



UNWTO EAST AFRICA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FORUM

MOMBASA, KENYA

20-22 AUGUST 2015

CONCEPT NOTE

BACKGROUND

Travel & Tourism has proven to be a truly global phenomenon defining the 21st Century. An activity once reserved for the privileged few only some decades ago, with more than one billion people crossing international borders each year, Travel & Tourism today offers people across the world an unparalleled source of growth, development, opportunity and unity. Globalization of goods and services, more leisure time, the technological and transport revolutions and rising middle classes, firmly positions tourism as one of the world's leading growth engines.

The numbers speak for themselves: 25 million international arrivals in 1950, 674 million in 2000, and over 1.1 billion in 2014 – international tourism shows no signs of slowing down. In 2014, international tourism exceeded once again our expectations, rising by 4.7% and hitting a new record of 1,138 million tourists travelling the world in one single year.

This remarkable tourism sector growth has had an invaluable impact on economies worldwide. Providing nations with the basis for development, investment, earnings, job creation and vital social inclusion, at present tourism accounts for 9% of global GDP, generates more than US\$ 1.3 trillion in trade income or 30% of the world's services exports, and provides one in eleven jobs worldwide.

In 2015, UNWTO forecasts international tourist arrivals to grow between 3% and 4%. Maintaining an inspiring growth trajectory, UNWTO analysis estimates that by 2030, the number of international arrivals will reach 1.8 billion meaning that in two decades' time, 5 billion people will cross international borders for leisure, business or other purposes such as visiting friends and family every day, not even including the four times as many tourists traveling domestically.

Nowhere is the value of Travel & Tourism more clearly evidenced than in Africa.

In 2014, the African region maintained a 5% share in worldwide arrivals and a 3% share in tourism receipts. In absolute terms, the region welcomed a total of 56 million international tourists representing an increase of 2% versus prior year. International tourism receipts (+3%) increased by US\$ 1 billion to reach US\$ 36 billion. These figures should, however, be interpreted with caution, as results are still based on the comparatively limited data available so far.

Examining the continent's performance on a sub-regional basis,:

- In North Africa (+1%), international tourist arrivals in leading destination Morocco grew by a modest 2%, following a strong performance in 2013, while arrivals in Tunisia decreased by 3%.
- Subsaharan Africa grew by an estimated 3% in 2014, based on available information. Arrivals to the subregion's largest destination South Africa (+0%) were flat in 2014.
- Worth mentioning among the other destinations for which data is reported are Côte d'Ivoire (+24%), Madagascar (+13%), Mauritius (+5%), Zimbabwe (+3%) and the Seychelles (+1%).

The next 20 years show clear signs of continued growth in Travel & Tourism for the African continent.

Importantly, they also offer the opportunity to be years of leadership: tourism as the continent's leading sector for economic growth, social progress and environmental sustainability.

Continent-wide, to make this possible we need to make tourism a priority in national policy decisions, foster competitive and responsible business models and practices and increase cooperation between the public and private sectors.

In addition, it is critical that sub-regional destinations look to cooperation to advance tourism growth and development efforts, working together to be able to leverage traveller interest and mobility in their quest for unique, enriching African travel experiences. In so doing, the opportunity exists for sub-regions, and the continent as a whole, to maximise sustainable growth and competitiveness for the betterment of all nations.

ADVANCING OPPORTUNITY OF EAST AFRICA REGIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

In an effort to accelerate the unlocking of greater potential of the East Africa sub-region, the UNWTO is honoured to be bringing together Tourism leaders of the East Africa and the Vanilla Islands to participate in the first EAST AFRICA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FORUM, to be held in Mombasa, Kenya from the 20th to 22nd August, 2015.

Proudly hosted by the Government of Kenya, the East Africa Tourism Development Forum aims to unite the region's Tourism leaders to engage in interactive dialogue around the important theme of "*CONNECTING OPPORTUNITY*".

The forum will begin with a welcome cocktail on the 20th August. The official opening will be done by H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta on the 21st August.

Thereafter, a series of thoughtful, solutions-orientated discussions focused on advancing tourism growth in the East Africa region will unfold, commencing with examination of East African regional *IMAGE*. An important scene setter for the day, this upfront session will examine the region's awareness, understanding, appeal and invitation as a lever for sustainable, equitable tourism activity into and around the region.

Following on, the forum will look more closely at *INTEGRATION* – identifying approaches to cooperative development of the tourism offering as a prelude to enhanced positioning of East

Africa and the Vanilla Islands within the highly competitive global tourism landscape, thereby directing tourism opportunity towards destinations within the greater region.

Finally, the forum will address matters surrounding *FACILITATION*. Together, opportunities for collaboration around mobility for greater shared benefit will be unlocked.

At the conclusion of the forum on the 21st August, the UNWTO will share a summary of outcomes and agreed next steps which will provide the Tourism leaders of the East Africa region and the Vanilla Islands with a framework for on-going cooperation.

The morning of the 22nd August will be dedicated to a Ministerial Dialogue to be lead by the UNWTO – *by invitation only*.

During the afternoon of the 22nd August, a Technical Visit will take place along Mombasa's coastline. All are welcome.