



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

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Insecurity and Kenyan Tourism

Tourism contributes a significant portion of the Kenyan GDP. However, over the last few years the country has witnessed a drop in visitor arrivals from 1.8 million in 2011 to about 1.5 million in 2013. Tourism earnings declined from 97.9 billion Ksh to 94 billion Ksh over the same period. The drop is attributed mainly to security concerns. Towards the end of the last decade the instability in Somalia led to kidnapping activities inside Kenyan territory and threatened Kenya's tourism sector. This forced the Kenyan Government, in October 2011, to actively participate in the Somali conflict and engage Al-Shabaab. Following this action the Somali based terror group has waged a campaign of retaliatory attacks inside Kenya, mostly against soft targets. The tourism industry has suffered as a result. Future growth and sustainability of this sector now hinges on a robust, well-crafted security policy. The present study analyses the effect of general insecurity and terrorism incidence and intensity on tourism numbers in Kenya using monthly tourist arrival and departure data from 2007 to 2013. No such study have been carried out for Kenya. Our results suggest that intensity of attacks as captured by fatalities significantly impacts negatively on tourist arrivals much more than the incidence per se. Also disruptive acts of insecurity such as the JKIA fire also very significantly impacted negatively on tourist arrivals. Policy-wise, this suggests that the priority of security infrastructure should be to eliminate high intensity events from occurring.