

# Beyond Tourism in Africa

## The issue

For years now, trophy hunting and tourism have been the two main ways for many communities across Africa to generate revenue from wildlife. The benefits generated by these activities have provided significant conservation incentives for people to share land with sometimes dangerous wildlife. The result has been large-scale conservation and often dramatic restoration of wildlife populations and habitats in many areas.



Today, both these ways of generating revenue from wildlife on communal land face a challenging future, with potentially substantial consequences for the conservation of iconic species and entire ecosystems. Trophy hunting is under increased pressure from animal protection activists and organisations, and is being increasingly challenged on ethical and welfare grounds in developed countries – where most buyers of hunting permits live.

Photographic and ecotourism are often cited as possible ways to fill the revenue gap from trophy hunting. There are some notable examples of community-private sector partnerships that generate significant benefits for communities from this kind of tourism. Yet that too faces challenges. First, photographic tourism is not viable in many areas due to their remoteness and relative paucity of scenery and wildlife. Second, poorly managed tourism can itself have significant negative impacts on wildlife populations, such as disrupting breeding and feeding patterns. Badly managed tourism has also had wider environmental, social and cultural effects, including pressure on scarce water resources, littering, and cultural exploitation. Third, tourism is a notoriously unreliable industry, and is vulnerable to perceptions of risk linked to disease outbreaks (sometimes far away on the same continent), economic and political instability, as well as the potential for local saturation of the

market. The industry is also largely reliant on tourists flying in from long distances and producing large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions, challenging 'eco' credentials. So, while tourism is often presented as a straightforward replacement for trophy hunting and a form of non-consumptive use of wildlife, it is not a panacea either in terms of its revenues or its impacts.

In the absence of economic or other incentives that encourage wildlife husbandry, communities across Africa will put their land to more profitable uses through livestock grazing or cropping.

Although this project has a geographic focus on Africa, there are many communities around the world that contribute significantly to global conservation efforts but also face trade-offs by choosing to share their land with wildlife.

## The response

It is this context that prompted the Luc Hoffmann Institute and WWF-Norway in 2019 to instigate a study on the options for economic activity based on wildlife in rural Africa. We were interested in preparing for a future in which pressure on land would see wildlife displaced in favour of less ecologically appropriate uses. In time, we hope to identify, incubate and promote innovative ways of providing communities a genuinely ecologically-friendly living from their natural environments.

To spur innovation in this important field and reach out to new thinkers, tangential sectors and especially young people, the Luc Hoffmann Institute set up Beyond Tourism In Africa, an innovation challenge in partnership with the African Leadership University's School of Wildlife Conservation and the WWF Regional Office for Africa. We aim to discover and incubate new revenue models that do not depend on tourism and enable local communities in Africa to derive income from wildlife, manage their natural resources sustainably, and improve their collective wellbeing. We are looking for solutions for Africa, but hope to discover innovations that can be applicable to other parts of the world.

For more information about the innovation challenge, or to provide funding to enhance the project's reach and impact and contribute to the future of conservation, get in touch:

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