

# The environmental impact of tourism is always harmful – discuss

[Environment](#), [Ecology](#)



As demands for tourism and recreation increases for example due to an aging but active population, new interest in nations heritage and people seeking quiet environments so too will their impact on other socio economic structures in society, tourist environments and wildlife habitats. In Bali, Kenya and the lake District much of the early development was uncontrolled and badly planned. Development was driven by the momentum for growth and the developers desires for fast profits, without any thought being given to the future.

These areas which are shaped by the forces of nature are now under threat, if not in the process of being physically damaged and destroyed. In Kenya tourism is mainly Safari and Beach orientated. The wildlife related tourism brought an increased amount of visitors into Kenya through the 1990s, boosting the LEDCs economy. However many of the areas that are most valuable to the tourist trade are the wildlife filled parks that have been inhabited by people like the Masai for hundreds of years.

Tourism has been environmentally harmful here where the sheer number of visitors and amount of Safari traffic is seriously damaging the vegetation cover and the vehicles are causing soil erosion. Also the increase in tourism has meant an increase in the long haul travel which is now seriously contributing to the greenhouse effect and global warming. Problems created are going to be more severe in the ELDW than in the EMDW. Many of the tourist souvenirs are made by the locals are made of ebony and the trees are cut down faster than replaced.

However tourism has not always been harmful to the environment and can benefit an area where the marine life has been re appraised and is beginning to be viewed as valuable. Like the marine park at Watamu off the coast of Milindi which was set up to preserve the coral reefs and to provide an additional visitor attraction. Not only has tourism brought environmental impacts that are harmful to Kenya, it has brought economic impacts that are harmful. At least 40% of tourist revenue is leaked outside to airlines and travel companies.

You can read also Waves

The result of beach tourism has caused a rapid increase of land prices along the coast, well beyond the purchasing power of local African farmers. The improvements in infrastructure has also contributed to land price inflation and encouraged further speculative hotel buildings on what was good agricultural land. I don't agree though that the impact is always harmful as the locals have benefited from these improvements in infrastructure.

Furthermore tourism had overtaken coffee on Kenya's major export earner: it equalled 43% of export earning in 1990.

Additionally tourism was an employer in both the formal and informal sector. In Bali the environmental impact of tourism has nearly always been harmful. The number of tourists visiting Bali was fairly low until the late sixties when the numbers dramatically increased. This was due to the government's five year plan to encourage tourism to the area. The growth in tourism caused

harmful environmental impacts . Raw sewage was dumped into the sea as the infrastructure cannot cope with tourists.

This damages the reefs. The wake from motor boats also destroys the coral as does the actions of those trying to collect it to sell to tourists. Once damaged there is nothing stop the waves hittingthe beachdirectly, resulting in beach erosion that threatens coconut plantations, farmland and land on which hotels are built. Tourism in Bali has led to threat of extinction of numerous breeds of turtle whose eggs are now collected as a delicacy from tourists and the bodies of which as stuffed or made into trinkets.

On the other hand this led to the environmental benefit of the convention on international trade in endangered species forcing the Indonesian government to tighten their controls on the treatment of animals. As the number of tourists increases so does infrastructure of roads , electricity mains, water, airports and car parks being created. Though its association withpollutionhas been a problem. The main beach in Bali Kuta has been spoiled. There is severe beach erosion of up to 2cm a year and the combat the litter problem people are employed to bury the rubbish each morning.

Tourism also brought violent crime which was unknown to Bali before 1979, drug dealing , prostitution and theft increased. However in Bali a marine park of Bunaken off N Sula west was set up because of tourism. As the potential impact of tourism on the natural environment was recognised, suitable conservation projects were set up. Even though the environmental impact of tourism was harmful, I brought many economic benefits. Many new jobs

were created especially in hotels, travel agencies and the craft and entertainment industries e. g. 7000 applicants for 400 jobs at the new Bali-Hyat hotel.

There is a revival of some traditional arts and crafts aimed at the tourist market wood carvers, jewellery making, weaving, Batik. Also Balinese dancers now come to the larger hotels to perform for guests when originally the tourists would have had to go into the villages to see them. Again there have been economic costs where many of the economic benefits have not been evenly spread. Resorts in the South have benefited whilst those in the North east have not. This has led to conflict between the two areas over the distribution of tourist receipts.

At village level much of the money from tourism is being spent on schools, cultural improvements, temple maintenance. However increasingly the money is being spent on imported goods, which don't benefit the island economy. Land prices have increased between 1969 and 1970 by 40% in tourist areas this was 120%. In resort areas previously agricultural land use was for growing food for the islanders was sold off to resorts offering to pay hundreds of times the price it would fetch on agricultural land. To prevent the impact of tourism from being harmful again measures were taken by locals.

Boards were put up on gates and walls warning tourists that certain ceremonies were private. Trees were planted and flowers. A restaurant association was established and elected its own leader. This was followed by

the art shop, guest houses and bus drivers and dancer troupes. A map of the village was published by the organisation with full explanation of how to behave in the village an example of greater control by indigenous population. In the Lake District which is an MEDW, I don't agree the environmental impact is almost always harmful.

The lake district is one of the UKs national parks which has two purposes to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the lake district, was well to promote opportunities for understanding and enjoyment of special qualities of the national park and a duty to foster the economic and social well being of local communities within the park. These aims inevitably create conflicts of interest either between local people and visitors because users and uses cannot easily be easily restricted to certain areas of zoning. Footpath erosion is a widespread environmental impact and clear sign of visitor pressure.

It is caused by people not sticking to the footpath because they don't want to or it is flooded or poor management. The other causes of footpath erosion climate due to heavy rain, strong winds and frost. The type of vegetation as mat grass, bents and fesules resist trampling best, the aspect, erosion is more likely to happen on slopes less than 18 and the pressure of use. However it is not always harmful as management strategies have been introduced which direct visitors along alternative routes: repair and maintain through drainage by placing small drainage channels along the path side so that rainwater is channelled away more quickly.

They can construct the path using techniques such as pitching which is sinking stones into the path so that only the tops show to give a hard surface. Also matting can be used stabilizing the path over boggy ground. Furthermore the path can be repaired using methods such as levelling off the scar and the banks on its sides. Re seeding the grass with mat grass and fescues which better resist the effects of trampling. In the lake district the environmental impact is not always harmful as LDNPA ensures tourism is sustained and managed. To prevent congestion on the roads and air pollution.

Roads are closed to traffic in tourist season and weekends. Tourists encouraged to 'walk in and walk out' i. e. not using cars. Also to preserve the environment and to make the environmental impact less harmful they have a concentration of high visitor densities with a small number of honey pots with high carrying capacity such as Windermere. At the other extreme there are natural lakes on which no use of the water surface is allowed e. g. waste water. These are managed at low carrying capacities to give low density, quiet, leisure experiences.

In such areas negative planning controls are used to restrict accessibility and hence control numbers of visitors. E. g. not upgrading the narrow winding roads over the passes from honey pots and not providing more parking spacing. They make the environmental impact less harmful. On top of this again to make the impact of tourism less harmful the LDNPA is the Development control or planning authority for the whole lake district. It must

approve all new buildings/ changes to buildings or land use. Tries to protect the area from development out of character with the landscape .

It does not stop all developments and must allow change to develop in response to people's needs as long as it doesn't damage the qualities and character of the national park. Overall it would seem that in that tourism in the LEDW has had an adverse impact on the environment, degrading the resources on which it depends. The damage was from the overuse and misuse of resources together with poor management and planning. However in the MEDW in the lake district they have been able to sustain the environment and tourism by balancing the economic growth with conservation of the environment.