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# **Development, Poverty and Tourism: Perspective and Influences in Sub-Saharan Africa**

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## **Abstract**

Globalization has been responsible for recent transformations of tourism practices that in turn have resulted in the restructuring of tourism landscapes, people flows and delivery networks across the globe. There is an international shift in the major tourist markets' purchasing behavior towards the Internet and away from the traditional tour operator /travel agent intermediaries. For the relatively small economies (South Africa excluded) of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) this represents both a threat and an opportunity. This paper seeks to widen the scope of recent debate on the tourism geographies of globalization by exploring in more depth the unfolding relationship between tourism and poverty reduction. Considered in the process are the production practices and regulatory frameworks for tourism along with the environments for tourist consumption in SSA countries. Particular attention is given to the role of development assistant agencies in fostering tourism as a means for economic growth. The paper seeks to answer the question—is tourism (given its inherent threats and opportunities) a legitimate poverty reduction strategy for countries to follow, and should development assistance agencies be supporting a tourism strategy? The argument for tourism is generally supported and propositions for packaging it to meet poverty reduction goals are suggested.

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## Introduction

Tourism's economic influence and opportunity was first realized in the 1950s and 1960s by countries like France, Spain, Italy, Greece, UK, Ireland, Australia and the USA who used tourism as part of an integrated development strategy to fuel urban regeneration, develop transport systems, finance rural development, and catalyze private sector development through employment and economic growth. As travel became cheaper and accessible to more people, developing countries offered the prospect of exotic destinations and products attractive to the fast expanding market-driven foreign travel companies. During the 1970s and 1980s a host of exploitative features such as high rates of foreign ownership, substantial leakages of tourism earnings, and social and environmental damage, typified tourism's "North - South" relationship. In reality, this was no different from any other form of resource extraction or exploitation paradigm.

Tourism's role in development has evolved considerably in the past 15 years. It is increasingly considered a stimulant not just for foreign exchange, economic growth and employment, but also an opportunity for host community participation in biodiversity conservation, urban growth, infrastructure overhaul and planning, rural development, environmental restoration, coastal protection and cultural heritage preservation. Couched in more socially and environmentally inclusive approaches today, tourism has a role to play in a greater number of developing economies than ever before and development agencies are progressively becoming involved in this sector. In the culturally and biodiversity rich SSA region, tourism earnings and employment have grown 1200%<sup>1</sup> since 1980 (WTO<sup>2</sup>, 2003), significantly outpacing other sectors. However, despite this growth, there is no evidence that tourism is contributing to an overall growth in per capita GDP.

Of the many strategies outlined in mainstream poverty reduction discussions<sup>3</sup> for SSA, tourism seldom surfaces. This paper argues that, in the case of SSA countries tourism should be considered and examines some of the reasons why it is not considered more. A central issue discussed in this paper is whether enough has been done to truly include host communities and countries in the value chains that comprise the delivery of tourism products and services.

The paper also notes that development agencies have a more significant role to play as they are being drawn into supporting tourism programs through a variety of largely ad hoc and circumscribed entry points. The paper argues that there is a pressing need for greater collaboration and strategic decision making in order to align these interventions with mainstream strategic poverty reduction choices being prioritized by countries. For instance, of the 30 or so PRSPs<sup>4</sup> for SSA countries, all but four (Burkina Faso, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti) explicitly mention tourism as focal sector for economic growth. Yet, in the case of the World Bank, tourism is specifically targeted in the Country Assistance Strategies (CAS) for only six of these countries.

Thus, the purpose of this paper is to explore through literature the evolving construct of tourism development as it applies to the unique characteristics of SSA countries and examine this region's potential to utilize sustainable tourism strategies in meeting poverty reductions goals.

## SSA Region Characteristics

The World Bank classifies the SSA region as comprising of 47 countries that combine to be roughly twice the size of the United States. Nearly a third of the known languages in the world are spoken in these countries, the majority of which have at least 30 distinct tribal groups. Of these countries only Liberia, Ethiopia (formerly Abyssinia) and South Africa were independent sovereign nations at the start of the First World War. The rest were either colonies or protectorates of Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain. By the late 1960s nearly all countries had seceded from colonial rule and were independent nations.

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<sup>1</sup> This figure represents an increase in tourism receipts from approximately US\$1 billion in 1980 to US\$ 12 billion in 2002 and an increase in employment in tourism from under 500,000 to nearly 6 million.

<sup>2</sup> World Tourism Organization, now a "United Nations Specialized Agency."

<sup>3</sup> For example, The World Bank Sourcebook on *Poverty Reduction Strategies* makes no mention of tourism explicitly (World Bank, 2002)

<sup>4</sup> *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* summarizes the country's development priorities.

Though independent, the negative legacies of dependence (mainly economic and political and characterized by colonial governance) are proving difficult to overcome in a world becoming increasingly driven by globalization and competition. According to the World Bank (WDI, 2003)<sup>5</sup> and United Nations (HDR, 2004)<sup>6</sup> classifications, 38 of the world's 50 poorest countries are in SSA and it is the most aid dependent and indebted region of the world. The challenges are enormous and the situation of poverty, by and large, is worsening. Examined externally, and exacerbated by growing populations (currently over 700 million and growing annually at 2.3%), SSA faces increasing economic inequalities, devastating HIV/AIDS pandemic (with huge social and economic costs), massive human displacements in the wake of natural disasters, violent conflicts, and debilitating political strife. The need for opportunities and solutions has never been more palpable as SSA appears being left behind, essentially excluded from today's global economy.

Yet, SSA encapsulates the paradox of unrivalled tourism resource wealth and opportunity juxtaposed with the reality of worsening poverty. Historically, tourism attractions in this region were largely in Eastern and Southern Africa, and consisting of fragmented game reserves, national parks and enclave beachfront developments designed to serve the recreational needs and economic interests of settler communities and foreign tourists. Although political independence for most African states in the late 1950s to early 1960s brought about measures of access control as well as opportunities for various forms of tourism development, the creation of a tourism industries were not viewed as important priorities on the post independence agenda for most countries. However, since the 1990s some SSA countries have more stable macro economic and political conditions that have allowed international tourism to flourish and be seen both as a pivotal and ancillary industry in their development process.

Despite this positive growth, the World Bank reported that the "Sub-Saharan Africa as a region saw no increase in its per-capita incomes between 1965 and 1999" (World Bank 2002: 5-6). For the last three decades, many African countries have been carrying out reform programs, and while these have partially reversed the negative trend, the results have been disappointing. In the 1990s, while per capita GDP in the developing world as a whole grew by 1.7%, Sub-Saharan Africa's fell steadily by 0.2% per year. In the face of declining primary exports such as mining and agriculture<sup>7</sup> (World Bank, 2004), modern tourism<sup>8</sup> may present a genuine opportunity for economic diversification if host countries and communities can realize their advantage and value their resources accordingly.

## Tourism as a Development Tool: A Brief History

Development attitudes and approaches to tourism are influenced by theories of economic growth and development, evidenced throughout the literature on tourism development. The first international seminar on tourism and development (funded by UNESCO and the World Bank) occurred in 1976 in Washington, DC. This led to De Kadt's seminal publication, *Tourism: Passport to Development?* in 1979. De Kadt's work spawned two poles of theoretical research around the discourse of tourism and development. These were Britton's "Dependency Model" (Britton 1982) and Butler's "Lifecycle Model," (Butler 1980) which dominated the thinking of tourism development in the 1980s. Britton and Butler were the first to warn that tourism may add to already apparent inequalities between "North and South." They also were the first to discuss wider (and largely negative) social and environmental issues associated with tourism development (later taken up by many authors in the sustainability debate). Both authors emphasized the degenerative nature of tourism development in a developing world context, however, it should be noted that both were writing at a time when tourism, and particularly mass tourism, was growing at an unbridled pace.

Under the mantra of promoting economic growth, tourism development projects were financed almost exclusively by the World Bank<sup>9</sup> in the 1970s. While the majority of these projects were very

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<sup>5</sup> The *World Development Indicators* in the World Bank's premier annual compilation of data about development.

<sup>6</sup> The *UNDP Human Development Report* was first launched in 1990 with the single goal of putting people back at the center of the development process in terms of economic debate, policy and advocacy.

<sup>7</sup> SSA's share of global agricultural export value has declined almost continually from 8% in 1965 to 2% in 2000

<sup>8</sup> Tourism is defined by the World Tourism Organization as the activities of people traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for no more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes not related to an activity remunerated from within the place visited.

<sup>9</sup> The World Bank first financed tourism development through two loan agreements in 1966 to Morocco and Tunisia. Both loans made available financing through national financial intermediaries for the foreign exchange costs of private tourism projects. Loans like

successful in catalyzing economic growth and tourism development for the selected destinations, the explicit focus on economic development in these projects tended to ignore environmental and social impacts (see Figure 1).

<b>Kenya Wildlife and Tourism Project (1976-1984) from <i>Conclusion</i><sup>10</sup></b>
<p>8.1 The project has been successful in that physical execution has been largely completed and the expected benefits in the form of increased visitor flows have been realized. The expected benefits in the form of improved visitor management in the wildlife areas, reduced environmental damage and the wider sharing of revenues from tourism have not yet been realized or have been realized only in part. With the exhaustion of loan funds and general budgetary constraints, <b>it appears that inadequate resources are now being allocated both to park operations and maintenance and to the anti-poaching programs of the Government.</b></p> <p>8.2 Although the importance of tourism's contribution to Kenya's foreign exchange earnings is acknowledged and the role of wildlife viewing in the development of tourism is recognized, the attention given to improved planning and management of wildlife resources and to the measures needed for the better conservation of these resources appears to have diminished with the completion of the project. Hence, consideration might be given to follow-up assistance focusing particularly on the priority of wildlife in the context of the development of the Kenyan economy and on the further measures needed to conserve and manage the county's wildlife resources in an optimal way. While the success of the Bank-supported Wildlife and Tourism Project in terms of its economic rate of return substantially exceeds expectations, <b>the concerns about the longer term future of Kenya's wildlife and its relation to the future of the tourist industry persist and need to be addressed.</b></p>

Figure 1. Extracts from Project Completion Report April 20, 1989 - Kenya

Although flagged as issues and discussed extensively in the documentation, explicit responsibility, such as environmental and social safeguard policies, was passed onto governments to address. However, governments were for the most unable to apply any specific remedial actions (e.g. carrying capacities for natural resources are discussed and recommended, but projects and governments had no mechanism or budget to implement these recommendations). With few exceptions, there was little discussion of the inclusion of host communities in the process of developing a tourism product; they are considered more of a difficult and expensive problem in the project input/output calculations. Poverty reduction and sustainability, though obviously implicit outcomes, are not mentioned.

A literature review from 1976 to the present reveals that authors have approached tourism and development from several different perspectives. Sharpley and Telfer (Sharpley, Telfer 2002) attempted to analyze and compare the parallel paradigms of tourism and development from the context of tourism as an agent of development. They draw from the literature in applying tourism development initiatives along a continuum of respective development theory models (Modernization; Dependency; Neoliberalism; Alternative Development) applied at various times in developing countries and concluding that the predominant economic theory governed the process of tourism development. Sharpley and Telfer (Sharpley, Telfer 2002: 80-105) ascribe the bulk of their analytical findings to an economic perspective where the prime motivation for developing tourism is as a contributor to economic growth. The issue of capital inputs versus capital outputs (input-output ratios)<sup>11</sup> is presented as the major argument for the lack of support for tourism as a development mechanism; they argue that empirical evidence demonstrates that the numbers do not add up. However, their perspective discusses capital inputs, such as roads linking the capital to national parks, as being for the sole benefit of the tourism industry. A more holistic view is to think of costly tourism-related inputs, such as new airports, roads and urban regeneration, as being for the public good, not just one for tourism businesses. In addition, the fact that tourism is a composite product of many other industries makes it difficult to quantify input and outputs; this has contributed to uncertainty about the role of tourism in economic development (Bryden 1973, Butler 1993).

In 1979, driven in part by the external debate around tourism and by its own changing approaches to development, the World Bank, under Robert McNamara's presidency, stopped financing the tourism

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these were targeted to meet the foreign exchange requirements of construction for both manufacturing and tourism businesses. Through a different instrument, the World Bank continued to process tourism projects during the 1970s. These were directed at providing infrastructure, urban regeneration, public sector capacity building, water and sanitation supply and the conservation of wildlife resources. They were all targeted toward creating a platform for international tourism through the development of destinations or enhancing those that already existed.

<sup>10</sup> Project completion reports are part of the World Bank projects evaluation process and are typically carried out three to five years post-project.

<sup>11</sup> Input-Output Ratios are a commonly used methodology for calculating the economic impact of tourism. They represent calculations of costs and investments against projected revenues and economic multipliers.

development activities it had been engaged in for a decade (Christie, 2001). Closing the tourism department at the World Bank was a significant milestone in the relationship between tourism and development theory as it effectively sent a message to both developing countries and the development community that tourism was strictly a private sector activity. Governments could not get loans from the World Bank or other donors for tourism development activities and tourism was marginalized in the economic development debate. Despite this turnaround, time has shown that many of the Bank's early interventions, combined with the financing for private sector development, were very successful in launching now established tourist destinations such as Bali, Kenya, Mexico, the Gambia, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. There is evidence that "leaving-it-to-the-private-sector" did achieve short-term economic results,<sup>12</sup> but not necessarily the desired beneficial long-term outcomes for the host country. In most cases though, the success of tourism in developing countries is largely dependent on government-controlled policies, services, resources and investment climates, where the private sector has traditionally had little say. Economic growth through the private sector works for development if there are mechanisms to capture and distribute the revenue generated beyond just the private sector.

### **Sustainable Tourism Development: 1990's Paradigm Shift**

"Sustainable development" entered the wider development lexicon in 1987 through the United Nations "State of the Environment" report, *Our Common Future*. This development concept was reinforced at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 when the many signatories to the declaration formally adopted "Agenda 21." The adage for tourism development was ". . . to maximize the potential of tourism for eradicating poverty by developing appropriate strategies in cooperation with all major groups, and indigenous and local communities" (Agenda 21 Declaration). This ideology put a whole new spin on development activities as they related to tourism, moving away from solely economic gain to one emphasizing environmental protection, community involvement, and greater cooperation. This, in turn, provided donor assistance agencies and NGOs with a legitimate and "responsible" entry point for tourism activities with development objectives. During the 1990s a strong environmental policy agenda was pursued in many SSA countries resulting in updated policies, institutional reform and the creation of national environment management authorities. While this approach addressed environmental policies at a national level, external reviewers (Butler 1992, Dieke 1991, Sindiga 1999, Jenkins 1991) viewed it as too top-down and lacking traction at the local level, where the social and environmental impacts were most relevant and tourism analysis was superficial at best. Using tourism development, though, as a strategy for financing environmental and conservation initiatives had popular political appeal. The new paradigm of tourism development to emerge in the 1990s became hence known as "sustainable tourism."

Since the 1990s there has been a significant body of literature concerned with tourism and environmental sustainability and tourism and social responsibility, however, much of this is concerned with secondary impacts or benefits of tourism development, obtainable only once a suitable macro-environment or "enabling environment" is in place. In this respect, the context of sustainable tourism embodies the balance between economic benefits and social and environmental impacts; arguably then, sustainable tourism (essentially an operating environment) is also a secondary benefit that can only really be achieved once the enabling environment is in place. This understanding is supported by most tourism planning literature, but critically not practiced "on the ground". The disconnect, which is at the heart of why official development assistance (ODA) has become increasingly necessary to subsidize what is variously described as "responsible" or "sustainable" tourism development, is that the reality of what constitutes an enabling environment or a platform for tourism is not easily achieved.

Overall, countries and development agencies have now realized that: 1) tourism is more capital intensive and interdependent than initially presumed and requires government intervention and regulation, 2) agriculture and other local linkages have not supported tourism as anticipated, and 3) domestic

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<sup>12</sup> Bank interventions in these countries were instrumental in establishing tourism as a significant economic platform. However, protection of the resources on which those respective industries were based—mainly wildlife and protected areas and clean beaches—were overlooked by the parameters of these projects. In many cases degradation of resources has threatened the sustainability of tourism businesses dependent on them. In many cases governments have requested Bank intervention with major remedial projects (e.g. in Kenya the Protected Areas and Wildlife Services project in 1992 which was an attempt to protect the national park resources exploited by the earlier project in Figure 1.)

management and entrepreneurship have not been fully developed. Current tourism sector programs in SSA financed by the international donor community reflect this new direction.<sup>13</sup>

## Opportunities for Poverty Reduction: An Overview of Tourism's Potential

### *Economic Growth*

SSA contains 38 of the world's 50 poorest countries (World Bank 2004)<sup>14</sup> and while other regions have witnessed declines in poverty over the past four decades, SSA, on average, has fallen farther behind and average income per day is only US\$0.82 (excluding South Africa), compared with the equivalent of US\$1.32 two decades ago (World Bank 2004). The poverty reduction strategy set out in *Can Africa Claim the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?* (World Bank 2001) not surprisingly places economic growth at the heart of the agenda and emphasizes the role of the private sector, which in the SSA context overwhelmingly means medium, small and micro enterprises (MSMEs).

The World Bank's *Doing Business* indices show that SSA countries have among the highest transaction costs and the most barriers to foreign investment of any region. SSA suffers from an over-dependence on agriculture, the mainstay of most of the country economies in the region. This sector employs over 60% of the population and contributes an average of 20% to the region's GDP. However, during the past 40 years, agricultural productivity has stagnated (e.g. on average it took 7 tons of coffee to purchase a car in 1960, by 2000 it took 11 tons). The region's agricultural sector has become constrained by low usage of improved technologies and information, under-capitalization of farmers, poor land use and insecurity of tenure, poor infrastructure, and inappropriate policy and regulatory frameworks that create distortions in markets and disincentives for efficient and competitive production. In sum, the economies of SSA are failing to compete globally, with one exception and that being tourism. Tourist arrivals and the associated revenue have grown steadily (WTTC Regional Report 2002) in SSA during this period (consistently 7% per annum for the region as a whole) and offer a significant opportunity by contributing to a reduction of macroeconomic vulnerability that comes from the regions' high degree of commodity dependence. Figures for international arrivals and tourism receipts to the region are estimated by World Tourism Organization (WTO) to be about 2.3% of global tourism (representing roughly 15 million people). Tourism receipts account for about US\$12 billion; compared with agriculture at nearly US\$70 billion and industry at over US\$100 billion, tourism remains a relatively minor player.

It is estimated that over 90% of businesses in SSA (as part of the service sector) are SMSEs (World Bank 2004). As such, the potential to utilize tourism as a tool for sustained socio-economic development as well as the redistribution of developed country wealth is increasingly considered in development strategies between donor assistance agencies and beneficiary countries. The main focus of these strategies is now defined through each country's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS).

A key argument of this paper is that tourism is already an important economic activity in 28 of the 49 Sub-Saharan African countries where tourism contributes more than 3% of GDP (IMF Country Tables 2002), and that many of these countries desire to increase tourism revenue and the associated benefits while mitigating some of the negative environmental and social aspects indicated by many authors (De Kadt, Britton, Butler, Urry, Sharpley, Smith and Eadington, Bachmann and Honey). There is explicit demand for a tourism economy from SSA tourism product suppliers. One of the main challenges is that market forces cannot equitably distribute benefits and costs (Butler 1993), and there is a necessity for government policies and donor-financed tourism development programs that attempt to redistribute some of the excesses of a market and private sector-led tourism industry. The challenges are to establish best practices, identify missing or poorly performing linkages, and prescribe critical pathways to achieving these ends. This will thereby maximize the impact of available donor and government finances to promote tourism as an agent of development. Essentially a larger share of the profits from tourism need to be left behind in host communities and countries, and, governments need to see benefits in the form of tax revenue, whether from general consumption and corporation taxes associated with tourism (direct taxes), or from taxes specifically targeted at tourists and the tourism sector (indirect taxes).

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<sup>13</sup> The World Bank has 30 ongoing projects related to tourism in the SSA region, USAID a further 26 projects and several other bilateral agencies account for another 33 projects (DANTEI database - George Washington University - 2004 - a research project looking at development assistance sources for tourism)

<sup>14</sup> The "World Bank 2004" citation throughout references African Development Indicators 2004

It is also recognized that a primary path out of poverty is through employment,<sup>15</sup> and that the private sector is the main source of job creation. The links between economic growth fueled and sustained by private sector growth and poverty reduction are strong and direct. A recent IMF study (IMF 2002) of a panel of 46 countries (29 in SSA) covering the 1972-1997 period found that a 10% increase in per capita GDP leads to 1 % increase in life expectancy, 3% decline in infant mortality rates, and 4% increase in the rate of gross primary school enrollment.

### ***Environmental Conservation and Rent Extraction***

The desire to expand tourism in the SSA region presents another challenge in that it conflicts with the requirements of a rising population to farm more land for local subsistence. This land-use dilemma places a strain on biodiversity rich habitats outside protected areas as well as existing protected area systems (the resources that attract tourists) under constant threat from encroachment. Together with illegal hunting this has led to a depletion of wildlife habitats. The difficulty is that the very existence of big game and other flagship species, such as the mountain gorilla, give these areas an economic value in terms of extractable rents from tourism activities. This type of tourism is one in which developing countries have a comparative advantage over developed countries.

Scarce natural resources are a source of economic rents<sup>16</sup> that offer the countries of SSA opportunities for economic benefits. If the assets that generate rents are not managed appropriately, however, the “rentable” value will decrease. A key point about rents is that they should accrue to the owners of the resource, the host communities and countries of SSA, and not to the intermediaries delivering the product (agents and tour operators). In thinking about tourism and the environment a fundamental question needs to be posed: what are the net benefits provided by the development of the environmental (and cultural) assets (sun, sea, sand, vegetation, terrain, and so on) on which tourism depends?<sup>17</sup> Governments incur costs to promote the tourism sector and provide infrastructure for it. Communities incur costs such as denied access to natural resources and increased cost of living due to excessive “tourist” prices. Meanwhile, foreign investors or local elites cream off profits from tourist expenditure on the back of these community and government investments.

One well-documented example of close collaboration between tourism, communities and rents was the Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) program in Zimbabwe and its predecessor Administrative Management Design (ADMADE) in Zambia. These programs were designed to assist wildlife conservation objectives through utilizing the hefty fees foreign hunters were prepared to pay to shoot animals. These fees were funneled back to impoverished local villages with the objective of providing incentives for decreased poaching and the protection of habitats. This approach typified the relationship of tourism with the environment in the 1990s, where the main focus was environmental protection. The gap in this approach was that the communities were still not true owners of the process; they were content to sit and collect rents without necessarily channeling those benefits towards sustainable growth goals and improved livelihoods.

### ***Enhancing Legitimacy through Ownership***

In *Who Owns Paradise?* Martha Honey (Honey 1999) points out that there is a huge gap between the ideology and the practice of sustainable tourism. Of the many examples sited, the common denominator is the core issue of ownership (of the policies, products and services in the destination). Empirical evidence suggests that this ownership has shifted back and forth between external and internal players. From the external development context, during the 60s and 70s, most SSA countries inherited from colonial times a “Statist” framework of governance where a few elites controlled economic development. During the 1980s, the interventionist strategies of the IMF and the World Bank (Structural Adjustment Programs) were an

<sup>15</sup> Tourism is cited as being the highest employment generation sector in the world, with an estimated one in twelve employed in tourism and tourism jobs providing over 10% of total employee wages and salaries (UNCTAD Employment Report 2003, Direct and Indirect Employment). Other studies suggest that tourism also employs a significant percentage of the informal economy, which for many communities is a significant social safety net.

<sup>16</sup> A ‘rent’ is an excess return to an asset, a profit above normal market rates of return. Rents arise from assets that are scarce and fixed in supply. Beachfront property is an excellent example of the sort of asset that will yield economic rent.

<sup>17</sup> From a tourism perspective, historic assets such as the Pyramids, Machu Pichu, Ankor Wat, Stone Town in Zanzibar, and Westminster Abbey are as significant a magnet to tourists as their natural counterparts: the Great Barrier Reef, Serengeti National Park, Mountain Gorillas, the Grand Canyon and Victoria Falls. From a development perspective the impact of these assets on their respective host communities and countries is undeniably significant; they are the equivalent of gold mines and oil wells.

effort to break down state control and encourage a wider economic and social platform. During the 1990s, external markets, such as European tour operators in the Gambia and, German and Italian operators in Kenya, encouraged by internal policies to promote foreign direct investment (FDI), took greater control of tourism development by controlling the demand in generating markets.

Using the example of tourism development in Kenya, Dieke (Dieke 1991) points to a difference between post independence state ownership and control and market led (or external) growth, arguing that the former was too controlled and the latter, out of control. This ownership problem is emphasized in much of the literature, but Brohman (Brohman 1996: 49-52) uses the context to explain donor tourism development interventions during the 1990s, where there has been a distinct effort to broaden the planning, policy-making and ownership of the tourism development process. Milne and Ateljevic (Milne 2001) argue that theoretical approaches to tourism development fail to achieve sufficient ownership because they do not engage local or national stakeholders fully. The empirical evidence of this can be found on the shelves of ministries of tourism in 16 SSA countries that received "tourism master plans" during the 1980s (UNDP/WTO archives) that were never implemented.

Sindiga (Sindiga 1999:34) argues that "the structure, organization and management of international tourism favors multinational corporations from the developed world," assuring a large outflow of the resources generated by tourism. The creation of such leakages results in a net loss to the host community and country. Sindiga cites this issue of ownership and power structure as being the most critical to address for the long-term benefit of tourism to be felt by the host population. Arguably, an increasing number of countries are embracing the notion that foreign industrial interests are crucial to their development strategies, and are developing congenial and liberal policy environments to foster and scale-up business cooperation. At the same time, though, there are a growing number of tourism policy formulations and reformulations taking place on the continent specifically directed at indigenous tourism enterprises.<sup>18</sup> This paper argues that this needs to go further and extend to natural and cultural assets, where little beyond protection and preservation has been achieved; only recently have studies aimed at valuing assets (including wildlife and national parks) been carried out (Aylward, Lutz 2003). Typically these national assets are undervalued by governments (perversely, it ends up that poor countries subsidize the visits of tourists from rich countries) and overvalued by the private sector as evidenced by the differences in prices to consumers between private game farms and lodges and publicly owned national parks.

It is recognized by several authors (particularly Butler, Britton and Urry) that the level of development (part of the enabling environment discussed earlier) of the host community is an important factor in achieving a decrease in the input-output ratio as well as the negative social and environmental impacts of tourism. This suggests that the success of tourism investments are tied, at least in part, to the level of development of the host community. Arguably then, the capacity to participate could be considered a key limitation to ownership.

### ***Tourism Control: The Case of Kenya***

Tourism is of major importance for Kenya's economic development. A World Bank study in 2002 ("Background to the PRSP for Kenya": 9-11) quotes some key economic data: Tourism currently contributes 2.6% of Kenya's GDP; 153,000 people employed in the tourism industry in Kenya; US\$ 302, 631,000 earnings from tourism in 2001. The sector is an important foreign exchange earner with a lot of potential, but is currently facing multiple challenges including a limited base of tourism products, poor and dilapidated infrastructure, weak marketing and economic leakages caused by the predominance of foreign-owned tourism enterprises.

Further investigation however, supported by Sindiga and Dieke, shows that the concept of "foreign-owned" is not entirely obvious. Foreigners in fact front foreign-owned companies, which are majority-owned by political elites in Kenya. The law in Kenya precludes foreigners from owning businesses outright in Kenya. This measure, ironically introduced to prevent leakages from foreign owned multinationals, has facilitated the evolution of an alternative leakage model not discussed in current tourism development literature, namely the monopoly by local political and social elites. In the tourism industry in Kenya 80% of mainstream service providers are owned jointly or entirely by political or politically influential figures.<sup>19</sup> In addition, government departments control the resources that supply tourism

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<sup>18</sup> The "Pro-poor tourism" initiative, targets these policies specifically.

<sup>19</sup> Interview, Chairman of Kenya Tourist Board (Uhuru Kenyatta) 2001.

demand. These departments have evolved into power structures that control tourism development, and, to a large extent, revenue flows (rent extraction) around the sector.

Development agencies recognize these realities, but do not relate them to the realities of the political economy. The seminal work by the World Bank, *Assessing Aid*, specifically addresses the challenge of using financial aid to create good policy environments and encourage private sector growth (World Bank 1999:3-4). Nowhere in this book is the issue of public sector power and patronage structures considered as impediments to development.

## Conclusion

This paper has shown that while tourism is important to the SSA region and has abundant potential to contribute to the economic growth of countries in the region, in most cases there is no discernible impact on poverty. It may be, as the paper argues, that the lack of data in the tourism sector makes it difficult to quantify costs and benefits that can be specifically ascribed to the tourism sector. This, in turn, makes it difficult to legitimize the role of tourism in poverty reduction. It could also be that the broad numbers showing increases in tourism visitors and revenue do not account enough for leakages that might be happening at a local (to elites) as well as an international level (to tour operators). Other critical questions to ask are whether the right indicators are being used and whether the contribution of the informal sector involved in tourism is (or even can be) measured.

There are other pitfalls. Krippendorf (Krippendorf 1987) points out that tourism does not always bring greater prosperity, largely because employment in the tourism industry is usually unskilled, low-paid, part-time and seasonal. In addition, the local taxes that are raised in order to develop the infrastructure necessary to attract tourists and the tourism industry, while the rising costs of providing essential resources and services such as water and waste management are typically passed onto local residents and businesses. This, compounded by the fact that tourism pushes up prices of accommodation and food, can cause poverty and the eventual displacement of local people. It was pointed out that the scenario presented by Krippendorf is one where ownership lies outside the host community and the major incentive is one of extraction and exploitation; governments, and increasingly, companies that practice social and environmental responsibility, can, and do mitigate for this exclusion through policies and micro level reforms that enhance linkages and capacity building at the host community level (such as policies to purchase and employ locally).

The paper has also argued that not enough attention has been paid to the process of development and the open system into which development funds are being injected (the enabling environment) and that this may be inadequate to capture the benefits from tourism. It is argued that in order for development objectives, like poverty reduction or environmental preservation, to benefit from the opportunity costs of tourism investments and rents from tourism assets, a greater understanding of true ownership of resources and their value is necessary to ensure that rents reach host communities and countries. There is a need for more systematic research into tourism, comparing and benchmarking successful policies (such as pricing) and practices across countries in order to advance understanding of the value chains and linkages involved. A systematic analysis of the whole tourism value chain may also highlight policy issues in a range of other cross-cutting sectors and could be a catalyst for reforms of other overlooked policy areas (e.g. land markets or labor laws). The relevance of such an analysis seems self-evident as many countries are using, or have to use, tourism as a model for sustained economic growth. Enhancing tourism's legitimacy in poverty reduction strategies is dependent on host countries and development agencies placing a greater emphasis on the monitoring and analysis of its true costs and benefits. There is also a need to examine the value chains associated with tourism products and compare these in the same way that benchmarks the benchmarks in the World Bank's *Doing Business* are developed.

Perhaps the most important issue highlighted in this paper is the ownership dilemma as this dictates who is actually getting the revenue from tourism assets, products and services. Would, for instance, poverty be more impacted by an increase in central government revenues (collected from user-fees, licenses and taxes on the industry) or by allowing communities to own resources (such as national parks) and enhancing their capacity to manage those resources and benefit more directly from rents and inclusion in relationships with the private sector?

It is suggested that further work and research in the SSA region would benefit from a more quantitative approach that addressed the following systemic areas:

1. Identification of the main tourism segments based on the country's comparative advantages.
2. Benchmarking of the country's (or the products') economic performance in these key segments by conducting value chain analyses that quantify the extent of backward and forward linkages and identify the major value adding steps and the market structure along the chain.
3. Analysis of crosscutting themes (infrastructure, land, imports, building/work permits, admin barriers, workforce, environment, fiscal profile).
4. Identification, specific to tourism, of the policy and institutional issues that may constrain investment and productivity growth.
5. Development of a set of best practices based on case studies of successes elsewhere, such as development projects that launched successful destinations.
6. Creation of industry-university partnerships to help adapt academic degree programs to meet the training needs for English and French speaking African countries, using new IT capabilities in tourism education to significantly increase the quality of human resources for tourism management and ownership.

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