



SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM
Making tourism count to communities, ecosystems and businesses

Monica Ondeng, Fanuel Owiti
Great Lakes University, Kenya

The impact of community partnership approach to water hyacinth control: a case study of Lake Victoria

Water hyacinth is a free-floating perennial plant that can grow to a height of 3 feet. The dark green leaf blades are circular to elliptical in shape attached to a spongy, inflated petiole and thick heavily branched, dark fibrous root system. Water hyacinth is a very aggressive invader forming thick mats which cover the entire surface of the lake causing oxygen depletions and hindering the multiplication of fish in the Lake. It has affected water sports, water transport and fishing in Lake Victoria. Due to water hyacinth coverage in the lake, there have been no significant water sports yet this is one of the most important tourist attractions in the region. Water transport has also been affected through the complete coverage with the green leaves of water hyacinth that have spread all over the water surface, while fishing has been greatly affected due its occupation and oxygen depletions. However, with proper community partnership approach, this menace can be turned into positive entrepreneurial activities like manufacturing of organic manure, biogas, crafting of furniture and beauty products for supply to the hospitality and tourism industry. This paper will identify various community partnership approaches that can be used to control water hyacinth from Lake Victoria, hence impacting positively to the local community both economically, socially, and environmentally within Lake Region.