Japan	4.1	18.5	7.5	3.3	33.4
India	5.1	18.0	2.7	2.0	27.8
Middle East	5.9	15.4	5.7	2.6	29.6
Other Asia	7.2	12.5	2.4	3.4	25.5
Australia and New Zealand	4.8	13.4	4.4	2.5	25.1
All Others	9.4	9.3	9.1	9.0	36.8
Total	3226.2	1027.5	427.2	373.8	5054.8

\* Persons staying one month or more in one hotel — includes some block bookings for aircrew.

Source: Kenya 1996a: 178.

The coast attracts increasing numbers of Europeans, especially from Germany, Great Britain, Switzerland and Italy. Of the 5 million hotel bednights in 1995 (Table 1), 24% came from Germany, 19% from the United Kingdom, 6% each from France, Italy and Switzerland, and 5% from the USA. The data in Table 1 on country of residence and region of Kenya visited show differences in tastes and preferences of the visitors. Many Europeans prefer beach holidays. In 1994, for example, Europeans spent 2.2 million bednights at the coast representing three-quarters of all European bednights in the country in that year (Kenya 1995: 165). Beginning 1983, Germans became the leading single group visiting Kenya. Ever since, they account for one million bednights each year. Although many visitors from the United Kingdom go to the coast as well, a significant number still opts to stay in Nairobi. Most visitors from North America and Asia choose Nairobi and the game lodges. As will be explained below, the European domination of Kenya's tourism is related to the source of foreign capital and expertise in the country's tourism; however, the European patronage of the beaches also reflects taste and preference.

Overall, the proportion of tourist bednights spent at the coast over the past two decades has been consistently higher than any other tourism region in the country. Another indi-

cator of the concentration of tourism at the coast is the number of tour operators (Table 2). The coast is shown to account for 44% of the national total.<sup>1</sup>

*Table 2* Distribution of tour operators by region, 1995

Tourism region	No. of operators	Share (%)
Nairobi	1,113	49.7
Central	84	3.8
Western	35	1.6
Coast	973	43.5
Maasailand	31	1.4
Turkana	2	0.1
Kenya	2,238	100.0

*Source:* Interview with Kenya Association of Tour Operators, January 1998.

### TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

The beaches are the single most important tourism asset in the coast. The clear coral beaches provide the holiday maker with an opportunity for swimming, sun-bathing, walking in shallow water and enjoying the beauty of the coral gardens. The lagoons behind the coral reef are good grounds for swimming, goggling, surfing and sailing because the coral reef keeps away dangerous sea animals such as sharks.

The drowned river mouths and the presence of several tidal creeks, sheltered bays and deep water inlets allow a range of opportunities for safe sport fishing. As a result, several centres of game fishing have developed including Lamu, Malindi, Kilifi, Mtwapa, Mombasa, Shimoni and Mafia. Malindi in particular is world famous for big game fishing including marlin, tunny, sailfish, kingfish, barracuda, dolphin and giant rock cod (Ouma 1970; Kenya 1971). Lamu's sheltered waters provide potential for cruising and yachting. Boating can also safely be done at Kilifi Creek, Mtwapa, Tudor and at several points along the coast such as Vanga, Wasini Channel, Funzi Bay and Gazi.

The estuarine parts of the coast where fresh water and sea water mix are excellent grounds for mangrove forests. Although these forests are better known for fuelwood and timber and the mangrove ecosystem is a rich ground for fish, crabs, prawns and oysters (Visser & Njuguna 1992), it is not always well understood that the mangroves have a high ecotourism potential. So far, and save perhaps for the Mida Creek which has been developed for sight-seeing and bird watching, mangrove forest areas have remained unexploited for tourism (Visser & Koyo 1992).

There is a terrestrial forest, Arabuko-Sokoke, between Kilifi and Malindi near the Gede ruins which could be developed for nature trails and bird watching. Arabuko-Sokoke is a mixed natural forest, a remnant of a larger tropical forest which stretched the entire coastline of East Africa and has a number of endangered and rare animal species. These are the golden rumped elephant shrew, the Sokoke bushy-tailed mongoose and the

<sup>1</sup> Appendix 1-3 offer detailed figures on the number of visitors to Kenya as a whole, Coast Province, as well as the various tourist attractions at the Coast. Figure 1 shows all the coastal National Parks and Reserves.

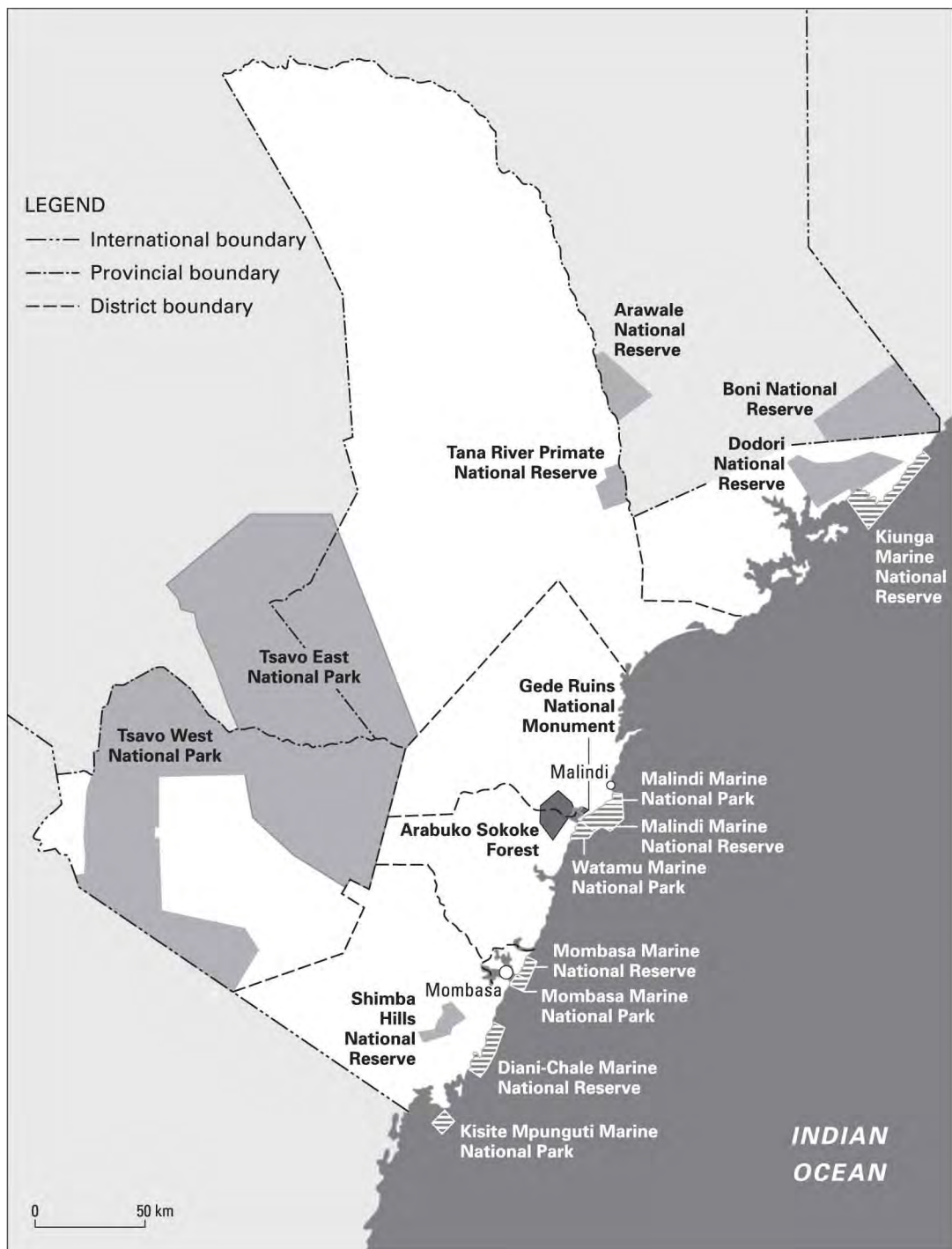


Figure 1 National parks and reserves

Ader's duiker (Virani 1995: 26). Also, Arabuko-Sokoke is second ranked as the most important area for bird conservation in Africa and contains a number of rare birds including the Sokoke scops owl and Clarke's weaver (Virani 1995).

The presence of Shimba Hills National Reserve, about 30 kilometres from Mombasa, and Tsavo National Parks (East and West) inland provide opportunities for combining a beach holiday and a wildlife safari. This complements the experience offered by water safaris in marine parks and reserves. Kenya was the world leader in marine conservation when, in 1968, it established marine parks and marine reserves for protecting and conserving marine resources. This was in line with the resolution passed at the first world conference of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature in 1962 (Jackson 1973: 64). By 1996, marine parks had been carved to cover 50 km<sup>2</sup> of the sea while marine reserves take another 700 km<sup>2</sup>.

Whereas the protection of these areas enhances conservation thereby encouraging tourism, traditional uses of the Indian Ocean by the local people have been disrupted. Such activities as collecting cowrie shells, fishing, harvesting forest products from the mangroves and recreational uses of the sea have been severely restricted with negative consequences to the local economy and lifestyle. The mangroves traditionally supplied poles for housing, boat making, fencing, woodfuel and other domestic uses. Similarly, the protection of Arabuko-Sokoke forest has excluded local access to *Mbambakofi* and other tree species used for furniture and to herbs harvested for medicines. This has potential for future conflicts between the local people and the government.

Finally, the Kenya Coast had city state civilization for centuries. Although much of this urbanization did not survive to the contemporary time, there are historical monuments and sites and ruins of tombs, houses and mosques as evidence of this resplendent past. These are of interest to tourists because they combine a mix of oriental and African civilization. There may be 70 such sites of which 58 have been recognised by the government through publication in the official gazette (Mutua-Kihu 1984; Kenya 1971). These monuments date back to the period between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries A.D. and represent pre-Portuguese and pre-Omani cultures. There are four abandoned town sites at Gede, Ungwana, Shanga and Omere and two partly inhabited ones at Pate and Siyu. Of these, only the African-Arab town of Gede and the Portuguese defence post of Fort Jesus in Mombasa are maintained by the National Museums of Kenya. Together, these places attracted over 200,000 visitors in 1996 (Kenya 1997: 185).

The urban architecture of certain towns, for example Mombasa's *Mji wa Kale* (Old Town) and Lamu are of historical interest and hold great touristic attraction. To be noted are the narrow streets, perhaps reflecting a security imperative at the time. Another historical monument is the Vasco Da Gama pillar, a symbol of the Portuguese visit to Malindi in the fifteenth century.

Although in a tourism sense Lamu tends to be an outpost of Mombasa and Malindi, the place has several attractions in its own right including *dhow* trips, small islands, mangrove swamps, sea life and Islamic architecture. Lamu is a Muslim town with Islamic traditions dating back to the eighth century A.D. Lamu is a regional centre for Islamic conservatism and orthodoxy (Salim 1973). Every year, Muslim pilgrims from the whole

of East Africa go to Lamu for *Maulidi*, the celebrations marking the birth of the Prophet Mohammed. One day excursionists fly to Lamu to enjoy the town's varied attractions. However, most of Lamu's tourism facilities remain relatively underdeveloped. This is partly because Lamu is virtually inaccessible because of a poor road connection; in addition, parts of the road are prone to armed banditry.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF BEACH TOURISM

The Kenya coast has been in contact with other parts of the world for centuries. As such, it has a long experience of receiving visitors. However, modern tourism did not begin until after the establishment of British colonial rule at the end of the nineteenth century. During the 1920s and 1930s a few resident Europeans from the interior began to frequent the coast for their holidays. These Europeans who were mainly farmers in the Kenya highlands lacked other suitable alternatives for their holidays and were attracted by the sandy beaches and the warm climate. Initially, these domestic tourists visited Mombasa but with time, they ventured to the north coast and went to Malindi which provided a beautiful seaside, sandy beaches and opportunities for deep sea fishing (Martin 1973: 103). This beach tourism started as a spontaneous activity and there was no accommodation for the visitors. Many of the tourists pitched a tent on the beach. By the early 1930s, the numbers had increased so much that Brady's Palm Beach and Lawford's hotels were constructed as family businesses (Martin 1973).

During the Second World War, Malindi experienced a lull in domestic tourism. Although the town was bombed by the Italians in 1940, little damage was done. But troop movements through the town precluded local tourism. This changed after the war when both Mombasa and Malindi attracted resident European retirees from the interior. According to Martin (1973), Malindi became the choice retirement place because it is cooler and housing and labour were relatively inexpensive. This process continued in the 1950s and the early 1960s. Others went to the coast on vacation during Easter and Christmas holidays. As Kenya became independent in 1963, coast tourism could be summarized as a holiday place for resident Europeans.

Foreign tourism at the coast started after 1962 with the first all-inclusive package holidays (Jackson 1973). Comprised essentially of Europeans, these tourists took advantage of the cheap charter flights to Mombasa. The numbers of visitors increased tremendously after 1965. This marked the beginning of international tourism at the beach and it has since been dominated by Germans, Italians, Swiss and French.

Like everywhere else in Kenya, this expansion of tourism had not been planned for. However, private investors took the initiative and made ad hoc responses to meet the demand. Up to 1970 most of the bed space expansion took the form of alterations and extensions to existing hotels (Kenya 1971). New investment in the tourism industry was precluded by a lack of physical infrastructure, especially roads and communication facilities, electricity and water supplies. Mombasa airport had poor facilities for handling aircraft. In addition, there were delays and uncertainties in ferry operations both at the Likoni Channel and across the Kilifi Creek connecting Mombasa and Malindi.

Recognition of the problems of tourism development at the coast led to the establishment of an interministerial working party to deliberate on strategies for the future development of tourism in the area (Kenya 1971). Consequently, some 3,100 new beds were planned and the need to expand the physical infrastructure was reinforced. Similarly, the government encouraged private developers and investors to participate in coast tourism development. The Kenya Tourist Development Corporation (KTDC), which had been formed in 1965 as a parastatal to assist tourism development, provided investment finance. In the meantime, private investors moved in and constructed hotels along the beaches wherever they could obtain land. The result is a ribbon-type spatial structure of hotels along the coastline which in many places denies local people access to the beaches and the sea. The government responded by merely providing infrastructure after investment decisions and actions had been made without prior planning.

#### CONTEMPORARY COAST TOURISM

As noted above, coast tourism increased with the introduction of cheap charter flights from Europe. This led to further investments in the Mombasa International Airport. Between 1976 and 1978, Mombasa airport was reconstructed at a cost of K£ 11 million so that it could handle direct flights from Europe (Hazlewood 1979). It was further expanded in 1995. At present, the airport has six parking bays and two principal terminal aprons and can accommodate modern, wide-bodied aircraft (Sindiga 1996). Also, Malindi airport has a tarmac runway and terminal facilities to handle medium-size aircraft. In addition, Malindi is equipped with a fire fighting system, water supply, ambulance service, police service, travellers' lounge, and customs and immigration officials. The airports have made it possible to accommodate large numbers of coast holiday makers.

By their nature, all-inclusive package tours on charter airlines tend to be cheaper and cost about half the price of a seat on a scheduled airline; in addition, hotels give discounts of up to 50% of the normal rate (Sinclair 1990; Sinclair *et al.* 1992). International tour operators frequently make block bookings of hotel rooms in advance and are able to obtain large discounts because of their bargaining power and ability to source the tourists. The accommodation prices are usually negotiated in Kenya shillings and this allows the overseas operator to pay less because of frequent currency depreciation. Besides, many of the international tour operators retain most of the foreign exchange abroad and do not remit it to Kenya (Sinclair 1992; Kenya 1991b). The country loses a large amount of money to foreign airlines as well. These leakages of foreign exchange earnings are particularly high for the tourists who go to the coast. One estimate of foreign exchange leakage of tourism expenditure put the figure at between 62 and 78% for beach-only holidays including the cost of airfare for tourists travelling in foreign airlines compared to 12 to 23% for those travelling by Kenya Airways (Kenya 1991b: 152). However, even with international travel by foreign airlines, the leakage of foreign exchange would drop to 35 to 45% if the tourists would do beach-plus-safari holidays because of the in-built element of internal travel within Kenya (Kenya 1991b: 152-153). As such, beach tourism appears to be subsidized by the Kenyan economy thereby minimizing its contribution to

local employment and development in general.

Most of the mass tourists who go to the coast cannot afford expensive wildlife safaris in the country (Bachmann 1988). According to Visser & Koyo (1992: 80), the low budget mass tourist does not allow for such extras as visits to marine parks. He focuses on a holiday in the sun, with beer and passive entertainment including indoor games, discotheques and whatever in-house activities a hotel can offer. However, coast tourism enterprises can cater for the requirements of the economically segmented market. The affluent tourists patronize the quiet and expensive Diani Beach to the south of Mombasa whereas the low budget tourists stay in Mombasa and Malindi. The tourists who can pay combine a beach holiday with a wildlife safari in the country's interior; others visit the range of attractions at the coast itself.

Although the Kenya coast has great tourism assets, its popularity in Europe is related to the foreign ownership of many tourism enterprises including hotels, tour firms, and charter aircraft. This is especially so with British, French, Italian and Swiss nationals who have invested in Kenya tourism as individuals, families, small companies and multinational corporations. This appears to contribute to the successful promotion and marketing of the coast as an optimal holiday destination for the Europeans. In Malindi, most hotels are owned by Germans and Italians, some of whom are absentee landlords but periodically shuttle between the coast and Europe (Jommo 1987; Bachmann 1988). Foreigners also own private cottages and apartments which are made available for tourist use; in the process, they undercut hotel business. The Germans and Italians have also gone into tourism-related businesses such as boutiques, bars and entertainment (Jommo 1987). About 78% of the major hotels at the coast, 67% in Nairobi and 66% of the lodges have some foreign investment, while wholly foreign-owned hotels at the coast form 16% of the total, Nairobi 17%, and lodges 11% (Sinclair *et al.* 1992: 59).

It may be noted that like in other areas of the economy, the pattern of foreign investment in hotels in Kenya shifted in the 1970s to emphasize joint ventures or partnerships involving international finance agencies, multinational corporations or other foreign firms and Kenyan state and private capital (Swainson 1980). Most of the large tourism enterprises are joint ventures with local capital (usually the Kenya Tourist Development Corporation) and are run through management contracts which cover financial arrangements, government concessions, level of protection and fees paid to the parent company for technical and management services (Swainson 1980). Foreign firms usually push for the highest fees possible and insist on expatriate technical and managerial staff. A joint venture provides access to knowledge, expertise and joint distribution channels thereby increasing output and profitability (Sinclair *et al.* 1992).

There are other cases in which franchising agreements are used. This agreement is somewhat like a management contract. Here, a local company associates with a foreign one through using its trade mark, for example Holiday Inn. Production, knowledge, marketing and quality controls are assured through periodic checking and/or by maintaining a resident representative (Sinclair *et al.* 1992). However, the responsibility and risks of the operations are vested in the local company.

The development of joint venture business between local and foreign capital is very



strong in the hotel industry. The joint venture arrangement assures that participating foreign investors manage the businesses and control the financial transactions usually in their own interest rather than that of Kenya. The joint venture became a preferred mode of investment by multinational corporations because of the fear in the 1960s and 1970s that African governments would nationalize foreign assets. A joint venture thus provided a multinational corporation with security against political risk. To insure that they generate high profits, multinational corporations sign management contracts which provide them with financial and management control on the enterprises. This way, they assure that hefty fees and expatriate wages are repatriated to their home countries. In Kenya in general there is little African participation in the ownership and management of big hotels and tour operations businesses. At the coast, it is only the ownership of local guest houses and small hotels which is in African hands; however, these are not the indigenous Waswahili people. In tour operations, Africans tend to have small companies which obtain subcontracts from the big tour operators for a small fee (Jommo 1987).

A few examples suffice to illustrate the foreign domination of tour operations. Many of the businesses tend to be vertically integrated. This means that, for example, a tour operator owns an airline and a hotel chain at the same time. In Kenya, many international tour operators have local subsidiaries. They access the tourists in Western Europe or North America, put them on their aircraft to Kenya where the ground handling is done by their local subsidiary tour firm and accommodation is provided by hotels which they own (Bachmann 1988; Sinclair *et al.* 1992). For example, Africa Safari Club (ASC) of Switzerland is a vertically integrated tour company with its own charter planes, safari vehicles and several hotels at the Kenya Coast including Watamu Beach Hotel (Jommo 1987; Bachmann 1988). In addition, ASC owns a domestic air charter service in Kenya, Skytrail Ltd (Jommo 1987). So dominant did ASC become in the Kenya coast tourism business that it advertised that it was able "to offer a two-week holiday, including return flight, and full board accommodation for a minimum of less than a third of the cheapest Swissair excursion ticket to Nairobi" (Jommo 1987: 49).

The ASC company case is not isolated. The German owners of the international tour operator TUI also own equity in Pollman Tours of Kenya and several hotels including Whispering Palms Hotel, Two Fishes Hotel and Diani Sea Lodge. Their operations are vertically integrated. They monopolize travel packaging, management, investments advisory and local tour operations through Pollman's (Jommo 1987). Franco Rosso is an Italian tour firm. It owns Tropical Village in Malindi and Leopard Beach Hotel at Diani, among other properties; in addition, it is involved in local tour operations. The United Touring Company (UTC), a subsidiary of the British firm BET Traction, owns the expensive Block Hotels chain. Sinclair *et al.* (1992) note that UTC has hotel management, touring, travel and 'self-drive' divisions and combines these with serving as local agents for major overseas tour operators. Other foreign tour companies with equity in hotels in Kenya include Kuoni, Hayes and Jarvis, Universal Safari Tours and I Grandi Viaggi (Sinclair 1990; Sinclair *et al.* 1992). The vertical integration of tourist operations extending from tour firms to airlines and hotels is the most common organizational structure of tourism in developing countries (Farver 1984). Under such dominance of

foreign business interests it is not surprising that there is a heavy leakage of foreign exchange earnings from the Kenyan economy.

## IMPACT OF TOURISM

### *Infrastructure*

The pattern of coast tourism development reveals a line of beach hotels along the coastline restricted to within one kilometre of the shoreline. This narrow development along the coast is served with access roads, electricity, water and other basic infrastructure, away from the centres of the local population. The Mombasa-Malindi tarmac road was deliberately located within three kilometres of the beach in order to abate hotel development. The same can be said about the Likoni-Ukunda-Lunga Lungu road in the southern part of the coast. In this way, tourism has tended to grow as an activity isolated from the local community in which it is located. Also, tourism facilities are concentrated at a few places: Mombasa Island (21 km<sup>2</sup>), the adjoining areas in both the north and the south coast, Malindi-Watamu and Lamu. There are large parts of the coastline that are without hotels especially to the north of Malindi.

### *Economic impact*

The indigenous people of the coast, the Waswahili, have maintained a hands-off attitude to the ownership and employment in the tourism industry (Peake 1989; Sindiga 1996). Except for some young men with secondary education who take up salaried clerical jobs in the tourism industry (Peake 1989: 215), the Waswahili avoid subordinate positions in hotels partly because the Islamic culture tends to look down on such work, partly because of their low level of education, and also because of an association of tourism with immorality (Beckerleg 1995; Sindiga 1996). However, they prefer to work in *dhow* sailing, fishing, mangrove harvesting, and sand mining. Subordinate hotel jobs such as working as cleaners, waiters, and boatmen are done by people from the coastal interior (the Mijikenda and Taita) and by up-country communities (Migot-Adholla *et al.* 1982; Sindiga 1996). The first author estimated that up to 60% of hotel workers came from outside the coast. However, sea tourism business is controlled by the Waswahili. They operate glass-bottomed boats as an informal activity and take tourists to view underwater marine life on the coral reef. But the magnitude and level of employment of these operations are not well known.

One of the economic activities associated with tourism is the selling of arts and crafts. It appears that the revival of certain Kenyan art is associated with mass tourism. There are many examples including Akamba wood carvings, Kisii soapstone carvings, Kikuyu and Kamba baskets, Maasai and Okiek beads, necklaces and earrings, Pokomo mats, and handicrafts produced by many other communities (Horner 1993; Klumpp & Kratz 1993; Bachmann 1988). Contrary to some claims that tourist arts and crafts are not authentic, the evidence shows that throughout Africa they build on traditional expertise (Soyinka 1985). However, they may be modified to conform with the desires of customers (Schadler 1979). In Kenya in general, the makers of arts and crafts lose money to mid-

dlemen who purchase the articles at very low prices and then sell to the tourist market locally and abroad at handsome profits. But large-scale production of the crafts is problematic because of lack of credit to purchase materials. Although in Mombasa some of the handicrafts are produced by women's groups, payments are made to individuals according to personal output. Many of the women, however, cannot make sufficient quantities because they are unable to raise investment capital since they are not paid quickly after delivering their merchandise (Maas 1991: 48-49). In Malindi there exists a cooperative of over 100 wood carvers who sell in their own shop in the municipal market. Still, the economic benefits to the local community of tourist arts and crafts tend to be limited. Also, although certain aspects of Kenyan arts and crafts and dances have been encouraged, other forms of artistic endeavour, especially music and theatre, have been curiously ignored both by the government and the foreign promoters of tourism (Bachmann 1988: 194).

Finally, the linkages between tourism and other sectors of the economy may be considered. There are no region-specific data on this subject. At the national level, Kenya saves much foreign exchange because food and beer consumed by tourists are not imported. Summary (1987) found high forward linkages in food manufacturing, baking, hotels and restaurants; and high backward linkages in agriculture, paper products, metal products, petroleum, trade, transportation and other services. Although tourism's backward linkages with agriculture are strong, it appears that these links are forged between large tourist hotels and large agriculture producers; in the process, peasant producers lose out. Potentially, the coast could produce sufficient food for the requirements of the population and the tourist industry. However, this is not so at the moment. Vegetables, fruits, milk and other agricultural products are brought in from highland Kenya to meet the tourist demand. As such, the coast tourism industry has rather poor linkages with agriculture because the latter is underdeveloped.

Bachmann's (1988) study in Malindi estimated that each hotel job indirectly created another job in agriculture, trade and handicrafts. He concluded that employment and income effects of tourism are rather small in the area. He estimated that, in the 1980s, 20 to 25% of the Malindi Town population received a regular income from tourism; the figure goes down to between 9 and 10% for Malindi Division (now District) and only about 5% for the whole of Kilifi District (Bachmann 1988: 251). These results show that except for a few beach localities, tourism's economic impact on the local economy at the coast is minimal.

#### *Socio-cultural impact*

The impact of Western tourism on Third World peoples has provoked much scholarly comment (Mathieson & Wall 1982; Wall 1996; Harrison 1992; Lea 1993). Some have dismissed tourism as final form of colonialism in which Europeans subjugate Africans (Middleton 1992). Even at the Kenya coast, some local inhabitants themselves see tourism as a new form of colonialism (Peake 1989: 213). Tourist lifestyles in their isolated enclaves tend to accentuate the dramatic differences between foreign affluence and local poverty. Other objections include the superficial packaging of culture for tourist con-

sumption and cultural change.

The development of mass tourism at the Kenya coast created profound socio-economic change in the Muslim towns, especially Mombasa and Malindi. Not surprisingly, a myriad social problems including a high drop-out rate from schools by male children, drug peddling, petty crimes, family disputes and prostitution have been blamed on tourism (Migot-Adholla *et al.* 1982; Beckerleg 1995; Peake 1989).

Although the relationship between tourism and prostitution is not linear, it is evident that sex is consistent with the motivation that underlies much of tourism. Just like tourism itself, visiting a prostitute may fulfill certain fantasies, and provide companionship and thus an opportunity to relax (Ryan & Kinder 1996). Such forms of relaxation may be socially disapproved in the West. The period of the visit therefore offers a temporary escape from the reality, norms and values which prevail in the western world (Smith 1977; Graburn 1977; Peake 1989). This behaviour can, however, be disconcerting to the host community, especially among older people. At the Kenyan coast, young boys are dropping out of school through the influence of tourists who are seen to consume alcohol, drugs and to engage in casual sex (Beckerleg 1995; Sindiga 1996). Such influence is so pervasive that traditional forms of parental control are breaking down (Beckerleg 1995). As these youths have no skills, they are not prepared for positions in surrounding tourism enterprises (Eastman 1995). This leads to frustration, loitering, general delinquency and drug taking (Brule 1988: 13; Beckerleg 1995). Some of these youths end up as the so-called beach boys offering informal services ranging from "male prostitution for female and male clients, tour guiding and companionship" (Peake 1989: 210) to selling drugs and a host of other things. Although beach boys provide sex to "surprisingly numerous elderly women, who visit Malindi each year seeking companionship of young men, "the boys do not take much pride in hustling old women; they hide away from home and acquaintances" (Peake 1989: 211-212). The beach boys engage in this behaviour so as to raise some money with which they would start a business.

Some writers consider the Kenyan coast to be a "tourist paradise for Western hunters of sex" (Thiong'o 1993: 173). There is even a claim that the Kenya coast is perceived as a place where western tourists could buy African teenage girls "for the price of a ticket to a cheap cinema show" (Thiong'o 1977: 175). Indeed, Kenya's beach holidays appear to have increasingly gained the image as "sex safari" (Migot-Adholla *et al.* 1982). Although it is difficult to demonstrate the number of young girls in sex tourism in Kenya, there appears to be a consensus even within the Kenya government that commercial sex involving them is rampant in pockets of civil society (Christian Aid 1995; Daily Nation 1995; 1996).

Despite local disapproval of prostitution, there are many lodging houses around beach hotels (Mwakisha 1995; Migot-Adholla *et al.* 1982). It is well known that these houses act as hideouts for prostitutes and drug peddlers. Also, the increasing numbers of clubs, discotheques, beach resorts and other tourist conveniences has provided a perfect umbrella for commercial sex workers. However, female prostitutes are usually not allowed into tourist-class hotels unaccompanied by a male partner. This practice has sometimes led to ugly and embarrassing harassment of bona fide female customers

entering such premises. This is where the services of the beach boys come in handy. They assist to connect female prostitutes in neighbouring lodging houses to male tourist clients. As noted above, the beach boys themselves provide sexual services to female tourists (Peake 1989). Sometimes, the beach boys accompany the prostitutes to bars, discos and other entertainment programmes in tourist hotels. Here, they conduct negotiations with tourists on behalf of their clients. Alternatively, the prostitutes make direct arrangements with willing male tourists with the beach boys monitoring the process and providing protection where necessary.

#### *Environmental impact*

Many of the environmental problems of the coast are associated with hotel and tourism development. Most hotels are not connected to sewerage systems and discharge raw effluent to the sea (Sinclair 1990). Solid waste disposal is a serious problem as well. Overcrowding by tourists and boats physically damage the coral reef. Also, the beaches do not have any toilet facilities leading boat operators and the informal traders to help themselves on the beaches thereby affecting their environmental quality for tourism. Besides, the contamination of the environment associated with poor sewage and solid waste disposal is likely to undermine the tourism industry because of the potential health risk.

#### PROBLEMS OF COAST TOURISM

Coast tourism faces a number of problems that have to be addressed if the region has to maintain its tourism product. This is especially so with the physical infrastructure, in particular roads, water supplies and electricity. Coast roads need to be graded and the level of connectivity should be improved. Even urban roads which carry most of the tourist traffic are in a bad condition. In particular, attention must go to the maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing road network. Also, roads connecting the beaches and the terrestrial protected areas such as Tsavo and Shimba Hills need to be improved.

Water is a persistent problem for coast hotels. The main supply line to Mombasa for example is the 270-km long pipeline from Mzima Springs in Tsavo West National Park which produces about 35,000 m<sup>3</sup> of water a day and also serves various other places on its way to Mombasa. Although this is supplemented with supplies from Marere River, Sabaki River as well as boreholes, it is still inadequate. In 1992 for example, all sources of supply provided 85,000 m<sup>3</sup> of water per day compared to a demand level of 190,000 m<sup>3</sup> in the low season and 220,000 in the high season (Kenya 1994b: 19). This water problem is adversely affecting the tourist industry. Although some hotels have sunk boreholes to obtain additional water, the risks have increased as well. The water table has gone further underground allowing salty sea water to move inland, and supplies from boreholes are seriously threatened with raw sewage.

In terms of electricity, Kenya does not generate sufficient supplies. During peak periods, demand is greater than supply. During dry periods, Kenya's hydro-electric power generation slumps because the levels of water dams go low. This leads to irregular

supplies and the rationing of available power. This affects tourism enterprises in addition to commercial and industrial disruption. In tourist accommodation facilities, entertainment programmes are interrupted, food in storage gets spoilt and several other conveniences are affected to the chagrin of hotel managers and their guests. This could lead to loss of confidence of the coast as a competitive holiday destination. The problem of the basic physical infrastructure at the coast is a consequence of massive hotel construction without planning.

As noted above, early tourism development at the coast was undertaken without being guided by comprehensive planning. Whatever planning controls existed at the time merely insured that a proposed hotel development did not cause "external diseconomies" (Kenya 1971). Unfortunately, planning tended to be done in a reactive way; that is, after a development had been proposed. Without rational zones for tourism development, hotels have been located at inappropriate places. In some cases, noisy hotels with open air discotheques have been put near quiet hotels with older clientele (Sinclair 1990: 49). There do exist local building regulations, however, but these are often ignored. In Malindi, a hotel was constructed between two Islamic mosques (Sinclair 1990). At Watamu and elsewhere, hotels have been located in the middle of local communities, which created tensions because of the behaviour associated with tourists.

## CONCLUSION

Coast tourism started as a spontaneous activity undertaken by resident Europeans from the country's interior regions. On the basis of this local initiative, large numbers of foreign tourists started to visit the beaches aided in part by the development of the all-inclusive packaged tours from the mid-1960s. Both local and foreign investors responded to this market demand for accommodation. Consequently, coast tourism development was not integrated into the local economy. Roads, water supplies and electricity serve the tourist sites but are not always connected to the centres of the local population. This has tended to perpetuate the material differences between the tourism enclaves and the local society.

Just like in other parts of Kenya, tourism has failed to attract the participation of the local community. There are few backward linkages to the local areas which support tourism. As a local economic activity, tourism's role is rather small.

The local people appear to have an uneasy coexistence with tourism, which is related to the fact that the Waswahili population is relatively small and lacks the political clout to successfully challenge the government on tourism policy (Sindiga 1996: 429). This may be partly because the representation of the Muslim community in the Kenya government is rather small. There is increasing evidence, however, that the Waswahili have begun to invest in guest houses, especially in Lamu and Mombasa. This effort is largely directed at renovating residential houses and turning them into guest houses. Such investment may meet part of the domestic tourism market. Domestic tourism is likely to provide multiple benefits including absorbing occasional instabilities of international tourism. Also, small and medium-sized hotel establishments create more employment than the large hotels.

Local friction against tourism requires to be addressed as tourism development in the long term must have the support and goodwill of the local people. Also, tourism planners must ensure that the design and location of tourist facilities consider the environmental, economic and cultural realities of a given region.

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Appendix I Hotel bed-nights occupied, 1991-99 ('000)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Kenya	6,518.6	5,525.8	6,188.8	5,110.0	5,054.8	5,061.2	4,910.3	2,813.0	2,951.0
Coast Province	4,336.3	3,807.0	4,104.4	3,388.9	3,346.6	3,330.0	3,204.9	1,658.3	1,747.8
Coastal beach	3,881.7	3,482.5	3,762.0	3,071.5	3,059.6	3,144.9	3,074.4	1,505.3	1,625.2
Coastal other	269.7	181.8	196.2	185.2	166.7	70.9	71.5	109.1	73.9
Coastal hinterland	184.9	142.7	146.2	132.2	120.3	114.2	59.0	43.9	48.7

Sources: Kenya 1995: 165; 1998: 179; 2000: 174.

Appendix 2 Number of visitors to national parks and game reserves, 1991-99 ('000)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Kenya	1,518.5	1,367.1	1,521.0	1,527.5	1,493.1	1,488.7	1,364.5	1,079.4	1,533.4
Coast Province	436.1	417.5	407.1	423.7	453.3	375.6	331.0	216.0	325.3
Tsavo West	119.3	103.1	102.9	105.4	93.1	93.6	88.6	54.9	61.0
Tsavo East	135.9	125.5	135.8	132.4	228.8	137.5	123.2	66.9	111.6
Shimba Hills	38.2	31.9	24.8	31.6	20.2	23.4	22.5	16.8	17.7
Malindi Marine	33.0	44.2	41.1	39.4	38.8	39.3	27.0	13.7	23.9
Kisite/Mpunguti	33.1	28.0	27.5	34.8	32.4	39.9	35.1	29.2	34.2
Mombasa Marine	54.6	57.8	43.3	48.0	23.9	21.7	15.2	16.2	36.1
Watamu Marine	22.0	27.0	31.7	32.1	16.1	20.2	19.4	18.3	40.8

Sources: Kenya 1995: 167; 1998: 182; 2000: 177.

Appendix 3 Number of visitors to museums, snake parks and sites, 1991-99 ('000)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Kenya	789.7	813.0	849.9	818.3	842.5	758.8	588.1	494.2	573.1
Coast Province	255.8	265.1	342.6	287.8	311.8	231.4	168.3	116.8	150.7
Fort Jesus	187.0	187.4	289.9	221.4	245.3	180.2	124.4	88.9	107.8
Gedi	41.5	58.5	37.2	45.7	43.7	29.6	29.7	14.8	27.3
Lamu	13.3	10.3	7.7	10.4	10.7	12.2	8.6	6.2	6.7
Jumba la Mtwala	14.0	7.8	6.9	9.6	11.3	8.5	4.9	4.0	5.5
Kilifi Mwarani	.-	1.1	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.9	3.4

Sources: Kenya 1995: 168; 1998: 183; 2000: 177.

## REVIEW DETAILS

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*Source*

Sindiga I (2000). Tourism. In Hoorweg J., Foeken D. & Obudho R. eds. *Kenya Coast Handbook: Culture, resources and development in the East African littoral*. (pp. 223-236). Hamburg: LIT Verlag