

POACHING SERIOUSLY THREATENS AFRICA'S TOURISM AND ECONOMY



Poaching and illegal wildlife trade pose a serious threat to the economic development of Africa and its tourism potential.

One of the most important tourist segments in Africa is wildlife watching, according to a new study released UNWTO. To support the international projects to address the problem of poaching, which has reached unprecedented proportions, and strengthen the role of tourism in the fight against such crimes, **UNWTO is leading the efforts to deepen the understanding of the economic value of wildlife watching tourism in Africa.**

According to UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai poaching is not only destroying valuable ecosystems, but also poses a serious threat to socio-economic development. Biodiversity loss is directly linked to the loss of development opportunities in the African tourism industry, which provides a livelihood for millions of people.

Wildlife watching represents 80% of total annual sales of trips to Africa, safari being the most popular product. Animals threatened by poaching, such as elephants and rhinos, are part of some of the most popular wildlife watching tours.

The study also provides new findings on the economic significance of this type of tourism.

In addition to generating a crucial income for protected areas, through entrance fees, a typical wildlife watching tour costs on average USD433 and generates additional USD55 per day per person in costs. In addition, the tours often include services that are contracted locally, such as accommodation, transport, guides and cultural shows, all of which create significant employment opportunities for the local population.

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