

# BEACH TOURISM: TANZANIA'S NEW HOPE



Tanzanian tourism currently faces a lack of skilled tourism personnel. The industry suffers from the economic crisis as well. The country officials want to diversify the tourism offer by developing beach tourism, which will require investment and skilled personnel.

Tanzanian tourism industry is vital for the country's economy as it represents approximately 9 per cent of its GDP. According to the Permanent Secretary (PS) in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Dr. Ladislaus Komba, **tourism directly or indirectly employs some 7.1 percent of work force in Tanzania.**

The industry, however, faces a lack of skilled tourism and hotel personnel, which makes numerous businesses to hire foreigners. The secretary emphasizes that the Tanzanian tourism college needs to produce more graduates to tap the demand for specialized tourism employees.

Tanzania also suffers from the world economic crisis which affected areas of tourism. For instance **Safari tourism is the most important part of Tanzanian tourism sector** and it is also the sector that was hit the hardest. The number of visitors considerably dropped but according to the recent statistics the industry seems already recovering.

Tanzanians are also planning further development. The country's president Jakaya Kikwete recently visited the Caribbean where he was inspired by the developed beach tourism market. According to the president, Tanzania needs to capitalize on its beautiful pristine beaches as the Caribbean nations do. There are hundreds of kilometers of warm beaches in Tanzania that wait for development.

Today the nation's tourism industry is mainly based on wild life. To lure more visitors the authorities thus plan to diversify the offer, develop new beach resorts and attract foreign investors. Infrastructure improvements are also part of the projects as well as raising the quality of tourism services that are provided.

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Date: 2010-01-04

Article link: <http://www.tourism-review.com/challenges-for-the-tanzania-tourism-industry-news1981>