

KENYA IS A TOURISM DESTINATION FOR AFRICANS TOO



Kenya's officials want to further boost the country's tourism industry by promoting it as a tourism destination not only for overseas visitors but also for Africans.

Kenya is a luring and well established tourism destination with beaches and wild life reserves. It is an important part of the country's economy and Kenyans want it to contribute even more. The Kenya Tourist Board (KTB) and Kenya Airways (KQ) are thus going to invest Sh50 million (€ 500.000) into a marketing campaign that would promote the country as a tourism destination for Africans. The aim is to diversify the source market.

Currently only some **20 per cent of tourists come from Africa**, most of them from the Republic of South Africa. The tourism Minister of Kenya, Najib Balala, believes this initiative will encourage growth in intra-regional tourism. This way Kenya would be less dependent on wider international markets.

The plan is to organize trips for African travel agents and also to increase the intensity of advertising campaigns in all kinds of local media. Mr. Balala pointed out that new marketing strategies were desperately needed.

Kenya is also along with Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda a member of the East African Community (EAC). Rwandan President Paul Kagame and Kenya's Tourism Minister Najib Balala has been calling for a single tourist Visa for the EAC. The idea is to promote the community as a **single tourism destination**. The EAC members participate on the International Tourism Bourse (ITB Berlin), which also helps their image as a tourism destination. At the last ITB, Rwanda was the "Best African Exhibitor" while Kenya was placed the third.

There are regions in Kenya that still do not efficiently exploit their tourism potential, for example West Kenya. Recently the **Lake Victoria Tourism Association** was established to improve this situation. They will expose the regions' beaches, places of historical importance as well as its cultural heritage and establish a cultural heritage centre.

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