



AN ASSEMENT OF BLUE ECONOMY SUBSECTORS IN KENYA:

COASTAL AND MARINE TOURISM

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1. Introduction

Tourism is a significant driver and contributor to the economy development.

It is the **third-highest** contributor to gross domestic product

According to a report by the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) tourism accounted for 8.2 % of total gross domestic product in 2019.

Tourism equally contributes to **employment opportunities accounting for about 1.1 million people** (Ministry of Tourism & Wildlife, 2018).

Tourism creates linkages with other sectors of the economy, **adding to about 1.6 million jobs, or 8.5% of total employment** (WTTC, 2020).

According to the Kenya Tourist Board (KTB), of the tourists coming to Kenya, **about 65% visit the Kenyan Coast making tourism an essential part of the coastal economy.**



2. Coastal and marine tourism

Tourism industry is also a cornerstone of the country's Vision 2030. The sector, however, subject to seasonal fluctuations caused by factors such as: *Changes in foreign exchange rates; Health and security concerns; Catastrophic events*

The three major product lines of Kenya's tourism products are:

Coastal and marine

Safari

Business and conference travel.

Coastal tourism is land-based tourism activities such as: swimming, surfing and sunbathing, while maritime tourism refers to sea-based activities such as boating, yachting and cruising.

Marine tourism: sea-based activities such as boating, yachting, cruising, nautical sports, as well as their land-based services and infrastructures (Ecorys, 2013).



2. Coastal and marine tourism

Before 1965, there was small numbers of tourists in Kenya.

There has been a steady increase of visitors, and by 1980s, Kenya had become a top tourist destination.

- *The coast having a lion share of 60 percent*

Recent data on the development and growth of coastal and marine tourism in Kenya is scanty

For both coastal and marine tourism, water/sea element is predominant and is considered the main asset and advantage.



2. Coastal and marine tourism

Common coastal and marine tourism in Kenya include:

Cruising and sailing: Although cruising and sailing have been popular at the Mediterranean, Kenya has been receiving increased cruise ship traffic in the recent past.

Water sea sports: A diverse range of sports activities have already been established in Kenya (Mombasa, Malindi, and Diani).

Marine wildlife tourism: Kenya is home to some of the richest marine ecosystems with diverse sea flora and fauna; Malindi, Watamu, Kisite Mpunguti.

Heritage and cultural tourism: Kenya's coast has a rich history with several cultural and heritage attraction sites such as Fort Jesus, the Gede ruins, Kaya Kinondo sacred forests



2. Coastal and marine tourism

Strengths and opportunities

Cruising and sailing: Although cruising and sailing have been popular at the Mediterranean, Kenya has been receiving increased cruise ship traffic in the recent past.

Strength: Relative safe waters within the Kenyan territory.

Opportunity for growth:
Construction of post-modern cruise ship terminals.
Encourage the citizenry to engage in ship cruising activities.



2. Coastal and marine tourism

Strengths and opportunities

Water sea sports: Includes the most popular ones are scuba diving, speed boat riding, water skiing, windsurfing, swimming, sunbathing and coastal walk.

Some of the activities already taking place include Skydiving at Diani Beach, snorkeling at Malindi, windsurfing, Kite surfing, and jet skiing, among others.

Strength: The Kenyan Coast is particularly favorable for water sport activities as it is protected by a continental shelf that makes it relatively safer for such activities.
Youthful population

Opportunities for growth: Deep sea sporting activities are being undertaken in Kenya in small scale. Full scale exploration is limited due to lack of proper equipment and necessary skills



2. Coastal and marine tourism

Strengths and opportunities

Marine wildlife tourism: Kenya is home to some of the richest marine ecosystems with diverse sea flora and fauna; Malindi, Watamu, Kisite Mpunguti. Wasini area is also very popular with dolphin watching.

Strength: Variance in Kenya's ecosystem including mangrove forests and wildlife.

Opportunity: Strengthen security apparatus at the coast including the Tourism Police Unit in Kenya. Kenya's tourism sector suffered from incidents of insecurity.

One of the major sources of this insecurity are terrorism, post-election violence, political instability in the region, and crime which led to increasing cross-border traffic in small arms.



2. Coastal and marine tourism

Strengths and opportunities

Heritage and cultural tourism:

Activities such as the Lamu annual cultural festival week attracts a vast number of tourists from diverse backgrounds/ origins to come and experience the rich cultural heritage of coastal people.

There are endemic coastal forests such as the Arabuko Sokoke and Shimba Hills Reserve considered as sacred and religious places in Kenya.

Strength: Preserved cultural and heritage centres and the indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge and practices.

Opportunities for growth:

Need to protect the IP rights of the indigenous communities' traditional knowledge.

Need to maintain the cultural centres and heritage centres

Diversification and integration of coastal and inland attractors, including cultural, religious, or ancient trade routes e.g. the oldest trade ports where early explorers, missionaries, merchants, and sailors docked for supplies as they continued with their missions at sea and inland



2. Coastal and marine tourism

There is need to conserve and use the forests and resources sustainably for the benefit of other future generations.

This is because, the people residing around this area value the kayas and forests as cultural centers. ... but,

The destruction is happening despite...

Frameworks to ensure protection of Kenya's cultural heritage which include:

- *Constitutional provisions*
- *Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Cultural Expressions Act, 2016.*
- *The National Museums and Heritage Act, No. 6 of 2006.*



2. Coastal and marine tourism

Due to these negative effects and the importance of coastal and marine tourism in the global and local economy,...

... it is necessary to apply the Blue Economy approach to achieve sustainability principles in coastal and marine tourism.



3. Opportunities in Coastal and Marine Tourism

Cruise ship tourism: Cruise ship tourism attracts high net worth tourists, with industry experts pointing out that 400 cruise tourists are equivalent to 4000 air travel tourists.

Water sports tourism: Kenya has great potential for water-based tourism activities. The country has extensive beaches and coastal lines protected by the continental shelf. Some of the activities include Skydiving at Diani Beach, snorkeling at Malindi, windsurfing, Kite surfing, and jet skiing, among others.

Cultural Tourism /Heritage tourism: The Kenyan coast has a long and exotic history. Cultural heritage resources include historical sites and monuments, ethnographic resources, arts and crafts religious centres, traditions and festivals.

Thematic Itineraries: Diversification and integration of coastal and inland attractors, including cultural, religious, or ancient trade routes.



3. Opportunities in Coastal and Marine Tourism

Health and Spa: Health and spa facilities are expanding along coasts, including alleged medicinal and therapeutic qualities of the sands and clays and thermal waters.

Complimentary Activities: By expanding activities such as wine-tasting, gastronomy (food and culture), conferencing, special events, festivals, health, and well-being.

Recreational boating and Yacht Tourism: brings particularly high-value, low-impact tourism to coastal regions, stimulating the local hospitality, transport, construction, and supporting trades.

Deep-sea Sport fishing, sea safari, and mountain trips: Sport fishing is attracting more tourists, both domestic and international.



4. Barriers to development of Coastal and Marine Tourism

Underwater hotels and sea-floor/floating resorts: are being developed in many parts of the world.

Deep-sea tourist expeditions: Locations range from shipwrecks to hydrothermal vents and other beautiful deep-ocean ecosystems.

Marine Ecotourism: Marine Parks, underwater archaeological parks, coral reefs, and other locations with archaeological, ecological, or historical value can be exploited sustainably.



4. Barriers to development of Coastal and Marine Tourism

Low Level of Innovation: Changing consumer values have increased the demand for attractive and sustainable products that provide unique and customized experiences

Licensing, regulations and taxation: There are many different legislative instruments regulate the tourism sector, including coastal and marine tourism; which are further complicated by the overlapping functions of more many public organizations regulating the sector

Lack of Information/data: Reporting of marine and coastal statistics is not easy, and neither is it a standardized task

Climate Change: Rising sea levels associated with climate change will cause coastal erosion, loss of beach area, higher costs to protect and maintain waterfront tourism precincts.



4. Barriers to development of Coastal and Marine Tourism

Financial Constraints: Constraints on investment funding impede the potential growth of coastal and marine tourism

Leakages and offshoring: A key requirement for sustainable coastal and marine tourism development is for the local communities to benefit from the industry

Poor Governance: There is a failure of good governance of coastal and marine tourism regionally, nationally, and internationally as it is loosely structured

Pollution: According to several studies, yachts and cruises represent the largest marine tourism segment responsible for high levels of water and air pollution.



4. Barriers to development of Coastal and Marine Tourism

Safety and Security: Tourism development depends on safety and security. Tourists avoid insecure destinations

Weak marketing: Promotional and marketing weaknesses deter tourism development.

Language barrier: The shortage of tourist guides who speak a foreign language is a significant problem as many tourists expect assistance during travel

Coastal land alteration: Resource extraction such as hydrocarbon and energy infrastructure (pipelines) cause increased environmental impacts and pressures to the coastal and marine ecosystem.



4. Barriers to development of Coastal and Marine Tourism

Global communicable diseases: Covid-19 is one of the greatest challenges facing the world today.

Infrastructure barrier: The government has continually improved infrastructure in the coastal areas by constructing new roads and bridges to improve connectivity

Water and sanitation: Hotels and lodges in coastal Kenya and elsewhere in the country have historically suffered from poor drinking water service and most hoteliers and lodge operators have developed backup sources

Poor hospitality and other related services: The hospitality and other related services include accommodation, food, and beverages, entertainment



4. Barriers to development of Coastal and Marine Tourism

Pressures on resources: The coastal population is growing at a rate of 3.7% annually and exerts significant pressure on fisheries resources

Marine ecosystem health: Bio-based materials and components made from oceans' species provide packaging and vaccines solutions.

Capacity Building, Education and Training: The coastal and marine tourism sector has often had difficulties attracting or maintaining enough skilled personnel



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5. Governance Responses

Kenya does not have a ICZM legislation, however, EMCA, a primary legislation for the management of the environment in Kenya, lays a foundation for the development of an ICZM framework.

There is drafting of ICZM policy

The Tourism Act 2011, establishes the Tourism Regulatory Authority as the state corporation in charge of formulating and prescribing measures to ensure sustainable establishments to realize sustainable tourism development throughout the country.



5. Governance Responses

Mama Ngina Waterfront Management Board: in charge of putting in place control measures for traders in the facility, ensure garbage collection, maintenance of the grounds and ensure security.

The Constitution grants a right to a clean and healthy environment and obliges the state ensure sustainable exploitation, utilization, management and conservation of the environment and its natural resources



5. Governance Responses

In 2016, Kenya developed the National Spatial Plan covering the period 2015 to 2045.

The purpose of the Plan is to provide a national spatial structure that defines how the national space is utilized to ensure optimal and sustainable use of land and land-based resources.

Plan does not adequately address tourism activities that emanate from such developments.

Physical and Land Use Planning Act of 2019, one of the principles and norms of physical and land use planning as set out therein is that development activities shall be planned in a manner that integrates economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations.

The Act makes provision for development control whose objectives is to protect and conserve the environment.



5. Governance Responses

The Land Act empowers the National Land Commission to make rules and regulations for the sustainable conservation of land based natural resources including measures to protect critical ecosystems and habitats.

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5. Governance Responses

Bolstering destination safety and security through establishment of a specialized unit within the National Police Service.

This specialized unit is referred to as the Tourists Police Unit (TPU)

The Kenya Coast Guard Service is established under Kenya Coast Guard Service Act No. 20 of 2020. The Service is established to ensure security of territorial waters, port and coastal security and provide security for protection of archaeological and historical sites.



5. Governance Responses

The Maritime Zone Act is the law relating to the territorial waters and the continental shelf of Kenya; it aims to provide for the establishment and delimitation of the exclusive economic zone of Kenya

It has defects in information sharing, search, investigation and sea-based enforcement creates governance gaps

Kenya is a signatory to United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

The geographic Information System (GIS) could be used to map coastal resources and identifying overlapping uses hence assist planning to avoid conflict of interests.



6. General opportunities for growth

Protect natural and wildlife asset protection against degradation

Develop of dynamic product offerings

Streamline the enabling and regulatory environment

Improving the institutional framework, and

Attending to capacity-building needs for all players.

Finance coastal and marine tourism– sources, instruments and mechanisms to explored are present

Involve private sector in development

Blue economy strategy

Marine spatial planning



End

2021