

KENYA'S TOURISM: 2010 MIGHT BE A RECORD YEAR



East Africa's largest economy is finally recovering from difficult year and is making inroads in tourism. Ahead of horticulture and tea export, tourism is Kenya's second biggest source of income.

As the world recovers from the economic slowdown of 2009, Kenya is an example of a nation whose progress was stunted yet is now beginning to recover. Indeed, **the East Africans will probably gain greater profits from tourism this year than they did in 2007**, which was a record year for Kenya. **483,000 tourists have visited Kenya in the first half of 2010**. If the trend continues, the record will surely be broken. Post-election violence made the situation much worse last year, yet the current political state suggests that such violence and unrest could now belong to history.

Kenya is famed for its beaches and safari tours. **If the country succeeds in promoting itself as a safe and attractive destination, then it is almost certain that the tourism numbers will go up**. This is also the aim of Mr. Ndegwa, Managing Director of Kenya Tourist Board, who presents Kenya above all as a safe country. According to his opinion the recent referendum and absence of violence in 2010 are signs of progress.

Local travel trade stakeholders are however well aware that Kenya's tourism needs to improve its image as soon as possible. Kenya has to face heavy competition in the safari industry from a number of emerging African nations. The beaches of northern Africa are also seen as competition, especially as they are closer for European tourists. The Kenyan ministry of tourism believes that a mixture of luck, patience and belief will bring its rewards and the much needed funds to Kenya.

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