



**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT**

**THE ROLE OF ECO-TOURISM IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:
THE CASE OF MERU NATIONAL PARK, KENYA**

M.Sc. THESIS

OLA ALNOMAIRI

**Nicosia
September, 2022**

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MASTER THESIS

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Approval

We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by **Ola Alnomairi** titled “**The Role of the Eco-tourism the Sustainable Development: The Case of Meru National Park, Kenya**” and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Educational Sciences.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that all information, documents, analysis, and results in this thesis have been collected and presented according to the academic rules and ethical guidelines of the Institute of Graduate Studies, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced information and data that are not original to this study.

Ola Alnomairi

22/11/2022

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OLA ALNOMAIRI

Abstract

THE ROLE OF ECO-TOURISM IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF MERU NATIONAL PARK, KENYA

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Ecotourism is the meaning of having fun, and adventures, within the natural engagement, as well this term in Tourism is one branch of dealing with nature, mitigating the ordinary tourism impacts that have been recorded harm to nature such as the Carbon Footprint. Ecotourism can be classified within sustainable development practices, and developments for the long run, as the conservation, and restoration of Ecology (Vegetation, animal species, local tribes, and people), is necessary practice reviving the Ecotourism industry. Within this research, Kenya was the place of taking the moment in diving within the Meru National Park, as a scholar, and information has been picked and investigated more within an assessment methodology to relate the practices of the human within the industry of Ecotourism. The results were appearing that Meru National Park, has degradation and difficulties in maintaining the Park within the conservation, and restoration acts were limited as well the local human activities an affect the Park condition, at the level of ecology, which means the ecotourism also has adverse effects, starting from services and practices. As the recommendation of the study targeted the importance of some practices to boost the ecotourism industry and engage it within the sustainable development practices for the MNP, to have the best outcome as a sustainable practice.

Key Words: eco-tourism, environment, sustainable development, Meru National Park, Kenya

Abstract

SÜRDÜRÜLEBİLİR KALKINMADA EKOTURİZMİN ROLÜ: MERU MİLLİ PARKI ÖRNEĞİ, KENYA

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Eylül, 2022, (92) sayfa

Ekoturizm, doğal etkileşim içinde eğlence ve macera yaşamının anlamıdır ve Turizm'deki bu terim, Karbon Ayak İzi gibi doğaya zarar verdiği kaydedilen olağan turizm etkilerini hafifleten doğayla uğraşmanın bir dalıdır. Ekoturizm, sürdürülebilir kalkınma uygulamaları içinde sınıflandırılabilir ve uzun vadeli gelişmeler, Ekolojinin (bitki örtüsü, hayvan türleri, yerel kabileler ve insanlar) korunması ve restorasyonu, Ekoturizm endüstrisini canlandırmak için olmazsa olmaz bir uygulamadır. Bu araştırma kapsamında Kenya, bir bilim insanı olarak Meru National Park'ta dalış yapma anının yaşandığı yer oldu ve Ekoturizm endüstrisinde insanın uygulamalarını ilişkilendirmek için bir değerlendirme metodolojisi içinde bilgiler daha fazla seçildi ve araştırıldı. Sonuçlar, Meru Milli Parkı'nın bozulma ve koruma kapsamında Parkın sürdürülmesinde zorluklar yaşadığı ve restorasyon eylemlerinin yanı sıra yerel insan faaliyetlerinin sınırlı olduğu ve Parkın durumunu ekoloji düzeyinde etkilediği ortaya çıktı, yani ekoturizm de var demektir. hizmetlerden ve uygulamalardan başlayarak kötü etkiler. Çalışmanın tavsiyesi, sürdürülebilir bir uygulama olarak en iyi sonucu elde etmek için ekoturizm endüstrisini desteklemek ve MNP için sürdürülebilir kalkınma uygulamalarına dahil etmek için bazı uygulamaların önemini hedeflemiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: ekoturizm, çevre, sürdürülebilir kalkınma, Meru Ulusal Parkı, Kenya

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List of Abbreviations

BR:	Biosphere Reserves
EI:	Ecotourism Industry
ESF:	Environmental Science and Forestry
EWE:	Energy, Water, and Environment
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
IUCN:	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IYE:	International Year of Ecotourism
MCN:	Meru Conservation Area
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
MEA:	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MNP:	Meru National Park
NbS:	Nature-based Solutions
Pas:	Protected Areas
SD:	Sustainable Development
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
TIES:	The International Ecotourism Society
UBC:	University of British Columbia
UN:	United Nations
UNESCO:	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO:	World Tourism Organization
US:	United States
WCED:	Western Cape Education Department
WHO:	World Health Organization
WTA:	World Travel Award

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Today, tourism contributes significantly to economic growth and plays a vital role in the economy. A variety of services, including transportation, lodging, food, leisure, and entertainment, as well as those offered following tourist goals, are necessary to satisfy their needs. In terms of these services, supplying accommodations is crucial for the tourism industry since, without accommodations, people who travel for vacation from their homes would not qualify as tourists. To accommodate guests, they must meet their needs for food, drink, and leisure both within and outside of their hospitality facilities. These services are intended to satisfy the special dietary and recreational requirements of tourists as well as the needs of the hospitality industry (Ionel, 2016).

A significant amount of elasticity to natural (ecological), general economic, social, and political changes in every nation characterizes tourism as a complex economic activity. Given that several mega-, macro-, and meso-environmental factors have a detrimental impact on the tourist sector of the national economy, the situation there is complex (Nikazachenko et al., 2018).

Over the past few decades, the tourism industry has grown dramatically. More precisely, over the past few decades, the tourist sector's contribution to the global GSP has increased dramatically. In this regard, the tourist sector has evolved into one of the most important instruments for attaining sustainable economic growth in most nations. The tourism industry not only contributes significantly to the GDP, but it also plays a significant role in increasing employment opportunities, decreasing poverty, improving income distribution, increasing demand for goods and services, increasing tax revenues, and giving governments access to more foreign exchange reserves (Ren et al., 2019).

Kenya nation is blessed with stunning geographical settings, an abundance of species living in its natural habitats, long coastlines, and picturesque views. Additionally, the 45 ethnic communities that makeup Kenya's population have

contributed to the country's rich and diversified culture. The economy of Kenya is influenced by tourism. In Kenya, the travel and tourism industry generated 1.6 million jobs in 2019, accounting for 8.5% of all jobs, and it contributed 8.2% to the country's gross domestic product (WTTC, 2020). In addition, Kenya, behind South Africa and Nigeria, has Sub-Saharan Africa's third-largest tourism industry (GOK, 2020a). Despite having a wealth of tourist attractions, Kenya has mostly focused on two types of tourism, namely coastal beach tourism and wildlife tourism (Agayi, 2021).

People prioritize travel more when their quality of life improves, which is what is causing the tourist industry to expand. As a result, tourism becomes a global economic activity. Ecotourism inevitably becomes a substitute option for many individuals to meet their needs. The term "ecotourism" describes traveling for specific reasons in untouched or unpolluted natural settings while also taking an interest in the local culture and wild animals and flora. With the least negative effects on the environment and culture, it tends to promote natural conservation and environmental protection. While enjoying a natural activity, visitors could learn about resource conservation, provide feedback for community development, and eventually achieve sustainable yield management (Huang et al., 2019).

Although there is considerable conflict in the definitions of the term "ecotourism," the majority of tourism research agrees that the eco prefix is a clear indication of environmental or natural resource management as a fundamental principle of the idea. The question of whether ecotourism adheres more closely to its defining criteria in practice arises from the inherent discrepancy between theoretical conceptualizations of this form of tourism as "green practice expected to address adverse outcomes of conventional tourism" and the actual environmental impacts of this type of travel (Atieno and Njoroge, 2018).

Ecotourism's natural attractions and other environmental resources around the world are threatened by a variety of factors, such as the negative consequences of climate change and environmental degradation. In their argument that "it is widespread and growing environmental damage resulting from tourism, as it contributes to forest depletion, water pollution, soil erosion, habitat destruction,

wildlife harassment, economic exploitation, and cultural degradation of indigenous communities," Dapash and Kunday (2005: 5) highlight the particular case for Kenya.

Kenya's national Parks and associated buffer zones serve as the country's main ecotourism destinations, therefore harms like habitat destruction and wildlife harassment can in part be linked to these areas. According to Kruger (2005), tourism itself has been a predator of the ecosystem, placing undue strain on places and going beyond their carrying capacity. The worst-case scenario for tourism's role as a cause of environmental degradation in the area was the impact of irrational mass tourism (Atieno and Njoroge, 2018).

Statement of Problem

By giving the local community a more sustainable alternative source of income, ecotourism aids in the development of local communities. Many see ecotourism as an effective strategy to safeguard the environment while generating positive social and economic effects for nearby communities (Buckner et al., 2016).

According to a group of scholars who recently discussed Kenya's economic challenges and human abuse of the country's natural resources, national parks currently serve as one of the country's main economic pillars, and over the past two years, the international tourism industry has struggled to keep up due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Since ecotourism mostly focuses on natural resources like national Parks, marine sites, and more like natural reserves, it may be practiced with a little negative impact on the environment.

Information regarding Kenya's national parks, particularly the Meru National Park, would be gathered for this project. Studies conducted at Meru National Park were confined to academics' worries about the park's natural and biological conditions as a result of human activities. In addition, the Kenyan government had few economic resources that might be used to restrict park conservation measures. The 2030 conservation project of Kenya's conservation strategy includes Meru National Park. Since the conservation process is essential for sustainable

development at the level of natural areas within the selected Park, and since it may have an impact on ecotourism practices and actions, Meru National Park was chosen for this reason because it is located within the conservation area of the Kenya National Park Conservation Plan of 2030.

Kenya's national parks offer a wide range of natural resources and amenities to help travelers enjoy their trips, including:

- Mount Kenya National Park & Reserve.
- Amboseli National Park.
- South Island National Park.
- Saiwa Swamp National Park.
- Sibiloi National Park.
- Ruma National Park.
- Meru National Park (AFAR, 2022)

Over 3,200 square kilometers of the Meru Conservation Area are legally protected; Meru National Park, Kora National Park, and Bisanadi National Reserve were all gazetted in 1966, 1973, and 1979, respectively. According to UNESCO (2010), Meru national Park has been undergoing of conservation process to the area including the wildlife such as vegetation and animal species, this practice means the condition of the Park needs a kind of rehabilitation and refreshing for the wildlife state, such a conservation practices has been going on within the Park.

The problem of the study is to investigate the case of Meru National Park (MNP), in Kenya to have a recent image of ecotourism and the sustainable development action that has been taken within the Parking area, as well as how ecotourism can enhance the role of sustainable development within the region.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to understand the current situation of ecotourism in achieving environmentally sustainable development, particularly in Meru National Park in Kenya.

Research Question

What is the current situation of eco-tourism in focusing on environmentally sustainable development, particularly in Meru National Park in Kenya?

How can ecotourism particularly in Meru National Park be used in environmentally sustainable development?

Significance of the study

Kenya has pristine wildlife and is one of the most recorded countries for ecotourism destinations, it has beautiful wildlife, and a major number of national Parks, that varies from reserves to marine, and wild land types.

The study research would carry on within a secondary research method based on the available information that can be used in the tracking of the MNP, as this Park lies within the conservation area according to the 2030 plan done by (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2018), in Kenya, as this strategy conducts the aims of transforming the area of the Park. In this pattern, an investigation would be held on within the assessment model that is done later within the study in chapter four that would explain the case of MNP.

The research would consider the provided services that the Park provides as well the wildlife, and the species that are within the Park area, as well as the features, this includes a picture, and the classifications of the Park according to the ICUN, as well as the last available scholars about the studies that have been done in the Park recently within the previous nearly years.

The assessing of the Park's condition according to the conservation plans is part of sustainable development that can contribute to the ecotourism industry within the MNP, while the Park within the current state may have been exposed to degradation at the natural level (ecosystem). This could help in aiding the state of ecotourism in Kenya, particularly in MNP, as well as determination of the ecotourism state, as well the current process that has been taken within the Park land such as conservation, and protection of the areas.

Similar to the majority of developing nations where tourism is the principal source of foreign exchange (Mastny, 2001), Kenya's tourism industry generates a consistent amount of revenue from international tourists who are mostly drawn to ecotourism-related natural features (Atieno & Njoroge, 2018).

Definition of the Terms

Ecotourism: The International Tourism Society (TIES) (2015) defines ecotourism as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education (Fallahhosseini, 2020).

Environmental sustainability: it is as meeting the resource and services needs of current and future generations without compromising the health of the ecosystem that provides them, and more specifically as a condition of a balance, resilience, and interconnectedness that allows human society to satisfy its needs while neither exceeding the capacity of its supporting ecosystems to continue the regenerate the services necessary to meet those needs nor by our actions diminishing biological diversity (Mondino & Beery, 2019).

National Parks: According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) national Parks are defined as large natural or almost natural areas appointed to protect large-scale ecological processes, together, with complementary species and distinctive ecosystems of the region which provide a basis for spiritual and creative opportunities, scientific experience, education, as well as environmentally-friendly and cultural visits (IUCN, 2017).

Sustainable development: According to the World Commission on Environment and Development in the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987) it is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Mekuriaw & Teffera, 2013).

Sustainable tourism: According to the World Tourism Organization (1999) sustainable tourism is defined as the development that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future.

It is envisaged as leading to the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while supporting cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems.

Limitations

This study like other studies has a limitation, would be covered not by vesting the location, but only by using the available sources for the selected study, internet resources, and more. As the study is limited within these sources this could have a potential limitation of information and the real tracking may be affected.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Ecotourism is a unique form of nature-based tourism that preserves the well-being of the local community while protecting the environment and offers visitors a fulfilling experience and enjoyment of nature (Ceballos-Lascuráin, 1996; Higgins, 1996; Orams, 1995). It has been discussed in academic literature since the late 1980s. Ecotourism has become a topic of study in the realm of tourism research after years of development and research (Weaver & Lawton, 2007). The International Year of Ecotourism (IYE) was recognized by the UN in 2002, and the same year saw the founding of the specialized Journal of Ecotourism (Xu et al., 2022).

Gaining momentum throughout Europe (Nepal, 2002). Ecotourism fits well within the context of UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (BR), which, since their introduction in the early 1970s, have raised the discussion on the potential coexistence of aims such as conservation and sustainable development. This is because the approach combines conservation with sustainable development (Schultz, Duit, & Folke, 2011). Sustainable development is defined as "development which meets the requirements of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" by the UN World Commission on Environment and Development (Bruntland Commission) in 1987 (United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 16).

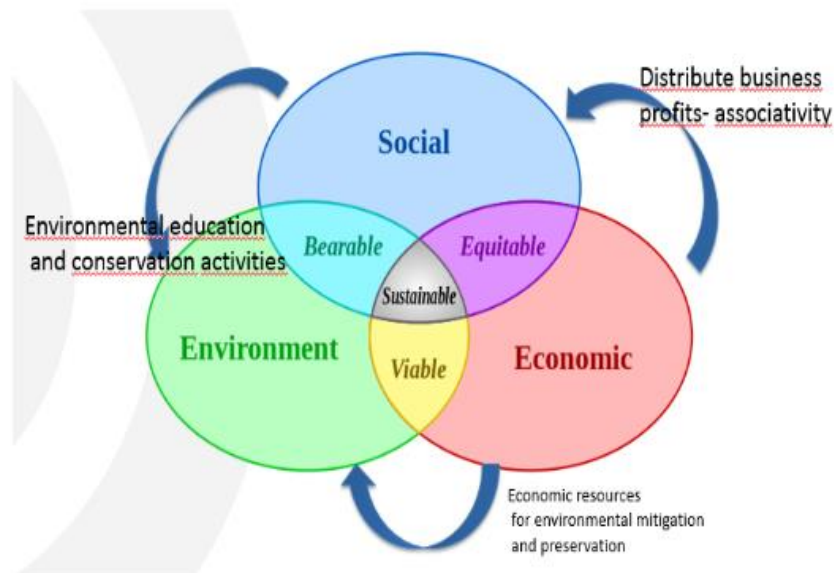
Environmental protection can be more specifically described as "the management of human use of organisms or ecosystems to ensure that such use is sustainable" (UNSD, 2017). However, sustainability must also consider human growth. Nature conservation is a crucial part of sustainability and the conservation role of the BRs (Biosphere Reserves), (Mondino & Beery, 2019).

There is consensus in the literature about the necessity for more investigation into how the designation of "learning sites" would assist BRs in fusing conservation and sustainable development aims in ways that simultaneously benefit both (Coetzer,

Witkowski, & Erasmus, 2013; Ishwaran, Persic, & Hoang Tri, 2008; Nguyen, Bosch, & Maani, 2011; Schliep & Stoll-Kleemann, 2010).

Figure 1

The Concept Of Ecotourism (Mosquera-Laverde et al., 2018)



Thus, sustainability can rely on a factor that needs action within these domains, especially when it comes to nature conservation, and restoration of nature is necessary to achieve the aims, eventually, see Figure 1. Nature and the ecosystem have a quite strong bond on relying on each other. Sustainable development can be achieved within the actions that are needed to revive the original state of the place that we target thus, a set of policies is in need such as the actions of ecotourism requires a set of reviving nature to have the goal achieved within both nature and ecotourism.

One of the main requirements for defining a tourism operation as "ecotourism" is that the site's local population should experience significant economic benefits that both improve their standard of living and serve as stronger incentives for nature preservation (Wunder, 1999).

Sustainable Development (SD)

Sustainable development is the international community's top priority and main development aim (Rerkklang, 2018). Sustainability is a state that is dynamic and relationships between ecological, economic, and social systems to be able to prevent a lack of natural resources and preserve an ecological balance. The UN Sustainable Development Goals are the healthcare system's overarching goal (SDGs) (Elshall et al., 2022).

Although there are many ways to interpret the idea of sustainable development, at its core it refers to a method of growth that seeks to strike a balance between various, often incompatible needs and an awareness of the social, economic, and environmental constraints that our society is subject to (Parris & Kates, 2003).

All too often, development is fuelled by a single demand without adequately accounting for its wider or longer-term effects. The harm that can appear from this kind of strategy is already becoming apparent, from the large-scale financial crises brought on by reckless banking to the changes in the planet's climate brought on by our reliance on fossil fuel-based energy sources. We must act now because the longer we pursue unsustainable development, the more likely it is that its effects would become frequent and severe (Sd-commission.org.uk, 2019).

Complexity, dynamism, and uncertainty are thought to be at least three key features of the innovation creation and adoption process. Due to the ease with which the nature and connections of interacting components can be overlooked, it is challenging to pinpoint the characteristics of an entire system when the complexity is great (Silvestre & Țîrcă, 2019).

The relationship between tourism and conservation is expanded and improved by ecotourism. It expands on the notion of leveraging tourism to support conservation and vice versa while strengthening sustainability standards (Buckley, 2011). The pre-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda is a prerequisite for the New Global Development Agenda. Beginning with the 1987 report of the Brundtland Commission, the article would highlight some of the fundamental principles of sustainable development.

History of Sustainable Development

Thomas Robert Malthus prophesied in 1798 that if food supply did not keep up with population increase, there would be the famine or, at the very least, a world population that could only subsist. Since then, technological developments have shown him to be a mistake. The concepts and futures outlined by the Club of Rome reflect the next stage of Malthusianism. According to their model, population and industrial capital would continue to increase exponentially, which would increase pollution as well as the demand for non-renewable resources, food, and other goods (Rubin, 1999).

The first international conference solely focused on environmental issues took place in Stockholm, Sweden in 1972, with 113 governments and officials from 19 international organizations in attendance. "Even though there were conflicts between environmental and economic concerns in some cases, they were inherently two sides of the same coin," a group of 27 experts stated there in articulating the connections between the environment and development (Vogler, 2007, p. 432). The United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), whose mission is "to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, educating, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations," was established as another outcome of the Stockholm Conference (Rubin, 1999).

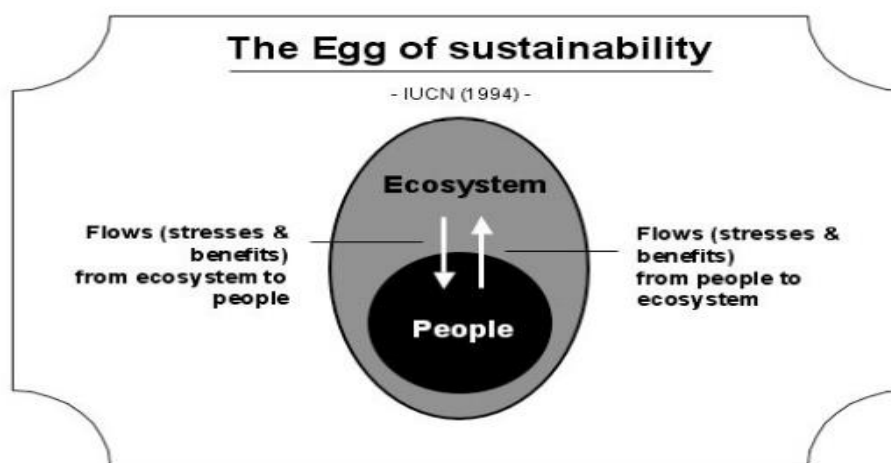
Since its founding in the late 1940s, the United Nations (UN) and its technical agencies and funding have actively driven the global development agenda. Initiated by its specialized agencies or funds at several World Summits and Conferences up until the 1990s, the strategy was fragmented and disjointed and attempted to address the three dimensions of development—economic, social, and environmental (Kumar et al., 2016).

The concept of "sustainability" emerged as a general guiding principle for human growth after the previous millennium. Its success can be attributed to the underlying considerations of the existential issues facing humanity at the time, which included growing anxiety over the overuse of natural resources and economic growth

at the price of environmental quality. When Carlowitz published the first book on forest sciences in 1713, the concept of "sustainable development" was first conceived. Wood would be "as crucial as our daily bread," he claimed, and it should be "treated with caution in a way, that there is a balance between wood development and lumbering." This would enable endless, eternal use (Keiner & Marco, 2005).

Figure 2

IUCN's Sustainability Egg (Source: IDRC 1997), (Keiner & Marco, 2005)



The egg of sustainability in Figure 2, has been recorded for the IUCN in 1994, and presented the ecosystem and the relation of the human being, as they can benefit from each other as they rely on each other within the development actions and the cropping of the human actions, as would what the nature can give and take.

Those eggs prioritized the ecosystem because social and economic well-being cannot exist without ecosystem health. Even though all the depicted models are too simplistic abstractions of reality, they are frequently employed in spatial planning to justify and support development decisions. The phrase "sustainability," which serves as the foundation for ideas and tactics leading to principles for (sustainable) spatial development, currently dominates discussions about the future of spatial development (Keiner & Marco, 2005).

The 20th century saw a swing between pessimistic and optimistic perspectives on the advancement of humanity. The optimism expressed in projections made at the start of the century, that due to scientific and technological advancements, virtually limitless possibilities would open, was broken by economic unrest and destructive global wars over the first half of the century. There have been moments when the dominating Western civilization has threatened to collapse. There were ghastly undertones of philosophy. But beginning in the 1950s, an unheard-of economic boom soon after World War II gave rise to new hopes for an improvement in living standards all across the world. However, it was at this time of industrial and commercial growth that the environmental crisis began to become more pressing, compelling individuals to make changes (Du Pisani, 2006).

The rationale for Sustainable Development

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), sometimes referred to as the Global Goals, were enacted by the United Nations in 2015 as a global call to action to eradicate poverty, safeguard the environment, and guarantee that by the year 2030, peace and prosperity would be experienced by everyone (UNDP, 2021).

The 17 SDGs understand that development must balance social, economic, and environmental sustainability and that actions in one area would have an impact on results in others. Countries have agreed to give those who are falling behind the most priority while making progress. The SDGs aim to eradicate AIDS, hunger, poverty and prejudice against women and girls (UNDP, 2021).

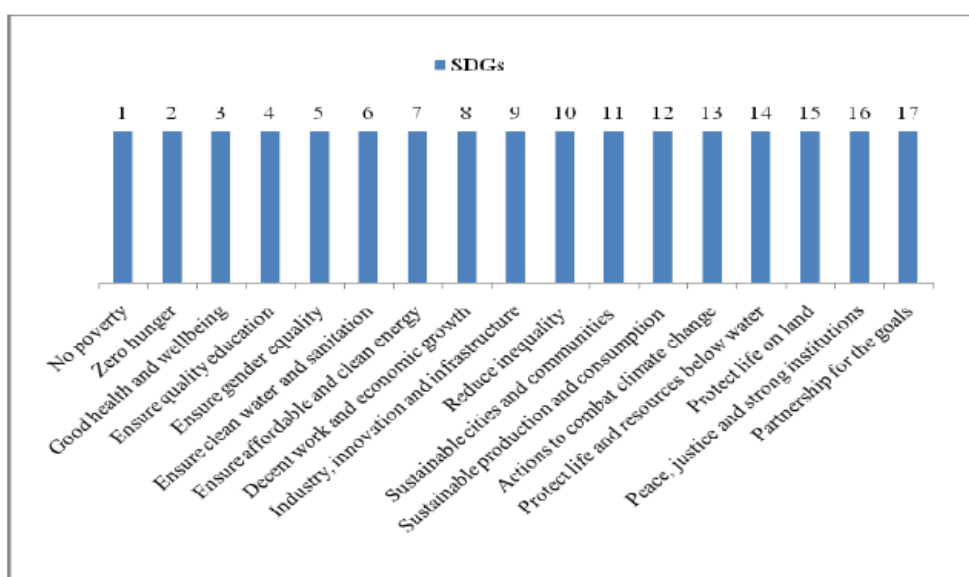
The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were approved by the UN in 2015 in New York, and all UN member nations have committed to implementing them by the year 2030. However, given the phrase "sustainable development" (SD) was first used in 1987, the adoption of the SDGs has a rather extensive history. Researchers, development professionals, and policymakers are now using both SD and SDGs increasingly when taking initiatives and activities. The phrase "sustainable development" was first used in a formal sense by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), also known as the Brundtland Commission, in 1987. It is defined by the WCED as "development that meets not

only the needs of the present but also for the future generation while not undermining the environment" (UNWCED 1987).

Following the Brundtland Commission, "The 1992 Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 1992 saw the adoption of Agenda 21 by world leaders, which outlines 27 principles for sustainable development and mandates the creation of national sustainability indicators (Tsa, 2010; Sadeka, et al. 2018). The historic Millennium Declaration, also known as the MDGs, was launched by the UN in 2000 in front of 189 countries, marking a significant turning point in the development agenda (Millennium Development Goals). The objectives aimed to solve several fundamental development issues, such as lowering child mortality and extreme poverty while also halving hunger and extreme poverty.

Figure 3

17 SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) (Science et al., 2022)



The Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the Global Goals, are a set of 17 interconnected international objectives that are intended to serve as a "common blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future." The UN General Assembly established the SDGs in 2015, to achieve them by the year 2030, as shown in Figure 3.

Based on benchmark data from 1990, a framework of 8 goals, 18 targets, and 48 indicators were chosen to gauge progress toward the MDGs by 2015. The aims and indicators for the eight goals have subsequently been raised to 21 and 60, respectively. After two years, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 which was held in Johannesburg (South Africa) produced the Sustainable Development Action Plan that highlighted the implementation of Millennium Development goals. In December 1992, the UN General Assembly formed the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), which created a set of measures known as CSD indicators. The most recent CSD indicator provides recommendations for using a core set of 50 indicators organized into 14 topics (Science et al., 2022).

Environmental Impacts of Sustainable Development

Ecologists' capacity to foresee the ecological effects of suggested activities would be constrained as long as operational and post-operational phase monitoring is not used more frequently. EIA has thus fallen short of offering a framework for the growth of ecological knowledge and comprehension (Treweek, 1995).

The word "environmental effect" describes how activity affects the environment by emitting gases or using natural resources (Hauschild 2018). This phrase is frequently used and linked to environmental harm caused by a particular event, with the power to sway public opinion by portraying the event as unfavorable and damaging (Sánchez 2006). Even if this idea is a part of the idea of environmental impact, she just establishes a small piece of your true relevance because the consequences can also have beneficial benefits (Neta & Seixas, 2019).

To support decisions that may have an impact on sustainability from a variety of viewpoints, including industrial, regional, national, and international, sound evaluations are required (Bare, 2014). While there are many tools available to help with the environmental management of a process to achieve sustainable development, it is crucial to take into account all environmental aspects in a sustainability assessment (Bare, 2014).

The higher education sector includes a variety of procedures required for the growth of the activities it suggests. An environmental management system that can provide information that guides the actions required to ensure sustainability in the sector, acknowledging the crucial social role it plays in the developing human and regional, and the production of knowledge for the benefit of all must be used to identify, evaluate, and monitor the environmental aspects and impacts resulting from these processes. Therefore, higher education institutions must incorporate socio-environmental criteria into their practices to act excellently and responsibly toward the environment (Hoshino Neta & da Cal Seixas, 2019).

Regional ecology's goal is to promote sustainable development from an ecological point of view. Regional ecology has become a crucial subfield of ecology in the roughly 50 years since the discipline's inception. Regional ecology does not, however, clearly define study techniques and research topics due to the complexity of regional ecosystems and ecological issues. This editorial clarifies the definition, research procedures, and significant research topics of regional ecology, such as regional ecological security assessment, regional sustainable development assessment, regional resource analysis represented by the relationship between water, food, and energy, and regional resource value assessment (Mao & Deng, 2022).

A significant paradigm change in science occurred with the emergence of ecology in the latter half of the 20th century, particularly regarding how people see, comprehend, and engage with nature. In fact, despite being mentioned by the German biologist Ernst Haeckel in 1866, ecology didn't gain prominence as a field of study until *The Limits to Growth* by Meadows et al. (1972) was put out of print. Indeed, Meadows et al 1972.'s book *The Limits to Growth* foresaw a bleak future for humanity due to our over use of natural resources. Exploring how our species has influenced the environments in which they live is something that humanity has been increasingly interested in on a global scale (Des Jardins, 2001).

Since then, the interaction between living things (including species) and their habitats, as well as the interconnectedness of many kinds of life, has emerged as a recurring issue in larger discussions of human growth and well-being (Ghimire and Pimbert 2000). Modern ecological sciences essentially aim to study the

interconnectivity of various life forms, the surroundings, and all living organs globally and in a systems paradigm. When seen from this perspective, ecology is more easily understood as the sensitivity to consider these connections and links in every action humans may take to better their circumstances (Munro, 1994).

Ecotourism

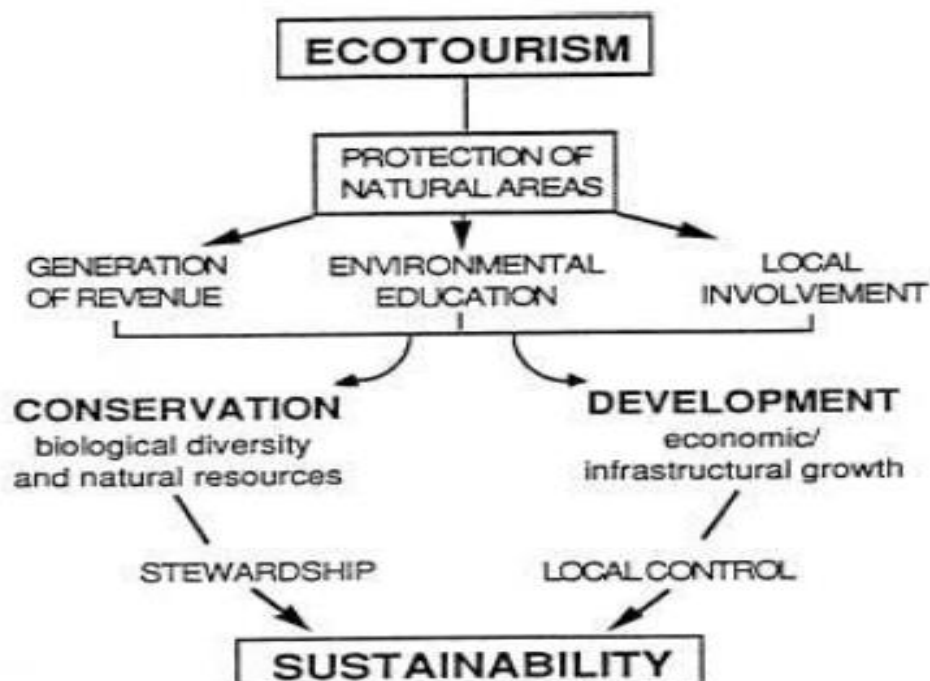
Hetzer W. (1965), who wrote "Environment, tourism, culture," was one of the first to identify this area of tourism. The Author defines four key elements of sustainable tourism as having the "lowest possible impact on the environment, respect for the host culture, increasing benefits to local people, and increasing tourists' satisfaction." As can be observed, the first factor is the proponent of "ecotourism," which emphasizes environmental protection and analyses how the tourism industry may harm the environment (Cheia, 2001).

The term "ecotourism" was first used to characterize the nature-tourism phenomenon in the past (Wallace and Pierce, 1996). To give an early example, in the 1980s, Ceballos-Lascura'in presented the first official and one of the most commonly accepted definitions of ecotourism (Blamey, 2001; Boo, 1990). To study, admire, and enjoy the scenery, its wild plants, and animals, as well as any surviving cultural representations (both past and current) found in these locations, it was stated: Traveling to relatively unspoiled or uncontaminated natural areas. (Ceballos-Lascura, 1987, p. 14), (Donohoe & Needham, 2006),

According to Jafari (J., 2000), "tourism is traveling to natural places that have not yet been impacted by the human factor to study, admire, and appreciate the landscape, wild animals, and flora there, as well as any cultural events (past and current) found in these areas.

Figure 4

Viewpoint On Ecotourism (Ross, Wall, 1999)



Ecotourism has the potential for sustainable development, as we can be more responsible towards the natural resources and components, as it's in Figure 4, as the protection of the natural elements can lead to a better understanding of what we have and what we conserve for the next generation.

Since 1990, NGOs, development specialists, and academics have developed and studied ecotourism as a strategy for sustainable development in addition to its definition as a type of nature-based tourism. Therefore, the term "ecotourism" refers to both a concept based on a set of principles and a particular business niche. One of the earliest definitions was created in 1991 by The International Ecotourism Society (TIES), formerly (UNEP, 2018). The Ecotourism Society (TES):

"Responsible travel to natural regions that preserves the environment and supports the well-being of local people" is known as ecotourism (Wondirad, 2020).

Figure 5

Various Writers' Definitions Of Ecotourism (Atieno and Njoroge, 2018)

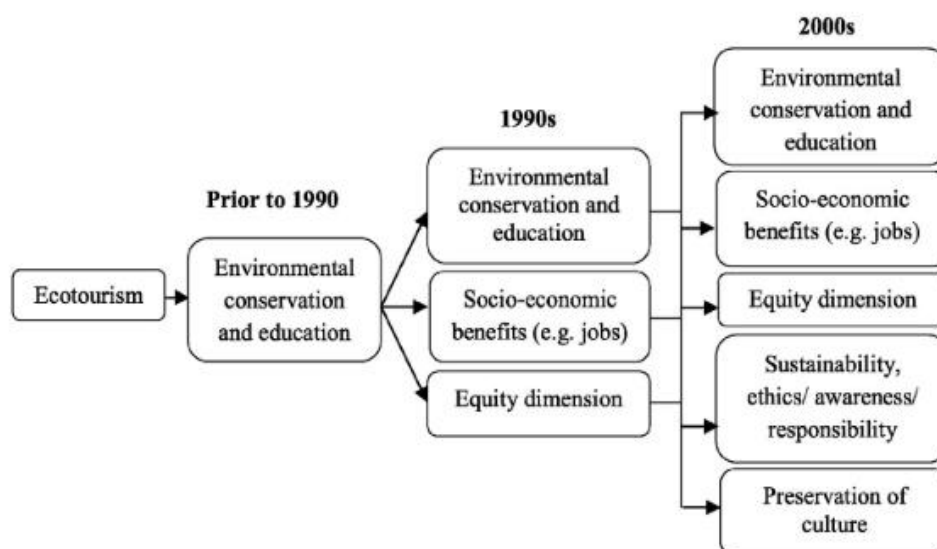
Author	Definition	Scale of operations
Lascurain (1996)	A resultant of the marriage between leisure travel to wilderness areas and the desire to protect the world's dwindling biodiversity	Small scale
Luck (2002)	Environmentally responsible travel, not limited to small-scale operations but may be possible for large ventures	Mass tourism
Cater and Lowman (1994)	A way in which increasing numbers of visitors can be accommodated whilst minimizing the cost and enhancing benefits associated with natural areas	Within confines of environmental-carrying capacity
The International ecotourism society	Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains well-being of local people	Small scale
Fenell (2003)	Concerns travel to a natural area; involves local people; feeds revenue to local environmental protection; and contributes to maintenance of local environment	Small scale
Boo (1992)	Nature tourism that promotes conservation and sustainable development	Not mentioned

Ecotourism is defined by the IUCN (now known as the World Conservation Union) as "environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features - both past and present) that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations" in 1996.

In Figure 5 a list of the definitions for ecotourism has been mentioned from a far dates between 1992, and 2003, as ecotourism definition can take either one or more understanding for each author by time and the events of the updates for the word. Figure 6 represents the updating, and the ecotourism field I have a wild range of meanings of ecotourism which has been given a wider meaning such as the aspects of dealing with nature in terms of conservation, education, and more aspects to be taken into consideration.

Figure 6

Ecotourism And The Meaning By Time (Cobbinah, 2015)



Types of Ecotourism

According to Lascurain (1991), who focused on the growth of ecotourism, it entails visiting relatively untouched natural areas with the specific goal of learning about, appreciating, and taking in the scenery, its wild plants, and animals, as well as any past and/or present cultural aspects of the destination. However, eco-tourism is not required to be a professional scientist, artist, or philosopher, even though ecotourism implies a scientific, aesthetic, or philosophical approach. The primary idea is that someone who engages in ecotourism gets the chance to immerse themselves in nature in a way that most people are unable to do in their regular, urban lives. Eventually, this person would develop a consciousness of the natural world and an understanding of its cultural components, which would cause that person to change.

In Table 1. The site types according to the ecotourism meaning, have been classified as five natural areas that have been defined according to the site specifications, such as the availability of water, terrain, wildlife type, and vegetation cover. As within this research, the terrestrial type is the main target of this study as it's a natural Park by itself without human interference (unless the provided facilities within the Park), as this type of site provides a natural national Park on its name and

description and features such as the wildlife from species, and vegetation, as well the natural geography of the land from mountains to hells, and savannas.

Table 1

Site Types for Ecotourism (Khondkar & Anis, 2016)

Type	Description
Marine	Islands, beaches, bays, coral reefs, and marine protected areas
Terrestrial	peaks, craters, caverns, pathways, and forests
Freshwater	rivers, waterfalls, hot springs, and lakes
Cultural	churches, landmarks, and festivals
Synthetic	Urban Parks and planting areas

The phrase "ecotourism" is broad and encompasses a variety of travel activities that all aim to promote environmental protection, cultural and environmental awareness, and local population preservation and improvement. Both volunteering and vacationing are widely available. Since any group can claim to be active in "ecotourism" without upholding a standard of conduct, research the specifics of the organization you intend to donate to or volunteer for (Ratfelders, 2021).

Eco lodging refers to lodging that has been constructed with consideration for the environment or that is merely situated in a natural location. The types of eco-lodging available range widely, from hotels or hostels made of sustainable or non-traditional materials to "eco-resorts" in remote areas with access to activities like bird-watching, sea kayaking, and tours of nearby outdoor sites.

Agro tourism: Agro tourism is a form of ecotourism that uses small rural farming communities as its main tourist draw. Some agro-tourism locations support and defend imperiled agrarian communities in underdeveloped nations. Others

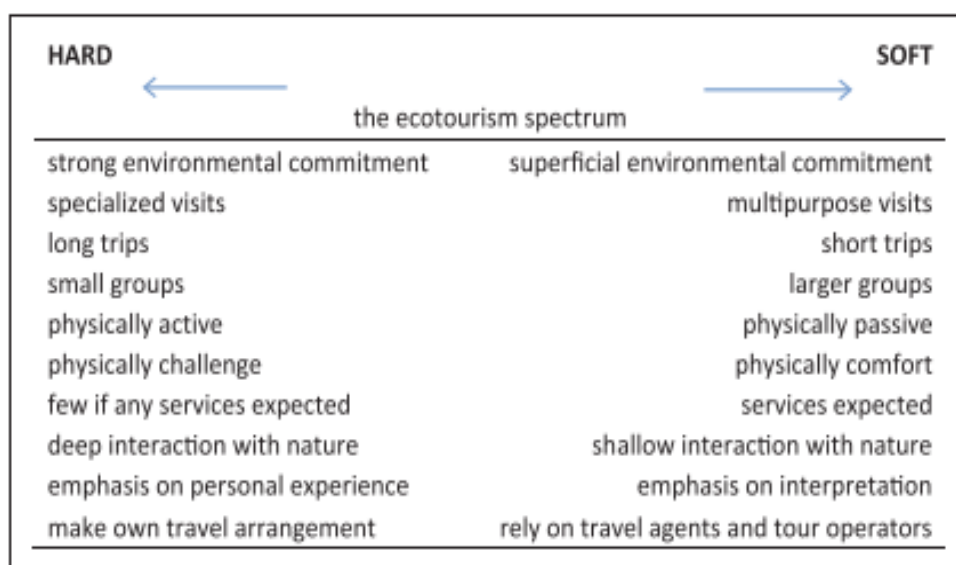
provide locations where sustainable farming practices can be demonstrated. Numerous agro-tourism locations promote the cultivation of local plant and animal species and volunteer opportunities.

Neighborhood Development: The protection of communities' lands and means of subsistence that are at risk from industrialization, deforestation, and other byproducts of modernization is a focus of some ecotourism options. Such groups give Eco-tourists the chance to engage with the local community by helping to build homes, plant trees, or learn local trades. Community development initiatives aid struggling areas financially as well as raise awareness and respect among tourists and locals.

Eco Trekking: Excursions to unusual, imperiled, or other alluring sites are included in eco treks. Treks may include activities like rafting, rock climbing, swimming, caving, hiking, sailing, or bird-watching to raise awareness of a specific area's environmental risks or habitats that should be preserved. Eco-tour companies may or may not give the locals financial assistance (Ormas, 2003).

Figure 7

Ecotourism Spectrum (Atieno & Njoroge, 2018)



In Figure 7, the spectrum of ecotourism meant to the actions that can be done within the natural area, for the act of a human being such as tourism, or what we mean within the ecotourism practices, as in this field a wide range of interference can happen such as the principles of ecotourism and the applications of it within the nature that can be harsh or soft as it depends on the actions that seek the nature needs and observations by science and human actions.

Principles of Ecotourism

Some of the most breathtaking animals in the world may be found in East Africa. It is crucial to assess the socioeconomic and environmental costs and advantages of this burgeoning enterprise given the increasing popularity of tourism in the area's wildlife Parks (Cheung, 2012).

The idea of ecotourism promotes sustainability in the growth of tourism, especially outdoor tourism. For future generations to enjoy the advantages of modern tourist implementation, ecotourism is undertaken by limiting the negative effects of tourism implementation on the environment and culture. Numerous studies have discovered that ecotourism also has drawbacks. Several national Parks that are dedicated to nature conservation started to welcome visitors along with the growth of ecotourism operations. On the one hand, this institution increases the possibility of Park infiltration. The people must, however, take advantage of this opportunity because the creation of national Parks can raise awareness of the value of protecting the environment (Atieno & Njoroge, 2018).

Governments established national Parks to safeguard the environment from the extinction of ecosystems and enhance the emotional and recreational well-being of people. By engaging in ecotourism activities, national Parks raise environmental consciousness, and environmentally conscious people are more likely to continue visiting national Parks as ecotourism destinations (Jeong et al., 2021).

Ecotourism has been heralded as a solution all over the world: a means of financing scientific research and conservation, safeguarding delicate and pristine ecosystems, assisting rural communities, advancing development in underdeveloped nations, enhancing ecological and cultural sensitivity, instilling environmental

awareness and social conscience in the travel industry, satisfying and educating the discerning traveler, and, some claim, fostering world peace (Eagles, 2009).

Ecotourism is a normative notion that is governed by overarching values about community well-being and the preservation of natural and cultural ecosystems (Thompson et al., 2018).

The principles of ecotourism could be according to Zheng et al. (2021):

- Reduce the effects on the body, society, behavior, and psychology.
- Increase respect for and awareness of the environment and cultures.
- Create satisfying experiences for guests and hosts alike.
- Give conservationists immediate cash gains.

Figure 8

Ecotourism Conceptual Model Adopted From (Kiper, 2013)

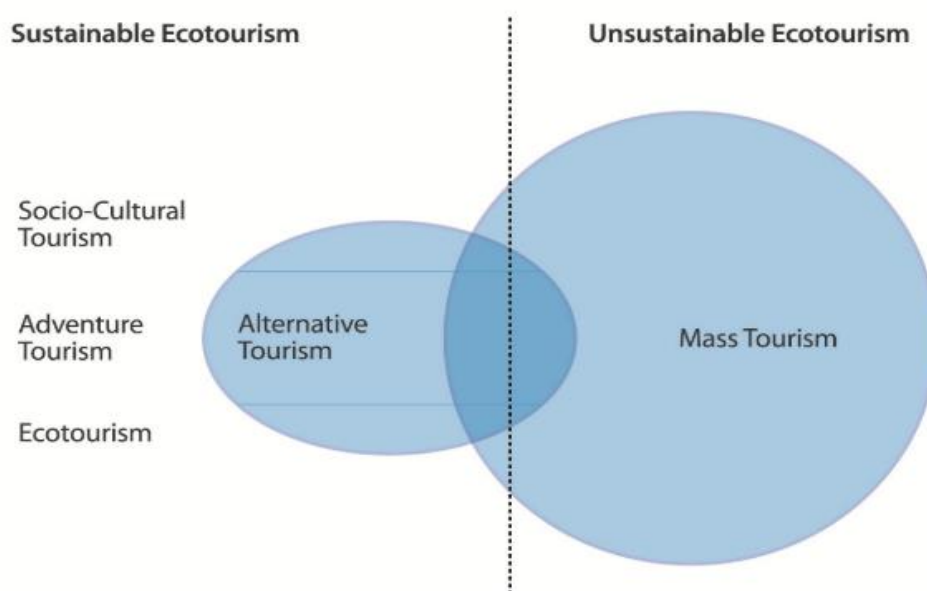


Figure 8, shows the importance of sustainable ecotourism, within alternative tourism including socio-cultural, adventure, and ecotourism as they can be related to sustainable development elements such as culture and the economy, the discovery of nature for educational purposes, and more.

While each national Park that, can be exposed to ecotourism principles may differ in accordance to the Park type, and the flora and fauna of the Park, as the need for action differs better the terrestrial and marine Parks, and so on (Zheng et al., 2021).

Ecotourism, according to Wunder (2000), provides several economic advantages in addition to its alleged long-term advantages for communities and environmental preservation. According to Brandon (1996), ecotourism enables Parks and other protected places to raise money on their own through the collection of entrance fees and other fees, which can then be used to fund conservation efforts.

According to Crapper (1998), "locals would have more of an incentive, and a struggle, to conserve what the visitors come to see as more native communities start to gain direct economic benefits as owners and partners of tourism services." According to Stronza (2007), the local population would actively support ecotourism if they realize that they can make more money through the preservation of natural resources than by indiscriminately using them. According to More & Stevens (2000), the natural regions wouldn't be protected if the destination's attractions didn't bring in money, and they believe that this money has significant economic worth.

Benefits and Challenges of Ecotourism

Numerous researchers have concentrated on the effects of ecotourism in terms of local economic benefits, changes in socio-cultural characteristics of residents and communities, as well as the protection of the natural environment. This is due to the growth and divergence in the size and nature of the ecotourism sector as well as its relevance to broader questions of conservation and development. Models of tourism development that presume stages or a cycle of evolution reflecting tourist numbers and the perceived allure of the location have frequently been used in analyses of these effects (Clifton & Benson, 2006).

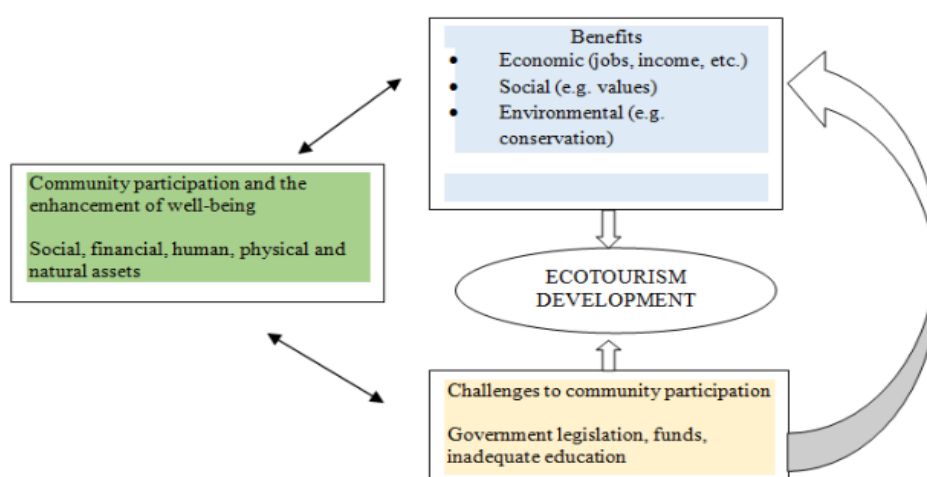
The success of ecotourism in achieving its goals of balancing nature conservation and economic development remains a problem despite its growing appeal on a worldwide scale (Baral et al., 2012; Sharpley, 2006; Wardle et al., 2018;

Wheeller, 2005; West, 2008; Wondirad, 2019). As a result, despite several examples of ecotourism's success on a global scale, it generally faces several serious difficulties that prevent it from achieving its main goals (Wardle et al., 2018; Wondirad, 2019). Several elements, such as political unrest, which threatens peace and security, a lack of infrastructure, which restricts access; and One of the main obstacles to the successful growth of ecotourism is inadequate resource development (Krüger, 2005; Mgonja et al., 2015; Carr et al., 2016) as well as elite capture and commercialization of ecotourism locations (Rivera and Gutierrez, 2019), cited in (Wondirad, 2020).

Corruption, inadequate community involvement, and dysfunctional tourism groups are all obstacles to the growth of ecotourism. Power concentration, elite dominance, and a lack of funding were among the bottlenecks described by Tosun (2000). According to Krüger (2005), the main contributing problems were inadequate local community involvement and a lack of solid planning.

Figure 9

The Connection Between Participation And Ecotourism Carter (Eshun & Tichaawa, 2019)



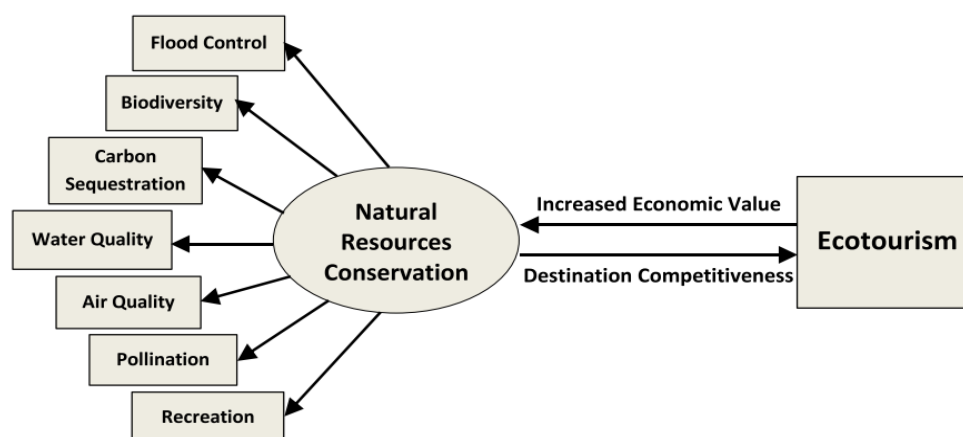
In Figure 9, the meaning of ecotourism development can be done by engaging the local community within the ecotourism actions such, the employment and the actions needed within the industry must have the attention of the local people for

them to share and have the maximum engagement and sharing of what would be done, as they can seek each other later for the upcoming challenges and update to such events that may occur later.

Lack of trust and cooperation among ecotourism stakeholders, insufficient funding, which is a result of other barriers like political commitment and corruption, insufficient competencies and management capacity, insufficient funding, which compromises destinations' resilience and competitiveness, and ineffective institutional arrangements. The majority of institutions in underdeveloped nations lack the flexibility and adaptability necessary to deal with the rapid changes brought on by modern tourism development (McCool, 2014; Graci, 2013; Nunkoo, 2015; Cooper and Hall, 2016).

Figure 10

Ecotourism And The Conservation Of Natural Resources (Rajamanicam et al., 2019)



The challenge is of ecotourism remains a critical issue, that needs to be revised since humankind can have a bad influence on nature, due to the economical movements and the industry that seeks a natural resource to rely on, as well the construction of the services such as hotels and more, within the ecotourism areas. As in Figure 10, ecotourism relies on natural resources as a business to be done, as well human interference may affect the quality of the natural resources as these resources

need the attention of human beings, to revive and keep within the natural statutes of the site such as the national Parks, and conservation areas.

CHAPTER III

Tourism in Kenya

Sand beaches along the coast, a variety of flora and fauna, game Parks, cultural landmarks, and picturesque landscapes are just a few of Kenya's many tourist attractions. Within the limits of Nairobi City is the Nairobi National Park. The well-known Giraffe Centre, where guests may view and even feed the giraffes, is also nearby. The National Museum, Amboseli National Park, Lake Nakuru, Hells Gate, and Tsavo East and West National Park are just a few of the additional attractions. The Maasai Mara's annual Wildebeest Migration is a popular tourist attraction in the nation. It has been termed the seventh wonder of the world and is a remarkable sight (ICAO, 2021).

Domestic travel has established itself as a significant force in the global tourism business. Kenya's tourism sector is a key economic pillar. According to empirical data, a sizable portion of travel and tourism expenditures are accounted for by domestic tourism. Domestic tourism has produced numerous job possibilities and aided in the growth of the global economy. Although seasonality is a typical occurrence in the travel industry, domestic tourism has proven to be a valuable technique for reducing seasonality's negative effects (Government, 2018).

Kenya's socioeconomic development is largely fueled by tourism, as it is in many other developing nations. Kenya's primary source of foreign cash at the time of its independence, in 1963, was the export of agricultural goods like coffee and tea. However, the country has turned to tourism as an alternative due to the drop in global market pricing of these key products. Despite tourism's growing importance as a major sector (Valle & Yobesia, 2009).

For most nations around the world, tourism is a major source of income. It contributes 10% to Kenya's GDP and earns the second-highest amount of foreign exchange after agriculture (SNV, 2007). The country's tourist industry has been expanding, increasing by 4.9% in 2019 as a result of better connectivity and government prioritizing (WTTC, 2020).

However, Kenya's development is based on the reliance on foreign tourists, whose arrival is impacted by the weather and other social, economic, and political aspects in both their places of origin and the destination countries. As a result, it is particularly seasonal in Kenya (SNV, 2007). The main tourism categories created and marketed in Kenya for many years now include wildlife safaris, beach vacations, scenic and natural sightseeing, cultural and adventure travel, corporate travel, and sports travel (Jebotip, 2021).

As a popular tourist destination, Kenya is renowned for its diverse landscapes and wide variety of wildlife; this is true of many African nations. Diverse types of tourism must be taken into account to ensure the sustainable development of the industry. Eco-mountain bike cycling excursions can be one of these, as they are becoming increasingly well-liked, for instance in Germany (Kremser & Wölfle, 2021).

In addition to being a popular safari destination, Kenya is also the starting point for humpback whale and wildebeest migrations. The area has been recognized as the top safari destination in the world and most recently as Africa's top tourist destination by the travel industry's Oscars, the World Travel Awards (WTA, 2021).

Located in the foothills of Mount Kenya is the Ngare Ndare Forest. Elephants have been using the forest as a crucial corridor for centuries to connect Mount Kenya and the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy (Gilliland et al., 2015).

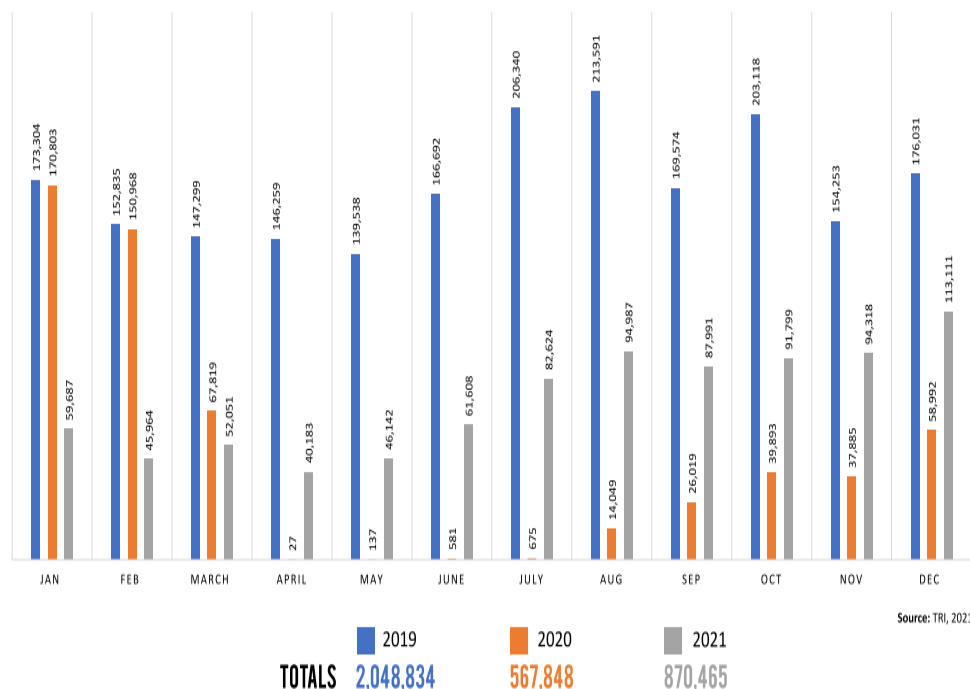
Africa's eastern coast, which straddles the equator, is known for its safaris, which provide unrivaled chances to observe nature's most untamed wildlife in their stunning natural settings. You may get up and personal with some of the most fascinating animals on trips with guides to game reserves and national Parks. You can observe stunning animals in their natural settings in wide-open pastures. Lions, elephants, rhinoceroses, leopards, and buffalo are the "Big Five," and they may all be seen in Kenya's national Parks and reserves (Ogutu, 2002).

The charm of Kenya is evident wherever you turn, from its majestic elephants traversing the countryside to its breathtaking mountains, forests, and hidden

waterfalls. The terrain is varied, with desert areas coexisting with snow-capped mountains, valleys, volcanoes, and stunning beaches with deep blue oceans (Wondirad, 2020).

Figure 11

International Annual Visitors Arrivals In Kenya (Institute, 2021)



The estimated annual growth rate for the Kenyan economy is expected to improve by 18% from 5.0% in 2021 to 5.9% in 2022. It is anticipated that the return to regular economic activity, the reopening of the economy, and the implementation of the Economic Recovery Strategy would enhance external liquidity and boost economic growth (Institute, 2021).

Tourism in Kenya has been thriving before the breaking of the global pandemic in 2019, and 2020, as we can see in Figure 11, even though we can see the improvement within 2021 year, due to the start of losing the restrictions, the tourism industry still has a significant impact on the economy income, as it can be defined as the third sector in the country (Author, 2022).

Sustainable Development and Ecotourism in Kenya

Ecotourism methods being used in urban settings are a relatively new idea that should be developed in many places, including Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kisumu in Kenya. Urban green tourism, which Toronto's Green Tourism Association invented, is a practical illustration of how a city can market itself, specific businesses, and attractions to offer a distinctive travel experience and spur demand for sustainability. Even though urban tourism has received a lot of criticism and debate. Urban tourism became a unique field of knowledge within both the urban development and tourist disciplines through further discussion, particularly in the 1990s by several Authors (Dodds & Joppe, 2001).

Recent growth in ecotourism is mostly a result of travelers' desire for more fulfilling vacations (Okech, 2007). Kenya has paved the way for ecotourism. It pioneered some of Africa's first community-based conservation initiatives using Park and tourism income and started the first systematic efforts to integrate ecotourism concepts and practices into its national Park system (Honey, 2008). Canadian visitors to Kenya were assessed in 1994 by Ballantine and Eagles using a definition based on three factors (Okech, 2009).

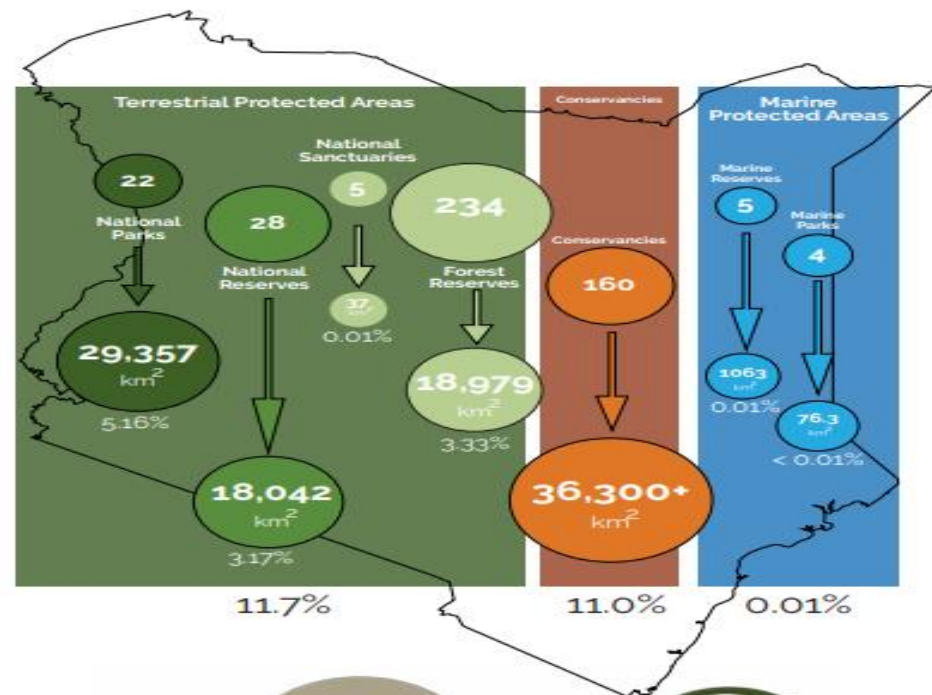
Their standards, which take into account three dimensions to define a visitor's status as an "ecotourist," include the social reason (an educational component), the desire to travel to "wilderness/undisturbed places," and a long-term commitment. Given the broad nature of these requirements, it is not surprising that 84% of the Canadian tourists visiting Kenya who were polled met the criteria for Eco tourists. According to these criteria, it could be argued, that the term "eco tourist" has no real meaning (Okech, 2009).

Kenya is home to a diverse range of ecosystems, including inland and marine waterways as well as mountains, forests, rangelands, dry lands, and croplands. Every one of these ecosystems sustains a wide variety of animal and plant species, some of which are unique to Kenya and cannot be found anywhere else in the world, as well as several functions that are crucial to our prosperity and wellness as individuals, groups, and a nation. As part of our commitment to our people, our prosperity, and our planet, this Strategy is a call to action and a roadmap for enabling all Kenyans to

take part in caring for and conserving our unique natural heritage – Government of Kenya (GoK, 2018).

Figure 12

Kenya Wildland and Natural Areas (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2018)



According to sustainable development and ecotourism not much has been done as the acts within the level of natural Parks are ongoing under the procedure, as in Figure 12, the country has been divided into three principal areas to categorize the ecotourism areas according to the nature of Kenya, as mentioned within the scholar a set of conservation practices is in need to save the land and natural Parks from deterioration as well to boost the ecotourism (Author, 2022).

Sand beaches, gorgeous scenery, and incredible animals have drawn visitors to Kenya for more than a century. But there are problems with this, such as environmental degradation brought on by tourists' transportation requirements, tourist littering, poaching, and game hunting. These operations had a detrimental effect on local tourist attractions, leading the flora and wildlife to deteriorate and their sites to be destroyed (Ogweno, 2021).

With more than 100 eco-tourism destinations, Kenya has a broad eco-tourism character (Burdett, 2018). Since its establishment in 1961, the Maasai Mara national reserve has gained recognition as one of Kenya's and the world's top ecotourism destinations. A fantastic approach to support initiatives to safeguard the environment and natural resources that are a part of the eco-tourism agenda is to travel around Kenya and stay in an eco-rated hotel.

Kenyan ecotourism confronts several difficulties, largely as a result of the absence of strategic business plans, well-trained nature guides, community consensus-building techniques, and infrastructure facilities like roads and accommodations. (Okech, 2011).

The "Fortress Conservation" method is the main problem with ecotourism in Kenya. Native Kenyans, including the Maasai, are uprooted from their traditional grounds by Fortress Conservation. The conflict between clans that had previously coexisted peacefully is sparked by the restriction of swampland (Weaver, 1998). In Kenya, ecotourism has stolen the homes, livelihoods, and money of indigenous people. Tourists must be more aware of the measures taken by travel agencies to reduce the abuses. Tourism businesses need to learn more about the culture, people, and geography of the host country. The "Fortress Conservation" method, which uproots native Kenyans from their ancestral grounds, is Kenya's largest ecotourism problem. Fortress conservation entails dividing up the land into distinct sections for certain goals, including defending the tourist areas from the locals and wildlife (Weaver, 1998).

Ecotourism in Kenya

In Kenya, eco-tourism has developed from a vague concept to a specialized industry that draws both loyal clients and brand-new ones. While some tourist sites promote themselves as unique eco-tourism destinations, others integrate traditional tourism with more ecologically friendly techniques. With more than 100 eco-tourism destinations, Kenya has a broad eco-tourism character (Burdett, 2018). Since its establishment in 1961, the Maasai Mara national reserve has gained recognition as one of Kenya's and the world's top ecotourism destinations. A fantastic approach to

support initiatives to safeguard the environment and natural resources that are a part of the eco-tourism agenda is to travel around Kenya and stay in an eco-rated hotel.

In particular, ecotourism, whose heart, according to Okech (2009: 2), "remains in National Parks and reserves and their buffer zones," has benefited from Kenya's geographic terrain as an environmental resource, increasing the country's tourism revenues. According to Honey (2008), Kenya is a pioneering African nation that has adopted the earliest efforts to systematically incorporate eco-tourism concepts in its national Park systems. Kenya has been experimenting with community-based conservation using the Park and tourism income (Atieno & Njoroge, 2018).

The ecotourism industry has rapid expansion; the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 2004) noted that the industry was expanding internationally three times faster than average in 2004. Industry of tourism as a whole. Similar to the majority of developing nations where tourism is the principal source of foreign exchange (Mastny, 2001), Kenya's tourism industry generates a consistent amount of revenue from international tourists who are mostly drawn to ecotourism-related natural features.

Figure 13

Information On Ecotourism In Kenya For Travelers, adopted from (Atieno & Njoroge, 2018)

	Green travel activity	Region	Eco attraction	Eco accommodation
1.	Luxury safari	South rift	Maasai Mara	Eco lodges
2.	Bird watching safari	Western circuit	Mt. Elgon NP	Camps
3.	Fishing safari	Coastal region	Watamu beaches	Eco lodges
4.	Snorkeling	Coastal regions	Watamu beaches	Eco lodges
5.	Village immersions	Western circuit	Mt. Elgon	Home stays, camps
6.	Camel trekking	North rift	Lake Turkana	Camps
7.	Adventure camping	Western	Mt. Elgon	Camps
8.	Cultural visits	South rift	Maasai Mara	Eco lodges

The green travel activity in Kenya has been mentioned in Figure 13, within the set of regions and the Eco attractions, as well as the provided services within the ecotourism industry in Kenya, this means a set of eight physical activities can be

done within the wildlife of Kenya is a huge attraction and a unique feature for what the nature in Kenya can provide.

Sand beaches, gorgeous scenery, and incredible animals have drawn visitors to Kenya for more than a century. But there are problems with this, such as environmental degradation brought on by tourists' transportation requirements, tourist littering, poaching, and game hunting. These operations had a detrimental effect on local tourist attractions, leading the flora and wildlife to deteriorate and their sites to be destroyed (Ogweno, 2021).

Early in the 1980s, the Meru National Park (300 km north of Nairobi, Kenya's capital city) gained notoriety for its great biodiversity and profusion of mammals and birds. Elephants, giraffes, rhinos, buffaloes, and zebras were among the most prestigious species that experienced a decline in population after 1985 as a result of poaching, which sharply increased after that year due to worsening mismanagement and inadequate protection. At least at the start of this decline, these species were being monitored (Atharin, 1980). There were some species wiped off. The management of the Park began to improve in 1998, and poaching activities dropped dramatically. Regular counting revealed that species abundance began to rise as a result of successful reproduction and recolonization of the protected region (Villanueva, 2009).

Additionally, the Kenyan government secured a loan from the "Agence Française de Développement" for the restoration of the Park and concurrently raised the standard of living for the populations of people living along the riparian zones (Ganzin et al., 2003).

The Meru and Kora sister Parks are spectacular on a grand scale, and they include lush jungles, raging rivers, verdant swamps, khaki grasslands, and skeletal termite cathedrals, all beneath the enormous blue bowl of the sky. Few sites can compare to the sparsely populated and completely unspoiled atmosphere found here. More than 427 recorded species of birds are available for viewing, along with Grevy's zebras, elephants, Bohor reedbucks, hartebeests, pythons, puff adders, cobras, and buffalo (Kenya Wildlife Service, 2021).

A study has been done by Mugure (2020), and the study discovered that people's opinions regarding lion conservation are somewhat influenced by conservation benefits, human-wildlife conflict management, conservation education, and Park management practices. According to the study, people prefer visual forms of conservation education like movies and Park trips because they are more effective at spreading the message. According to a University of British Columbia study, community support for wildlife conservation is increased by the advantages of conservation (UBC). The study also discovered that an animal's tolerance for conflict and willingness to be preserved depends on the degree of conflict it causes. The values and sense of resource ownership that the community has been influenced by Park management practices.

The main reason for choosing Meru National Park is due to its natural resources from animal species and plants, and the water elements that it has, as well the ecotourism services such as the safari, and multiple activities, all can give a view for our approach within the research to have an assessment for the case, as it's shown in Figure 14, that presents the national Parks all over Kenya.

Figure 14

Kenya Ecotourism Sites (Explorer, 2016).



Kenya is home to several eco-lodges and camps where visitors may take in the beautiful surroundings while also knowing that their trip is actively preserving the environment. Ecotourism is a significant and growing industry in Kenya. Figure 14 is a map showing the distribution of the Ecotourism sites in Kenya, according to Burdett, (2018), there are six marine reserves, 28 national reserves, and 23 national Parks. A wide variety of wildlife, including zebras, lions, elephants, and over 1070 distinct kinds of birds. 536 kilometers of mostly sandy beaches make up the coastline. Six locations are World Heritage Sites.

Impacts of Ecotourism in Kenya

It is frequently believed that community involvement in ecotourism planning and development would solve the social and environmental problems associated with mass tourism. However, these recommendations for more "sustainable" types of travel frequently ignore the ways that situations involving resource management are frequently characterized by unequal patterns of access to and control over resources. In heterogeneous and politically differentiated social settings achieving equitable broad-based 'participation' invariably proves problematic. The ability of locals to negotiate fair and lasting relationships with other players and agencies in ecotourism ventures is weakened by such circumstances (Southgate, 2006).

The environmental effects of tourism in Kenya are commonly accepted to be significant, although being mostly unquantified. Kenya, for a few well-known locations, like the Maasai Mara National Reserve and the Amboseli National Park. The actual effects of tourism activities and visitor capacities have not been evaluated, even in these Parks (Ikiara & Okech, 2002). As the main effects can be listed as:

Disruption of wildlife behavior: Some hotels and resorts are located close to breeding sites and watering holes, which scares animals away. Loss of vegetation: Overdevelopment has resulted in numerous environmental issues, such as improper trash and sewage disposal, with raw sewage frequently being dumped into the ocean. Hotels around the coast have been constructed disregarding water, telephone, and sewer infrastructure already in place. For example, there are roughly 50 lodges in Maasai Mara alone.

Pollution: Additionally, sewage pollution has harmed coastal resources. Some tourist attractions along the coast discharge sewage directly into the water, largely due to a lack of appropriate environmental regulations, competent monitoring, and legal enforcement. Even in places like Diani that benefit from environmental protection, this has resulted in the elimination of active corals.

Overuse of natural resources: Overuse and destruction of Kenya's natural resources are results of mass tourism. Targeting mass tourism has led to an influx of cheap visitors who fly in on chartered flights and are primarily headed for coastal beaches. This group of travelers is believed to be less concerned with the environment than the wealthier and more affluent ones, who frequently lean toward ecotourism. The costs that mass tourism imposes on the environment might not be sufficiently offset by the cash it generates (Ikiara & Okech, 2002).

Initiatives related to ecotourism haven't had much of an impact on how natural resources are managed. This is primarily because of the lack of a national policy to integrate the initiatives with resource management and conservation. The idea that wildlife needs to be conserved to prevent overuse and/or competition with agriculture continues to have an impact on conservation (KWS, unpublished report, 2001).

Unfortunately, big businesses are now using ecotourism as a marketing and sales tool. In Kenya, Tanzania, and other African nations, a substantial portion of the ecotourism destinations are either under protection or are owned by travel agencies. In these areas, residents hardly ever receive any direct advantages from ecotourism. National Parks are being created out of pristine lands through commercial ecotourism. Pastoralists occupy 70% of Kenya's land, 50% of Tanzania's, and 40% of Uganda's total land area in East Africa. Some of these sites have been converted into wildlife reserves, which necessitate infrastructure like roads and lodges, destroying natural ecosystems and having a long-term environmental impact (Drughi, 2018).

Challenges of Ecotourism in Kenya

Nairobi National Park, the oldest of Kenya's 24 National Parks, has over 70 years of national Park expertise and has a wealth of knowledge on conservation,

nature education, and management strategies for Kenya's Parks. It is the pinnacle of discovering Kenya's National Park System (Mwangi et al., 2022).

The competitiveness and sustainability of Kenya as a travel destination are being impacted by significant problems and difficulties. Over the years, Kenya's tourism industry has faced challenges, most notably a protracted period of underwhelming performance in the 1990s (see Akama, 1999:1; Ikiara, 2001). Ikiara, for instance, calls 1990s performance "erratic" (Ikiara, 2001). The inbound international tourism industry was rendered more difficult by the global economic crisis in 2009 and the post-election period of social upheaval in 2008. Long-term underperformance has characterized the last two decades, notwithstanding recovery phases like 2004–2007 and 2010, which have major stakeholders worried (Mayaka & Prasad, 2012).

Kenya's wildlife serves as a national resource and a major source of income for the government. In Kenya's socioeconomic growth plan, the two industries of wildlife and tourism are linked and crucial. This chapter examines the role that wildlife plays in the tourism industry, techniques for managing wildlife, the regulatory and legal environment, stakeholder engagement, as well as the difficulties in managing and conserving wildlife. The information and methods presented here can be utilized to develop and put into practice solutions that would improve the management and conservation of wildlife for the good of all parties involved (Otianga-Owiti et al., 2021).

Between numerous stakeholders, there is a lot of controversy in Kenya around the ownership and management of wildlife. Whether on public or private properties, wildlife is regarded as a resource that belongs to the government in Kenya. This has led to conflict amongst stakeholders who want more freedom and rewards for protecting wildlife on their grounds. To negotiate agreements with stakeholders, communities, landowners, corporations, international agencies, and non-governmental organizations, the government has recently had to make concessions. International organizations frequently have a major impact on whether species are given priority. Therefore, the numerous stakeholders participating in the

decision-making process would be examined in this section (Otianga-Owiti et al., 2021).

National Parks

Kenya has a wide range of biological diversity, with wildlife resources making up a sizable component of that richness. In a substantial portion of East Africa's remaining wildlife-rich and -diverse populations, pastoralists live. According to recent studies, the majority of the locals living close to protected regions feel negative about government policies and conservation initiatives (Okech, 2011). The relationship between tourism and conservation is expanded and improved by ecotourism. It expands on the notion of leveraging tourism to support conservation and vice versa while strengthening sustainability standards. In the early years of sustainable development, in the late 1980s, it first appeared (Stronza et al., 2022).

Kenya has a reputation as a premier location for ecotourism. As a result, ecotourism, which upholds crucial principles of sustainable tourism, has gained popularity. The country's safari tourist industry shared many characteristics with the ideas governing the emerging worldwide trend toward small-scale sustainable tourism at the time. Kenya has a reputation as a premier location for ecotourism. As a result, ecotourism, which upholds crucial principles of sustainable tourism, has gained popularity. The country's safari tourist industry shared many characteristics with the ideas governing the emerging worldwide trend toward small-scale sustainable tourism at the time. However, many of the methods used during the mass tourist era have vanished more than ten years after the introduction of the new sustainable alternatives, and this is still having an impact on how the ecotourism industry performs in the nation today. The primary cause of this is the spatial overlap of tourist sites, and consequently, the availability of goods and attractions that appeal to both mass and eco-tourism in the same locations (Ambo, 2007).

National Parks around the globe enable the preservation of astonishing biodiversity in a wide variety of habitats. The preservation of land, wildlife, and habitats is the responsibility of national Parks, which exist on every continent and in every type of environment. The creation and administration of National Parks, however, are not without controversy. Governments can improve the sustainability

and responsibility of our worldwide national Park systems by adopting certain policies and taking specific steps (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2016).

The majority of the time, National Parks are created when the government recognizes a region of land that is significant in terms of national history, biodiversity, and the environment. The first national Parks date back more than a century. In reality, the U.S. National Parks Service, which manages more than 400 unique locations spread across 84 million acres in all 50 states, turns 100 years old in 2016. National Park systems are used throughout, from Vietnam to Peru to South Africa. The website for South Africa's national Parks, which states that the Parks "[represent] the indigenous animals, flora, landscapes, and associated cultural heritage of the country," may best capture the worth of these.

It was discovered that ecotourism contributes to better forest management by preserving biodiversity, protecting endangered species, and protecting their ecosystems. Ecotourism also strengthens neighborhood communities while bringing both direct and indirect economic advantages (Indira Anggraini and Gunawan, 2021).

The future of tourism, especially nature-based tourism, is now brighter thanks to ecotourism. Ecotourism offers the chance to reduce the damaging effects of tourism development on the environment and culture so that it can be preserved for future generations to enjoy (Rhama, 2020).

This is in keeping with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) idea, which has been ratified internationally, as well as with several environmental and socioeconomic concerns. This is connected to the discovery that tourists' compulsive behavior leads to damaging tourism. Ecotourism is therefore seen as one of the options for enhancing community welfare, economic development, and environmental conservation (Theng, Qiong & Tatar, 2015).

Despite the geographic importance of protected areas and the growing dangers that various agents are posing to the world's biodiversity, successful conservation is still debatable and uneven. In this environment, protected areas have

developed into a major draw for ecotourism endeavors, appreciated for their capacity to produce monetary gains in a non-extractive manner, thereby enabling the sustainability of biodiversity (Novelli & Scarth, 2007).

Due to the poor being "preoccupied with meeting their subsistence needs, [which] may not support the ethical and aesthetic values of wildlife conservation and tourism development," the creation of protected areas and the development of tourism typically imply a change to the use of a place, frequently resulting in the displacement of people, loss of livelihoods, and lack of access to public land by local communities (Tourism Concern, 2005). (Akama, 1996, p. 567).

Both the multitrillion-dollar industry that caters to it and the category of human behavior that it falls under is tourism. Key contributions to the study of tourism and the environment are dispersed over a wide range of social and natural scientific disciplines (Buckley, 2011).

According to Buckley (2011), distinct forms and aspects of tourism have quite different effects on the environment, necessitating the use of quite different environmental management strategies. There are distinct differences between elements of transportation, lodging, and activities; between levels of land development in the wilderness, rural, and urban areas; and between various climates, terrain types, and ecosystems. Hotels in cities are connected to municipal services like sewage treatment, rubbish disposal, and water and power supply, and they bear a proportionate share of the costs associated with these services. Stand-alone vacation destinations, such as those found on islands, coasts, or mountains, frequently have their generators, water supply, sewage treatment facilities, and waste management systems. The size and sophistication of these systems vary substantially.

Even though protected, National Parks are not immune to deterioration as a result of overuse from visitors. As national Parks rely on sizeable inputs from the environment, equally sizeable outputs could be generated in terms of land degradation, habitat and species loss, pollution, stress and behavior modification of wildlife, etc. (Tubb, 2003).

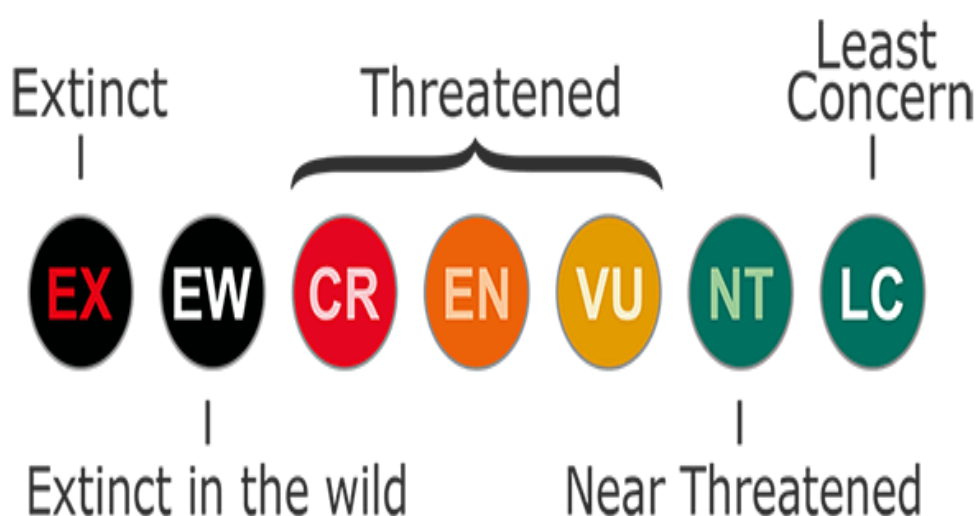
With rising interest in visits, National Parks and other protected places are well-liked tourist sites. The majority of infrastructure development initiatives for tourism-related activities are located close to National Park boundaries. Planning for land use in non-protected regions continues to be fraught with controversy and is dominated by two opposing paradigms (Stokke & Haukeland, 2018).

The oldest and biggest international environmental organization is called the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The largest professional worldwide conservation network today is IUCN, which was founded in 1948. More than 1,200 entities, including 200+ governments and 900+ non-government organizations, are members of the IUCN. The Union's headquarters are in Gland, a Swiss town close to Geneva (George, 2016).

The classification within Figure 15, has been classified from extinct to least extinct, in accordance to the species of animals and vegetation according to the IUCN, as an international effort to dedicate and assess the damage of the species that has occurred within the natural areas, this could help in assessing and reviewing what needs to restore (Author, 2022).

Figure 15

Classification of threatened species in the IUCN Red Data Book (George, 2016)



The IUCN Red List relies on Assessors (trained people, typically species experts) to evaluate species based on the information and data currently available. This originates from a variety of sources, including peer-reviewed academic publications, books, reports, professional expertise, indigenous knowledge, and citizen science (“IUCN Red List of Threatened Species,” 2005).

Any species that is at risk of going extinct shortly is considered a threatened species. Depending on how seriously they are threatened, threatened species are divided into three categories by the International Union for Conservation of Nature: vulnerable, endangered, and severely endangered (George, 2016).

Table 2.

*IUCN Classifications For Managing Protected Areas (Dudley, 2008),
(Mucova et al., 2018)*

Category	Description
1a Strict Nature Reserve	Strictly protected areas are those where human access, use, and impacts are restricted to safeguard the area's conservation benefits and, presumably, its biodiversity and geological or geomorphological features.
1b Wilderness Area	Large, little or moderately changed landscapes typically retain their natural character and influence. These places are preserved and managed to maintain their natural state.
2 National Park	Huge-scale ecological processes with distinctive species and ecosystems are protected in large natural or almost natural regions that also offer the opportunity for spiritual, scientific, educational, and recreational visits.
3 Natural Monument or Feature	A specific natural monument may be a landform, sea mount, marine cavern, geological structure like a cave, or a living feature like an old grove. Certain areas are designated to safeguard these types of natural monuments.

Table 2. (Continued)

*IUCN Classifications For Managing Protected Areas (Dudley, 2008),**(Mucova et al., 2018)*

<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>
4Habitat/Species Management Area	Areas where management reflects the need to safeguard a certain species or ecosystem. Although many would require ongoing, proactive interventions to suit the needs of certain species or ecosystems, the category does not mandate this.
5 Protected Landscape or Seascape	Whereas protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other benefits depends on maintaining the integrity of this interaction between humans and nature, the area has developed a distinctive character with important ecological, biological, cultural, and scenic significance.
6 Protected Areas with Sustainable Use of Natural Resources	Areas that preserve ecosystems, together with the cultural values and conventional natural resource management practices that go with them. Generally big, mostly in a natural state, with a section under sustainable resource management, and where one of the key goals is low-level, non-industrial resource utilization consistent with the preservation of nature.

National natural areas can be classified according to IUCN, in table 2, the classification and the definitions are illustrating every natural area that can be related to a certain unique natural identity, such as water, hard land, landscaping, marine life, or both as Kenya, have the most above classifications (Author, 2022).

National Parks in Kenya

With environments ranging from the Indian Ocean to wooded ecosystems, huge savannah woods, mountain summits, and the bottom of the Great Rift Valley, Kenya is home to an array of species that thrives. From the ocean floor to Mount

Kenya's snow-capped peak to the Chalbi and Turbi deserts, a cross-section of the nation reveals a wide variety of habitats and ecosystems (Chongwa, 2012).

With the establishment of British imperial control in Kenya in the 1890s came an interest in the formal protection of the country's natural resources and wilderness. Western visitors entered the newly established British East Africa Protectorate to go on extensive hunting safaris, which led to the mass extinction of animals (Honey 1999). To continue their big-game hunting excursions while using the locals as guides, porters, and servants, the British sought protected territory. Over time, the British developed regulations to accommodate their wants for recreation and to fund hunting safaris (Honey 1999).

Kenya has 8% of its land area designated as a protected area for the preservation of wildlife. Protected areas are surveyed, delineated, and gazette landscapes and/or seascapes that have been designated as National Parks or National Reserves. Protected areas in Kenya include a variety of environmental types, including forests, wetlands, savannahs, and maritime, dry, and semi-arid. There are 4 maritime National Parks, 6 marine National Reserves, 23 terrestrial National Parks, 28 terrestrial National Reserves, and 4 national sanctuaries among the protected areas. The KWS also oversees more than a hundred field stations and outposts outside of protected zones (Gilliland et al., 2015).

Figure 16

Kenya National Parks Map (Ltd, 2018)



As mentioned above, Kenyan protected areas fall under the category of Parks or reserves. The difference between the two categories is that only tourism and scientific research are permitted in Parks, where all natural resources are completely protected. On the other hand, certain restrictions apply to human activity in reserves. For example, these activities include gathering firewood in terrestrial reserves or fishing in marine reserves. It is important to note that a sizable portion of Kenya's wildlife does not reside in protected areas. This is because many of these areas are not completely guarded, and animals frequently enter and exit them in search of pasture and water at various times of the year (Kenya Wildlife Service, 2021).

CHAPTER IV

Methodology

Secondary research is crucial for any article and is especially important for a dissertation or thesis research project. In addition to producing the literature review and the theoretical framework for the dissertation, secondary research can also be employed in place of primary research (Acadoo, 2022).

To understand concepts, opinions, or experiences, secondary research entails gathering and evaluating non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio). It can be used to get an in-depth understanding of a subject or to develop fresh research ideas (Bhandari, 2020).

Secondary research is a typical method of conducting a systematic inquiry in which the researcher relies exclusively on previously collected material. For meaningful study conclusions, this research design entails arranging, combining, and analyzing these data samples (Formplus Blog, 2020).

The data has been collected from various resources such as Google scholar articles (mainly for literature review) and Websites (National Parks information).

The main benefit of secondary research is that the data is frequently accessible. This helps the researcher save a ton of time and makes it possible to collect a possibly larger dataset. Due to the absence of direct data gathering from a cohort, secondary research might also be financially advantageous.

Secondary research, which includes information on possible competitors for your business, is easily accessible because it deals with material that is already out there. It is not information that only one person or business may access. In that sense, unlike primary research, secondary research cannot be tailored to a particular person's or company's needs. You won't be able to obtain the same unique expertise tailored to your brand.

Ecotourism is a branch of the tourism business that focuses on using tourism to improve or maintain natural systems. To different people, ecotourism means different things. Some refer to it as a catch-all word for nature-based, adventure, soft adventure, and cultural tourism. Ecotourism was first coined in 1983 by Mexican environmentalist "Hctor Ceballos Lascurain" to characterize nature-based travel to relatively unspoiled places with an emphasis on teaching (Buckner et al., 2016).

This study would be a secondary research study based on several scholars to have the investigation of the selected national Park in Kenya, as we need to research the most valuable natural elements that can enhance and attract tourists in these countries, and have a review of the natural elements from the last studies, as well as the services that can be provided from the National Parks to serve the ecotourism practices and needs. An evaluation of the conditions was held on for specific areas, and the most well-known natural areas within these countries. This area has been known for human activities, as it's intense when it comes to the tourism industry.

The collection of data about the research within MNP in Kenya has been regarded by a set of scholars from the range of recent and old researches, ranging from the 2000s until nowadays, it's important to track the recent programs that have been spotted the light over the MNP, as the study of the environmental management program that started from 2007, until 2017, a ten of intensive work within the MNP, as there has been a dedicated plan for the future until the 2030 strategy aiming the conservation areas in Kenya which includes the MNP.

Even the data has been collected from several websites linked to Kenya's wildlife sites such as,(B. Africa, 2022; S. Africa, 2022; Maps, 2022; Rnxploresafaris, 2022; WTA, 2021), as these sites contain the documentation of the MNP, from pictures to the provided services.

As the scholar's articles include the recent studies within the MNP, the last updates about the ecological issues, and the human conflicts within the ecotourism industry within the selected area, which have spotted a serval problem related to the findings part.

The information that has been looked into helped within the assessment of the MNP, at the level of ecotourism, and the involvement of the sustainable development acts, as the study aims to relate these two issues together to have clear information on the area of the selected Park in Kenya. The author's studies combined within 2007-2017, and the 2030 strategy, has been given a clear update on what was going on and ongoing within the Park, even though the information is more concerned about the ecological aspects of the Park rather than the ecotourism statutes since within the ecological aspects the ecotourism sector can't be related to the issue.

CHAPTER V

Findings

One of the twenty-seven protection areas overseen by the Kenya Wildlife Service is Meru National Park. As indicated by the many vegetative communities that support a diverse variety of herbivores, carnivores, and around 300 species of birds, this 870 km² Park's ecosystem is highly varied. It takes place in a region with one of the highest densities of people in the nation and a population heavily reliant on subsistence farming. This has caused the local people to repeatedly break Park rules to obtain bush meat, honey, medicinal herbs, and wood products, which has increased uncontrolled fires in the Park (Webala et al., 2004).

The study would focus on the National Park and the state of the park, in a chosen case study (Meru National Park). This would indicate the significance of meeting the features within a well-known Kenyan park that is having good conservation practices and wildlife preservation in the Kenyan countryside, as well as tracking the relationship between ecotourism and the park, as this Park has been chosen in an intended manner.

National Park services can be listed below:

Economical: Taxation and unemployment, revenues (Services).

Social: Educational purposes, more engagement.

Environmental: Protection of wildlife (Qiu et al., 2015).

The assessment of the mentioned case of Meru National Park is to assess the statutes of the Park, following the environmental statutes, and the ecotourism statutes. This would help in understanding the Park and what it provides and how this Park has challenges that have been mentioned by recent authors according to scholars.

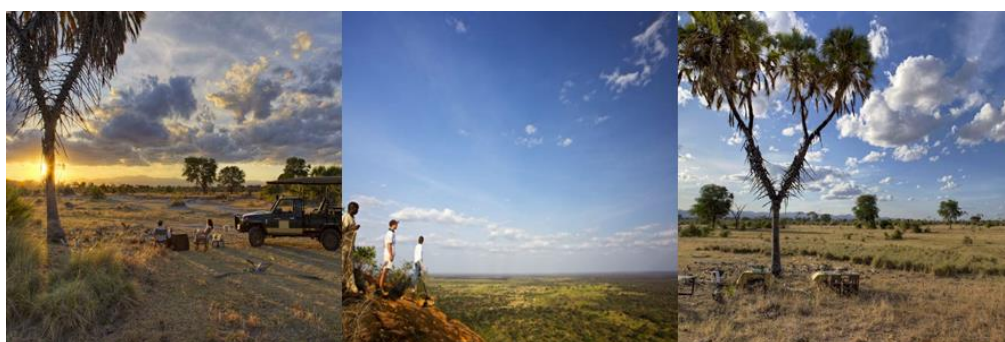
Activities In The Park

The MNP, Park has been founded in 1966, this Park has been marked by its wide safari life, fauna, and flora, which make it one of the most important national Parks in Kenya, as it's found within the conservation area for the plan of 2030 according to the Kenya government strategy of 2030. The Park has been equipped with certain accommodations, for the visitors, as well as a set of activities that can be provided within the Park for the tourists, while recent studies show a conflict between human activities and wildlife concerns as this Park may be harmed within the human activities, and the lack of financial resources to educate and engage the local people within the Park (Kenya Wildlife Service, 2021).

Activities include everything that locals, tourists, and travelers do while they are there. This consists of events that take place at the destination in the areas of economy, politics, recreation, and leisure. All of what people do for a living is economic activity. Events include conferences, meetings, festivals, sporting competitions, and religious, political, and cultural events.

Figure 17

Safari Adventure In MNP



Source: B. Africa, (2022) ;Rnxploresafaris, (2022) ;S. Africa, (2022); Safaris, (2018) ;Kenya Wildlife Service, (2021) ;Mucova et al., (2018).

Leisure is what people do when they have free time. It includes physical and recreational activities like reading, jogging, and sports like swimming, fishing, sunbathing, canoeing, kayaking, yachting, bird watching, stargazing, skydiving, skiing, mountain climbing, hiking, and trekking as well as road trips, rallies, the movies, dancing, music, singing, yoga, karate, football, and volleyball.

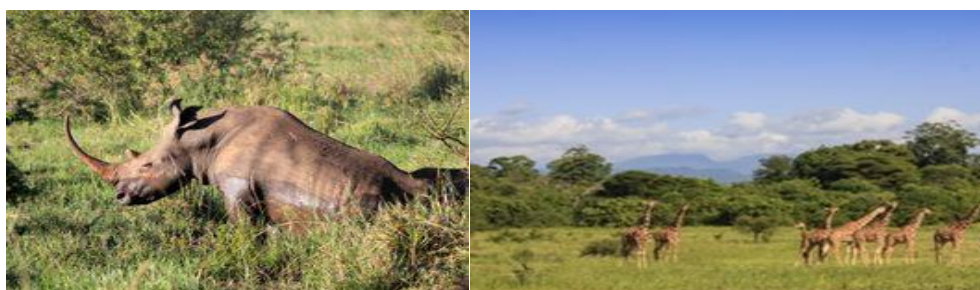
What to do (activities) in any location is determined by its attractions. The theme of Meru Park is exclusivity. The following are some of the major visitor activities in Meru National Park:

- Bird watching: There are around 300 different bird species. The ideal times to observe wildlife and birds are at dawn or dusk.
- The neighborhood hotels coordinate picnics and sundowners.
- Camping: The Park contains a large number of dispersed campsites.
- Safaris with wildlife and game drives
- Cultural excursions to meet the local Meru and Borana populations.
- Nature hikes or bushwalks
- Tana River offers opportunities for fishing and rafting. Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro
- Mount Bike riding
- The best afternoon activities include cultural tours, fishing, rafting, and simply unwinding by the hotel pools.

Rhinos, elephants and giraffes, and more species are the main huge species within the MNP that can provide natural animal views for the visitors to achieve their safaris adventures within the whole area.

Figure 18

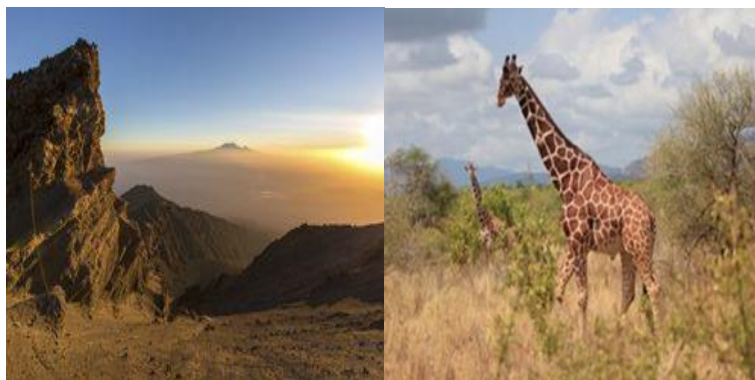
Rhino Animals And Giraffes in MNP (B. Africa, 2022)



Source: B. Africa, (2022) ;Rnxploresafaris, (2022) ;S. Africa, (2022); Safaris, 2018) ;Kenya Wildlife Service, (2021) ;Mucova et al., (2018).

Figure 19

The Mountains, And Giraffes Animal In MNP (B. Africa, 2022)



Source: B. Africa, (2022) ;Rnxploresafaris, (2022) ;S. Africa, (2022); Safaris, (2018) ;Kenya Wildlife Service, (2021) ;Mucova et al., (2018).

The Recent Studies On MNP

Although tourism has encouraged the preservation of wildlife and biodiversity, its negative effects on the environment are generally more pronounced. Beaches along the coast, where around 60% of all bed nights in the nation are spent, have been severely deteriorated and contaminated. Without taking carrying capacity limitations into consideration, too many hotels and other tourist attractions have been built. The tourism sector in Kenya has incorporated some of the global mitigation initiatives. In Kenya, a few hotels and other business owners stand out for their excellent environmental protection. Partnership programs between the government, industry and local communities are succeeding wildly. However, the vast majority of tourists frequently disobey the rules. The nation's mitigation attempts have been hampered by a lack of institutional coordination, corrupt practices, and weak institutions (Ikiara & Okech, 2002).

"Responsible travel to natural regions that conserve the environment and improve the well-being of local people" is the definition of eco-tourism. The ecotourism industry in Kenya is still expanding and developing. More active research is required in the area because there is a significant research void there (Ogweno, 2021).

The main outcome is an overview of the Park's history from 1983 to 2003, or from the first relocation of animals into the Park, which began in June 2003 and continued through June 2006 for some species. The simulated trials demonstrated the committed relationship between poaching activity and the prevalence of important species. Depicts trends in abundance variation trends for the groupings from 1980 to 2003. It is argued that EwE applies to these terrestrial habitats (Owino Manoa et al., 2020).

For 134 plant species across 45 plots—15 each for acacia-wooded grassland, combretum-wooded grassland, and acacia-Commiphora bushland—a cover/abundance rating (Braun-Blanquet) was recorded. According to their floristic similarities, three plant species assemblages were identified, and five were found in the SYNTAX analysis with a dissimilarity level of above 0.7. The three species—Acacia woodland grassland, Combretum wooded grassland, and Acacia-Commiphora bushland—responded to these habitats. The Combretum (node 5) community was distinguished from the Acacia (nodes 1 and 2) and Acacia-Commiphora (nodes 3 and 4) communities by the dissimilarity dendrogram. The heterogeneity (H') indices within these assemblages were 2.50, 3.05, 3.81, and 3.85 for nodes 1 and 2 (Acacia), node 3 (Acacia-Commiphora), and node 5 (Combretum community), respectively. In 48 trap nights spanning a total trap length of 2088 m in three vegetation groups within the Park and on nearby farms, 495 bats from 15 species (Webala et al., 2004).

Complex interactions between humans and lions occur in Meru National Park and its surroundings. The theory that lion distribution in the area is influenced by habitat factors, precipitation, household distribution, and livestock density has been confirmed. However, discover evidence supports the idea that cattle theft influences people's desire to seek restitution in the MNP (Kariuki, 2020). The MNP's disorganized lion pride structure is probably caused by seasonal variations in the availability of food and water. During prolonged droughts, ungulates move around in search of pasture and water. In turn, this leads to the lion pride splitting up and dispersing across the Park and even outside.

A study by Ndeereh et al., (2019), done on a Hyena animal within the MNP on a male was more active right away after being released, then he became less active for around two months before becoming more active once more, according to daily activity data. After being released, the female was initially less active, but she had already begun to move around before it was killed. Compared to the early hours of the night, both were often more active from daybreak until after midnight. Except for one or two occasions, the female was never mobile during the day, although the male occasionally covered short distances.

The programs implemented through community empowerment in the form of raising life skills Meru Betiri were discovered by this study by Subchan et al., (2020), such as the following program: a) The re-fertilization of the soil in the demonstration plots distributed around Donglo and Bonangan, as well as the breeding and planting of endemic plants in the region; b) Compilation of the Memorandum of Understanding realization through socialization activities; c) Through workshops and mentoring, 200 heads of the Wonoasri Resort's rehabilitation program would gain more knowledge and skills; d) Enhanced revenue from the village's property and yard thanks to workshops and mentorship.

The conflict between humans and elephants has been a significant issue for MNP's conservation efforts. The threat of crop raiding has caused significant losses for nearby communities. The incidence of crop raiding must be decreased and eliminated, though, through both short- and long-term community-based mitigation measures. These include guarding with deterrents, developing land use planning as a long-term measure, and taking into account future compensation mechanisms by MNP management as a policy program (Sitienei et al., 2014).

Agricultural activity would continue to increase in the study region after evaluating the effects of agricultural improvements on biodiversity conservation in MNP's buffer zone. According to forecasts from the 2009 census of the human population, there would be more people living in the study area, which would also lead to more agricultural activities in the buffer zone around MNP. If the existing unconventional farming techniques are not appropriately addressed, this could lead to species degeneration, in some cases even species extinction, and habitat modification

for wildlife. Despite the detrimental effects that uncontrolled agricultural expansion has had on biodiversity conservation in the study region, it has been determined that agricultural development is essential for balancing the social and economic needs of the neighborhood. To ensure a unified approach to managing the various and frequently conflicting needs of biodiversity conservation and agricultural development, the ecosystem management concept should be integrated with the sustainable biodiversity conservation model (Nyamweya, 2018).

Figure 20

Recent Researcher's Findings About MNP

MNP Challenger –Recent Authors Researches
Corrupted Tourism Sector
Expanding Tourism Sector ongoing
Relocation of the Animal species
Illegal activities – Disturbing of vegetation species
Animal and Human conflicts
Attempting for rewilding, and revegetation
Attempting to raise the life skills of the locals
Human and Elephant conflicts
Agriculture practices destroying the environment of the park
Local culture are ecotourism friendly and attractiveness

Given that there were more Hinde's Babbler groups in Ngaya Forest Reserve and MNP than in the agricultural landscape, protection by law is crucial for the conservation of threatened bird species. The Hinde's Babbler population fluctuates with the seasons; more individuals were seen during the dry season than during the wet season. The spatial distribution of thicket, especially *Lantana Camara* in encroached regions, determines the distribution of Hinde's Babbler groups. Only shrub cover exhibited a favorable, substantial link between Hinde's Babbler population and vegetation cover, the study found. Landscape bareness had no effect, whereas tree, forb, and grass cover had a bad correlation with Hinde's Babbler

populations. The Hinde's Babbler population decreases as disturbances like pesticide use rise (Onyancha, 2016).

Analyzing the suitability of an ecosystem for translocation may be possible using this method. It might aid in the non-lethal resolution of human-wildlife conflicts and aid in the preservation of biodiversity. In MNP, pre- and post-release treatment could also improve translocation success (Goeminne, 2020).

Figure 21

The Ecological Statues Of MNP ((Kenya Wildlife Service, 2007)

Category	Exceptional Resource Value
Biodiversity	▶ Black rhino
	▶ Grevy's zebra
	▶ Elephant
	▶ Mosaic of vegetation types
	▶ Bohor reedbuck
	▶ Leopard
	▶ Naked mole rat
Scenic	▶ Undisturbed wilderness
	▶ Tana River and Adamson's Falls
Social	▶ Community consultative committees and forum
	▶ Water catchments
	▶ Ngaya Forest
Cultural	▶ Ethnic and cultural diversity
	▶ Adamson's grave and camp

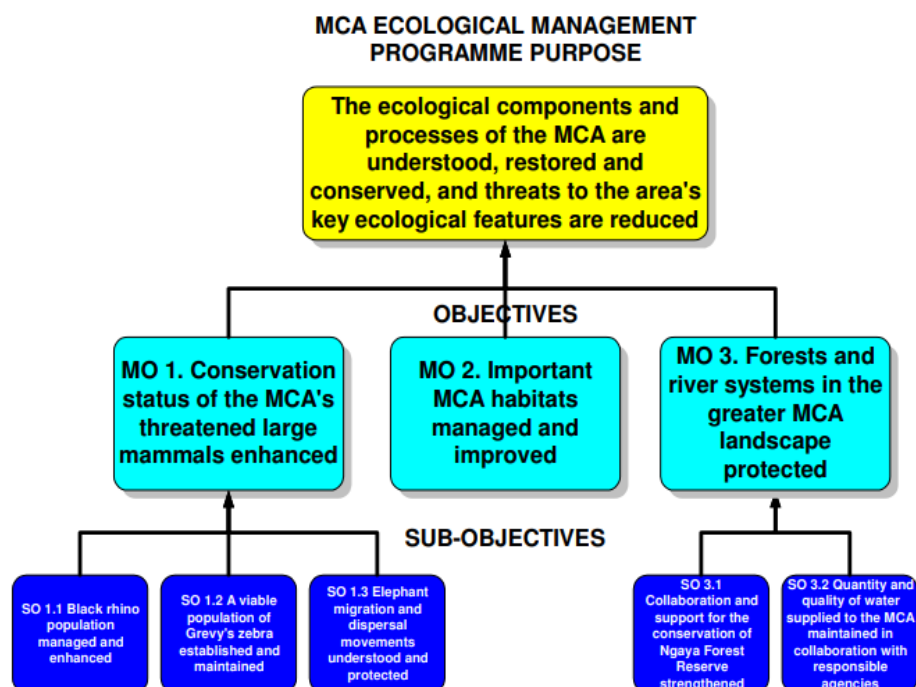
According to the study findings by Kivuva, (2021)., forest tourism goods considerably and positively impacted tourism sustainability ($r=0.258$, $p=0.001$). In other words, a unitary increase in forest tourism goods causes a 0.258-unit rise in tourist sustainability. The majority of travelers and destination operators concurred that cultural tourism experiences affected the viability of the tourism industry. Cultural tourism activities included visiting historical sites, sampling regional cuisine and beverages, watching local dance performances, viewing local artifacts, visiting sacred sites, seeing local basket makers at work, seeing traditional homes, going to local cultural performances and religious gatherings, and staying at homes in rural villages.

Ecological Management Program in MNP 2007-2017

The program was exposing and collected information about the Park area within the ecological medium, as it's presented in Figure 22, this included four categories targeting the main ecological features that can be included within the program and the actions needed to improve the ecological status.

Figure 22

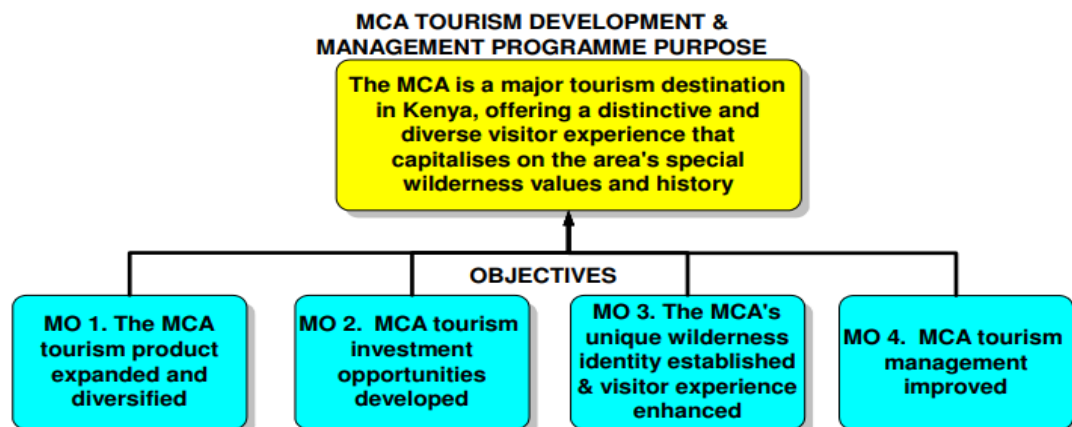
Ecological Management Map of MCA (Kenya Wildlife Service, 2007)



Several techniques have been taken in action to have the best ecological practices improvements such as protecting the ecosystem features from rivers to hardscape, as well as improving the lives of animals, and the treated ones were restored.

Figure 23

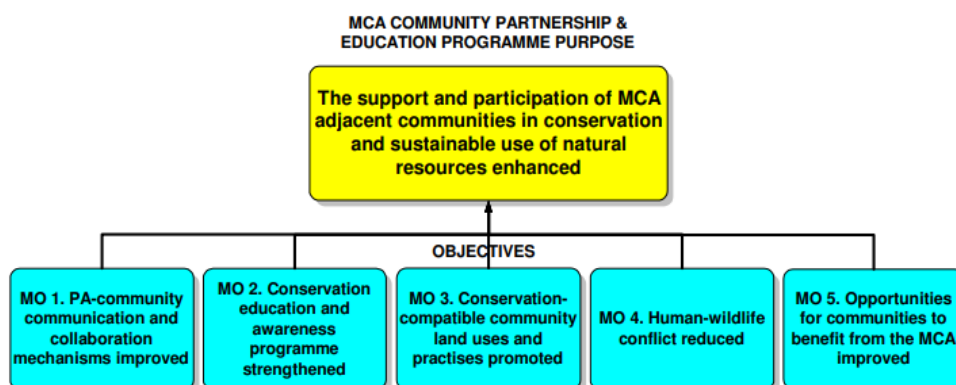
Tourism Development MCA (Kenya Wildlife Service, 2007)



Tourism development was one of the issues that have been taken into action within the MCA (Meru Conservation Area), as the industry has been going through diverse plans, and more developments were taken into place, to allow the visitors to have the maximum experience within the Park area.

Figure 24

Educational Program MCA (Kenya Wildlife Service, 2007)



The educational program was an issue to deal with in the local people so that they can have a better behavior within the wildlife, as they can raise the awareness, and valuables of the ecology from animals to vegetation, that can provide a better

understanding to protect and engage the locals within the Park area at an educational level.

Figure 25

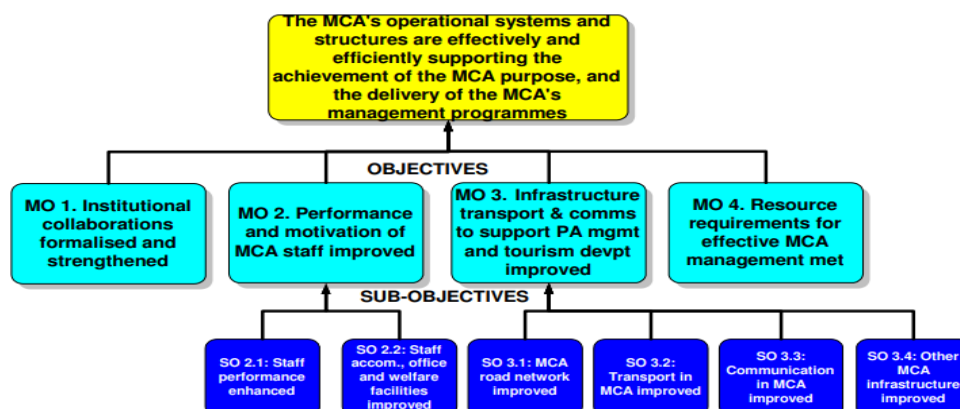
Security Features Community of MCA (Kenya Wildlife Service, 2007)



Security was one of the program's purposes to achieve to have safer tourist action, as enhancing security can provide a better environment for visitors.

Figure 26

Operational System MCA (Kenya Wildlife Service, 2007)



The operational system within the Park was the main key to communicating and operating the processes and tasks of the MCA, to have better outcomes that can achieve the goals and boost the work and the targets of the program.

The Goals of National Wildlife Strategy 2030, in Kenya

On the other hand, a study has been done by (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2018), as this study as aiming to target the importance of conservation in Kenya's wildlife including MNP, as this study goal is shown in Figure 27.

As we can see in Figure 27, the continuation and the promising of the conservations actions took place after a ten-year program that has been done for MNP, as well as MCA, the ecology, species, education, sharing, more research, training, and financial issues were all the targets of this strategy to be achieved in 2030, as the study area would be included, as this strategy is ongoing within the first years of working we still have to wait for the results assessing, as the same issues held by the program in 2007, was also carried on within the 2030 strategy, which means the issues need more to work on to improve the wildlife statues.

Figure 27

The Goals of National Wildlife Strategy 2030, in Kenya (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2018)



CHAPTER VI

Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendation

Discussion

Sustainable development has its way of more resilience and advantages that can reveal over time, as in the case of MNP, the Park has been offering several services such as from watching animals to accommodations, as well recent research has spotted the light within the critical issues that the Park is going through which is a threat to the sustainable development actions that would be taken later, as these issues are still existing.

The issue of sustainable development can be tracked within the economical, social, and environmental issues, at all of the levels that can provide the enhancement to the system of the country at the economical and development sectors, this can provide the opportunity to thrive and invest within the natural resources such as the National Parks.

National Parks can have the potential of enhancing the economical value of the country, as they present themselves within nature, within the resources from animals, to vegetation, and land shapes such as mountains, hills, and meadows. These natural resources can provide the potential ecotourism industry to be introduced within the country, and making the chance of the incoming to the country's GDP.

Ecotourism needs the foundations as an industry to have the potential income from these resources, as this industry needs the attention of sustainable development to be involved in whole sectors such as social, economic, and environmental. While the engagement of the local people within the industry can provide the potential for sustainability actions to preserve and protect the source of the land.

One main issue within ecotourism due to climate change and the struggles that affect the environment is the conservation acts, as these strategies can provide the chance for nature to recover from the human activities that may, or can halt the environment at the level of the species from fauna, and flora.

Conservation issues are the main issue that can bring ecotourism to another level, as the case of Kenya, the MNP, has been going through conservation acts since 2007, and later within the future to stand within the natural resources as they represent the ecotourism pillars.

The tracked studies have been focused on the ecological impacts of human practices, as well the conservation practices within the Park area, as there was a conflict between the local human, and the natural elements in MNP, as there were several attempts for the more conservation programs and strategies from the government of Kenya and still going. The research study tracked the fluctuations within the studies and the strategies for conservation both of them have ignorance of sustainable development and the acts were limited as the tourism sector in Kenya showed a corruption degree which affects the SD practices that can halt the sustainable conservation works for the future.

The challenges of ecotourism can also affect the sustainable development act within any area, as well ecotourism can provide a wide range of ecotourism types, such as terrestrial, marine, and more. In the case of Kenya, the MNP provides the terrestrial National Park experience within the provided services.

Sustainable development within the KKenya case has been affected by corruption, and thus it tends to be depending on international efforts, as the struggle among the local people also has key issues, as the conservation process seems not to do well every time they assess the case of MNP.

The data has been collected for the research back in the year 2007, and until the new day, the findings of these data has been targeted the process and the attempts several times within the conservation process within the MNP, as the authors have spotted some of the ecological issues, as well the local human conflicts with natures.

Figure 28
2007 M.P. and 2030 Strategy of MNP



In figure 28, we can target the demands of the same management program that has been done in 2007 -2017, which took ten years of working on, as the promises came within the same target for the 2030 strategy, as the main concern was the conservation issue at the ecological level as well the training and the financial issues.

Therefore the MNP, is in needs to be more assessment and have a clear plan for achieving the target of conservation actions as one of the SD practices that can preserve the ecological values of the wildlife, as well the training issue is a must within the tourism sector, and the financial issue that Kenya was struggling to deal with, all of these issues could be negatively deteriorate the MNP statues that can have a negative impact of the ecotourism within the real meaning of having the less harm to the environment, as the MNP is a one system area that can be working all together from services, to wildlife, and employee actions, all is running within the one area and relying on each other.

The study as well as an open question for future later research:

- Do MNP conservation practices have a real impact to improve the ecological life of the Park?

- Can we control the huge scale area of MNP within the ecotourism industry practices?
- Do the local humans have a response to the conservation recent practices and international efforts?
- Can the 2030 plan for conservation have its incomes and aims?

This set of questions needs to be addressed to have a better assessment of the MNP area, for future efforts, to achieve the SD, which can push up the ecotourism industry and thrive the ecological aspects too.

Conclusion

The situation of the MNP has been conflicted with the term Sustainable Development, due to the findings, and the ecotourism industry in Kenya is suffering from degradation at the ecological levels, which threatens the ecotourism industry within the MNP. While the attempt to have a conservation plan before and after the study assessments is one of the hopes that can protect the plans for sustainable development as well the ecotourism within the Park.

Thus, MNP has been within both sides of fixation, and halting the environmental aspects (ecology), from both the government, local people, and international efforts. The case of MNP showed the conflicts between human beings, and nature, as well the ecotourism industry within the Park provides several sets of services that can have a pleasant experience for the tourist, while the truth about the ecological level is under study and conservation programs.

The study researchers concluded that conflicts of the ecological statutes within the MNP, can halt, and risk the ecotourism industry within the Park, as the SD, still within a week of efforts and limited scales, needs to be addressed within the educational programs and more local efforts can be engaged.

Recommendations

The recommendations for the study according to the findings that have been related to the study area of MNP, as the Park has been going through a conservation

process since 2007, until now and then within the future until the 2030 strategy, as this recommendation may target the ecological level of the Park.

Promoting the conservation actions for wildlife following the vegetation and animal species with more study-based techniques, as this can enhance the ecology cycle of the Park and revive the natural elements for more income that can benefit the ecotourism industry within the Park area.

Updating the educational program within the MNP for the local people, so that they can benefit and apply within the surroundings, as well as engaging them more within the conservation practices, can have a huge income for the long sustainable vision, and aim, that can help within the sustainability achievements for the next generations, as well the tourism industry can revive, and support the local people at the financial level.

Seeking well-trained employees that can deal with the services in sustainable ways and solutions, as this could minimize the human activities that may occur and harm the environment, as this process can have benefits to reviving the local ecotourism practices by sharing international experiences.

Seeking financial aid to promote and fund the conservation and educational programs within the MNP, from the ecotourism industry, as a national need to strengthen the national weight of having national Parks as a valuable area for the economy. Limiting the disturbance of the species within the rules of restrictions as possible can be done, with education and certain restrictions.

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