



TANAPA TODAY

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Discover Rubondo Island: A Tanzania's Noah's Ark Style Park

TANAPA Scoops EU Award

Could Mount Kilimanjaro's Glaciers be saved?

Golf Course within the World-renowned Serengeti

Meet New TANAPA Board Members

Sustainable Conservation for Development



ARUSHA MANIFESTO



"The survival of our wildlife is a matter of grave concern to all of us in Africa. These wild creatures amid the wild places they inhabit are not only important as a source of wonder and inspiration but are an integral part of our natural resources and our future livelihood and well being. In accepting the trusteeship of our wildlife we solemnly declare that we will do everything in our power to make sure that our children's grand-children will be able to enjoy this rich and precious inheritance. The conservation of wildlife and wild places calls for specialist knowledge, trained manpower and money. And we look to other nations to co-operate with us in this important task the success or failure of which not only affects the continent of Africa but the rest of the world as well"

Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere - 1961

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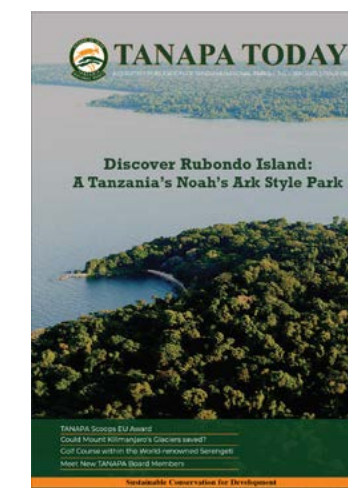
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Dear valued Reader;

Our projections indicate that over 1.6 million tourists, including you, will visit attractions in 21 national parks scattered around the country this financial year. If all goes as foreseen, you and other tourists will leave behind over \$142.9 million, up from \$125 million registered last financial year, equivalent to 15 per cent increase.

Various strategies for attracting this number of tourists are in place. I will dwell on few of them closely related to the return of your favourite magazine - TANAPA TODAY.

One of the strategies is promoting tourist attractions through mainstream media, social media platforms, and local and international festivals and conferences. Another strategy is rolling out red carpets towards the attractions, especially those found in the Southern Circuit, namely Mikumi, Nyerere, Udzungwa and Ruaha.

Currently, the welfare of almost all these national parks lies on the Northern Circuit, particularly Serengeti and Kilimanjaro national parks. Poor access and little efforts made in the past to promote the Southern Circuit's

attractions, whose magnificence remains unchallenged, are to blame for their dependence.

Thanks to the Tanzania Government through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism for incorporating TANAPA into the implementation of the Resilient Natural Resource Management for Tourism and Growth (REGROW) project.

This World Bank supported project aims at using one stone to kill two birds. First, improving service provision in the selected Southern Circuit's national parks. Second, diversifying livelihoods in selected communities surrounding the national parks. Implementation of the project will open up the sleeping giants in the Southern Circuit, as it will see over \$46 million invested in infrastructures alone, ranging from all-weather roads to airstrips.

REGROW will directly benefit about 20,000 houses surrounding the national parks, let alone tour operators and related businesses experiencing economic gains from higher tourism. It will impart efficient irrigation and production methods to about 20,000 peasants operating on Ruaha River Basin and build the capacity of public institutions and their officials

engaged in water, agriculture, land management, wildlife, tourism and protected area management in the Southern Circuit.

We at TANAPA will ensure these government's intended goals are met as we oversee the construction of the infrastructures. We will be ungrateful if we do not extend our gratitude to the government under the President, Dr Samia Suluhu Hassan, for according conservation and tourism due priority.

The government's investment will definitely bear fruits, including the industry contributing its rightful share to the tourism value chain and the national coffers. You are all witnesses of how the Tanzania: Royal Tour film in which the President herself took part as Number One Tour Guide defied the COVID-19 pandemic. The film commanded significant tourists amid travel restrictions last financial year, fetching the country the much-needed foreign currency.

The resurfacing of TANAPA TODAY is yet another attempt to buttress this achievement along with other media platforms.

William Mwakilema



Dear esteemed Reader;

You might have been asking yourself on the whereabouts of TANAPA TODAY, given the deep water we have all been sailing through in the past two years or so. Yes, with COVID-19 interfering with health, economies and all spheres, life was and still is not the same locally and globally.

The pandemic has, on one hand, robbed the country and the world of harmony, let alone loved ones.

On another hand, the scourge has provided both the country and the world with lessons on coping with it and future pandemics. TANAPA TODAY has not only recovered from the COVID-19 storm, but also learnt to cope with it and impending disruptions.

It will neither be caught with pants down again nor let nature to abhor vacuum. It will instead continue keeping you abreast of emerging and untold stories on conservation as well as on the travel and tourism industry.

This and forthcoming editions will attempt to fill the vacuum you encountered during the pandemic as they navigate through fresh stories.

Notwithstanding the crisis, national parks in the country continued shining in and outside the country, with outdoor enthusiasts voting three flagbearers, namely Serengeti, Kilimanjaro and Tarangire, as best destinations ever.

The trio defeated over 20 other best sites globally in the Travelers' Choice Award manned by Trip Advisor.

Tanzania National Parks' best practices in conservation and tourism paid dividends in Belgium where the European Society for Quality Research (ESQR) awarded the custodian of the country's 22 national parks the Quality Choice Diamond Prize 2022.

Thanks to the ESQR polls, consumer opinions, research and market study for recognising the agency's hard work and commitment to quality.

Kilimanjaro National Park (KINAPA) is among the sites one can see the hard work and commitment to quality in question.

Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) has been overseeing protection and restoration of ecological integrity within KINAPA since its inception in 1973. As it clocks 50, KINAPA has been proudly creating jobs for Tanzanians and minting foreign currency for the country's economy.

A pat on the back will inspire TANAPA, KINAPA and other parks to become even smarter and innovative. The construction of a state-of-the-art golf course on the fringes of Serengeti National Park is a case in point.

Last but not least, this edition brings you witnesses from the horse's mouth, as some tourists recall their unforgettable experiences from Ruaha National Park, KINAPA and Zanzibar.

Catherine Mbena

Discover Rubondo Island: A Tanzania's Edition of Noah's Ark

By Adam Ihucha



IN a far corner of the northwestern Tanzania nestles serene and tranquil island with hidden treasures.

The typical African paradise, officially referred to as Rubondo Island National Park, is an enchanting tourist destination with spectacular sceneries.

Started in 1960s, as an experiment of the edition of the Noah's Ark, Rubondo has expanded to become an important refuge for endangered animal species, with more than 60 great apes living wild on the remote, uninhabited island.

The picturesque island floating in Lake Victoria is truly Tanzania's scriptural Noah's Ark, as it offers a perfect scene for ancient life during the Noah's flood.

Adorned with thick and virgin rainforest, the scenic Island in the World's second largest fresh water body is real an idyllic retreat for nature lovers.

Located nearly 150 km (about 95 miles) west of Mwanza, at the entrance to Emini Pasha Gulf, the Rubondo Island National Park is also accessible by air or boat.

The park, a sanctuary for chimps, waterbirds and big animals like elephants, also offers a once-in-life-time adventure, taking you deep into the heart of nature.



Clear skies over Tanzania's sanctuary island (Credit: Anthea Rowan)



Egrets gather on Lake Victoria at dusk (Credit: Gunter Ziesler/Getty)



Tourists to this splendid Island have an opportunity for appreciating chimps trekking, do spot fishing and see rare indigenous sitatunga antelopes and African grey parrots.

Rubondo is one of the few areas in Tanzania where one can encounter endangered sitatunga antelopes.

Sport fishing allowed at specified areas and bird watching along the shore, in the forest and on the birds breeding islands.

Creation

Rubondo Island begun as a game reserve in 1965 and was declared a national park in 1977. In 10 years, between 1964 and 1974, a number of threatened species were introduced to the 237sqkm island by German zoologist Bernhard Grzimek.



A monitor lizard sunbathes on Rubondo's beach (Credit: Anthea Rowan)

It was until Grzimek initiated his zoo, the only resident animals were vervet monkeys, otters and indigenous sitatunga antelope.

While efforts to settle black rhino and roan antelope flopped, the elephant, colobus monkey, suni antelope and African grey parrot have thrived, making it become Tanzania's very own version of Noah's Ark: A floating island sanctuary for threatened wildlife.

The chimps brought to Rubondo were born wild and captured as infants. Traditionally, their mothers had been killed by poachers who targeted the chimp populations of Tanzania, Uganda and the Congo – and since baby chimps will not leave a dead mother's side, they were easy prey.

The infant primates were used in European circuses and zoos until they became older, bigger and typically aggressive, after which they were dispatched to live out the remaining – sometimes 60 years – of their lives serving as biomedical research in Europe and the US.

But Grzimek returned 16 fortunate animals to Africa, creating an artificial population in Rubondo that represents the world's only successful restoration of chimpanzees.

There were no resident populations to kill the introduced individuals, and unlike captivity-born chimps, the Rubondo animals seemed to have retained some knowledge of forest living.

The secluded and pristine island displays a magic that could make anyone believe in a mythical Noah's Ark: A sanctuary hovering between Lake Victoria and the sky where the animals are finally safe.

World-Class Experience in Store for Tourists

By Catherine Mbena



Tanzania conservation agency has unveiled a package of steps to help to boost tourism growth, vowing to improve infrastructure and services, as it seeks to woo more tourists and extend a lengthy of stay within and outside national parks.

With the exception of Serengeti, game drives, as a major adventure in most of national parks in Tanzania, last for a day or two, making an economic nonsense for both a tourist and a host country.

Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) Conservation Commissioner William Mwakilema says plans are underway to modernise its tourist infrastructure, as part of the grand mission to attract more tourists in the next two years.

“Infrastructure aside, we are going to ensure the provision of the finest services to tourists in our national parks and other nature and wildlife sanctuaries”, Conservation Commissioner Mwakilema explains. TANAPA is the custodian of 21 national parks which pull crowds of tourists every year, and now the state-owned national parks agency wants to contribute to attracting five million tourists by 2025 from the estimated 1.5 million tourists visiting Tanzania this year. He says the agency is working overtime to improve tourist services infrastructure in southern Tanzania in a bid to unlock the tourism potential. The majority of tourists visiting Tanzania flock to the national parks situated in the Northern Circuit, given its good infrastructure, mostly roads, airports, and a wide range of logistics to their travel destination.

The ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi’s (CCM) manifesto clearly stipulates that tourism will attract five million tourists who will leave behind nearly \$6.6 billion, up from the current \$2.5 billion by 2025, critical mass of common folks in Tanzania, particularly women and youth”.

TANAPA is now focusing on Tanzania’s southern circuit, aiming to have a number of choices for tourists to reach their destinations mostly Ruaha, -

Udzungwa, Mikumi, Nyerere, and Saadani national parks for photographic safaris.

World Bank’s funded REGROW project and the German government are striving to ensure that by 2025, the leading parks of Nyerere, Saadani, Mikumi, and Ruaha are accessible all year round.

Conservation Commissioner Mwakilema says the Tanzanian Government is, jointly with the parks agency, planning to purchase a tourist ferry to ply between Lake Victoria and to link Rubondo Island, Serengeti, and Saanane to Burigi Chato national parks. These measures are meant to increase the number of tourists visiting Tanzania. The agency is, in addition, collaborating with local communities surrounding the national parks, to undertake a number of ecological preservation projects to contend with climate change.

Wild animals need nature to flourish, but in the advent climate change, it is an open secret that some areas of conservation are losing their natural heritage, he warns.

Tanzania boasts having the spectacle of the Serengeti wildebeest migration and the most charismatic species and wild landscapes, thus making this African country the destination of choice for thousands of tourists from various parts of the world.

He says the conservation and tourism agency he leads welcomes investments in providing tourists with accommodation facilities, balloon safaris, canopy walkways, zip line safaris, water sports and horse riding among others.

TANAPA also protects the water sources of Ruaha, Mara, and Tarangire rivers flowing through the national parks to ensure the precious liquid flows permanently for wild animals to access it throughout the year.

“Water sources are key to nature conservation as well as the economy, we’re working with the communities to make it work,” he insists.

Hon. Mchengerwa Appoints Five New Board Members

By Edmund Salaho



“I’m grateful, indeed, to the nomination of the new board members, who comprise a more diverse group of professionals with extensive knowledge in various sectors” The soft-spoken Mwakilema credited as conservation guru tells TANAPA Today.

The government has announced the appointments of five Tanzania’s renowned-professionals to serve as board members of the high profile and award-winning state-run conservation and tourism agency for a three-year term, effective Aug 3, 2023.

Among the five Tanzanian daughter and sons the Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Mr. Mohamed Mchengerwa, picked strategically are Acting Director of Wildlife Division, Dr Fortunate Msoffe, the Azania Bank Business Development Director, Dr. Rhimo Nyansaho, the Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Initiative and Expert in Animal Medicine, . Robert Fyumangwa,

and the former Mining Commission Chief Geologist, Mr. Athuman Kwariko. Mr. Mchengerwa also named CPA Hadija Ramadhan, an experienced financial expert with a track record to join Tanapa board.

The nomination comes few months since the President, Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, had named the retired Chief of Defence Forces, General George Mwita Waitara, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA). A statement quoting the Permanent Secretary in the ministry, Dr. Hassan Abbas, says the Board, strategically appointed by Minister Mchengerwa, is responsible for monitoring overall governance of TANAPA,

a custodian of 21 national parks, with oversight of its regulatory and developmental mandates.

The TANAPA Conservation Commissioner, Mr. William Mwakilema, welcomes the appointment of the new board with humility, saying the members’ diverse backgrounds will bring fresh perspectives and ensure a well-rounded approach to decision-making and oversight.

The statement says two other members of the TANAPA Board of Trustees representing specialised expertise would be announced soon after their nomination process is done.

The state-run conservation and tourism agency, TANAPA, manages a total of 21 national parks, covering an area approximately equivalent to the land area of Croatia.

Ms Angellah Kairuki is a new Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism

By Edmund Salaho



President Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan has appointed Ms Angellah Jasmine Mbelwa Kairuki as a new Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism, in her mini-cabinet reshuffle.

In a move aimed to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the government’s operations, Dr. Samia also picked Mr. Dunstan Luka Kitandula as the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism. Effective from 1 September 2023, Ms Kairuki and Mr Kitandula began their journey of serving the country in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism. Before her last cabinet appointment Ms Kairuki, was the Minister of State in the President’s-Regional Administration and Local Government (TAMISEMI).

She previously served as Minister of Investment, Mining and the Deputy Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlement as well as Constitutional and Legal Affairs.

Prior to joining politics, Ms. Kairuki worked as a lawyer in both public and private sectors.

She completed her schooling from the Zanaki Girls Secondary School in 1997. She received her Bachelor of Laws from the University of Hull in England in 2001.

Ms Kairuki went to finish a post-graduate diploma in Law from the Staffordshire University in collaboration with Central Law Training in 2002.

She also worked in the Attorney General’s chambers as a legal secretary and lawyer between 2004 and 2008. Kairuki then moved to the private sector as Head of Department of the Ethics, Compliance and Governance at VODACOM Group PTY, before crossing over to politics in 2007.



Could Mount Kilimanjaro's Glaciers be Saved?

By Patty Magubira



Mount Kilimanjaro, the majestic peak in Tanzania, is not only renowned for its breathtaking vistas and diverse ecosystems but also for its iconic glaciers.

These magnificent ice formations have captivated explorers and scientists for centuries, but sadly, they are rapidly disappearing, due to the ripple effects of climate change.

Recently, Tanzania announced its commitment to plant five -

million trees on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro by 2030, as it seeks to save its famed glaciers on the summit from total melting, thanks to climate change.

Created in 1973 to protect and restore ecological integrity for current and future generations, the Kilimanjaro National Park, has along the way, been the tourism jewel, generating multi-million dollars annually to Tanzania's economy and creating hundreds of thousands of jobs to the locals.

However, UN experts predict that the legendary snow, one of key tourists' ecstasy on the peak of Mount Kilimanjaro, the roof of Africa, will completely disappear by 2050 as a result of ripple effects of climate change.

While the UN says the trend could be reversed if the world cuts down global warming by 1.5 degrees centigrade, some studies indicate that 80 per cent of the snow had been broken down -

since early last century. Officiating at the climax of the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Kilimanjaro National Park (KINAPA), one of the key world heritage sites the Natural Resources and Tourism Minister, Mr Mohamed Mchengherwa said:

"We are committed to plant five million trees on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro in our latest effort to rescue the snow from disappearing".

Mr. Mchengherwa also implored climbers to refrain from activities, which pollute and jeopardise the mountain, saying the ministry consider putting in place waste disposal and surveillance systems along the mountain's ascending and descending routes.

"It is time we promote use of alternative energy to reduce the widespread application of firewood and charcoal," he said.

Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) Conservation Commissioner William Mwakilema was optimistic trees would generate sufficient moisture and rains required for preserving the snow on the mountain, popularly known as the roof of Africa.

"The forest, rich in wildlife animals surrounding the mountain at between 1,700 and 2,700 metres above sea level, greatly contributes to mitigating climate change," Mr Mwakilema observed. Besides rolling out the tree-planting programme, TANAPA, in collaboration with over 200 conservation

and tourism players from 11 outfits, carried out various other activities to celebrate the anniversary of one of Tanzania's 21 national parks created on March 16, 1973. They include cleaning Mount Kilimanjaro's ascending and descending routes and debating on the eve of the climax of the anniversary on the mountain, tourism and climate change; the activity, which involved over 170 conservation and tourism players, higher learning students and ordinary citizens.

"TANAPA will continue collaborating with conservation and tourism players, the government, the public, private firms, researchers and journalists in ensuring ecological systems continue being conserved and protected for sustainable development," Mr Mwakilema said during the commemoration held at Marangu Gate.

"The deliberations on the Mount Kilimanjaro awe-inspiring journey have touched on the changes in diversity that the local area has seen, reflecting how tourism has been funneling millions of dollars annually into community and conservation drive in Tanzania as well as impact of climate change," Conservation Commissioner Mwakilema said in an exclusive interview.

Transferring dollars from international tourists to poor people living around tourist destinations has been a major challenge across the world. However, according to the SNV study dubbed 'Tracing the Tourist Dollar in Northern Tanzania, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro is a more pro-poor activity compared to other tourist attractions.

The study shows 28 percent of revenues generated on the Africa's highest peak trickle into the poor communities, opposed to 19 percent of revenue accrued from tourist sites in the famous northern tourism circuit.

This implies that 56,000 tourists, who scale up Mount Kilimanjaro and leave behind \$50 million revenue annually, pump \$14 million out of the sum into -

the pockets of poor folks who solely depend on trekking to make their own lives and of their dependents going.

The wages and tips received by climbing staff are all considered to be 100 percent pro-poor, as all guides and porters interviewed were reportedly coming from poor family backgrounds. For many, this is the most effective model of transferring of resources from international tourists to poor people living around the destination that has even been seen in Africa and Asia.

Chairman of the TANAPA Board of Trustees George Waitara said that all conservation and tourism players had resolved to engage in an afforestation programme to reverse the trend.

"If we conserve the environment, the snow will be restored," said General Waitara, stressing that much as Kilimanjaro was selling the country overseas through a slogan: The Land of Kilimanjaro, Tanzanians should be proud of the mountain.

Located in Tanzania, Mount Kilimanjaro is Africa's tallest mountain at about 5,895 metres (19,340 feet) above sea level. It is the largest free-standing mountain in the world, meaning it is not part of a mountain range.

Also called a stratovolcano, a term for a very large volcano made of ash, lava, and rock; Kilimanjaro is made up of three cones: Kibo, Mawenzi, and Shira. Kibo is the summit of the mountain and the tallest of the three volcanic formations.

While Mawenzi and Shira are extinct, Kibo is dormant and could possibly erupt again. Scientists estimate that the last time it erupted was 360,000 years ago. The highest point on Kibo's crater rim is called Uhuru, the Swahili word for "freedom."

The mountain is also known for its snow-capped peak; however, scientists warn that the snow might disappexaar within the next 20 years or so, owing to the climate change's ripple effects.

In 1889, German geographer Hans Meyer and Austrian mountaineer Ludwig Purtscheller became the first persons on record to reach the summit of Kilimanjaro.

Since then, Kilimanjaro has become a popular hiking spot for local and foreign tourists.

In 1973, the mountain and its six surrounding forest corridors were named Kilimanjaro National Park to protect its unique environment.

The park was named a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage site in 1987.

A variety of animals live in the area surrounding the mountain, including the blue monkey.





REGROW: Ambitious Project to Unlock Southern Circuit

By Catherine Mbena

The Tanzania Government is, through the Natural Resources and Tourism Ministry, implementing Resilience Natural Resource Management for Tourism Growth (REGROW) project intending to open up southern tourism circuit.

The overarching goal of the World Bank supported project is to improve tourism service provision and to raise income among members of communities surrounding Kilombero Nature Reserve and four national parks -

in the southern circuit, namely Ruaha, Mikumi, Nyerere and Udzungwa.

Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA), one of the institutions implementing the project, has already set aside Sh25.3 billion for identifying alternative means for generating income and sponsorship for members of communities surrounding the priority parks.

Besides giving the communities an opportunity for engaging in productive income generating activities and improving their livelihoods, this component of the project also aims at minimising their dependency on natural resources as the only source of economy.

Over 60 villages will benefit from two phases of the project, with the first phase involving 15 villages and second phase involving the remainder, through 15 Community Conservation Bank (COCOBA) groups in each village.

COCOBA is a banking system that enables rural dwellers to save, buy shares and secure loans at affordable interest rates. A COCOBA member can secure loans twice or thrice depending on his savings.

Each COCOBA group receives seed money for lending its members and another financial support for running environment-friendly income generating projects.

TANAPA is using the COCOBA system to enhance conservation

and at the same time to improve welfare of communities surrounding national parks. TANAPA trains COCOBA groups in financial management and in running the groups.

All COCOBA groups are expected to be the agents of change where their members would cease from engage in income generating activities which destroy the environment such as subsistence hunting and trade of meat of wildlife and production of charcoal.

Of the villages surrounding the national parks, 12 are in Iringa District, one in Mbalali District, three in Chamwino District, four in Kilolo District, 15 in Kilombero District, six in Morogoro District, four in Mvomero District, four in Kilosa District, six in Rufiji District and six in Kisarawe District.

Achievements

Besides COCOBA, the project component also provides youth from villages surrounding the priority national parks with sponsorship for them to pursue conservation and tourism studies and to secure employment opportunities in the same.

REGROW has since its inception in 2019 identified 763 groups with 15,542 members, 10,277 being females and 5,265 males. Of the groups, 161 will engaged during the first phase, and 602 will be engaged during the second phase.

The project has so far trained 161 groups with 2,968 members, 2,118 being females and 850 males, from 15 villages engaged during the first phase. It has extended about 1.5 billion worth seed money to 159 groups from villages selected for the first phase provided the met laid down conditions during the recruitment.

REGROW has approved about Sh3.2 billion worth projects belonging to 150 groups which have, in turn, contributed about Sh524 million to the projects whose implementation is slated for October 2023.

The project has paid over Sh1.8 billion to 36 learning institutions in the country for sponsorship of 522 youth in pursuit of conservation and tourism studies during the 2022/23 financial year.

It has also identified 354 youth forming village game scout forces in 39 villages mired in human-wildlife conflicts in the project's bid to strengthen community participation in resolving the conflicts.

The village game scouts have separately pursued a three-month course at the Community-Based Conservation Training Centre) situated at Likuyu Sekamaganga in Namtumbo District, Ruvuma Region. REGROW coughed up over Sh647 million for the village game scouts.



Ruaha Ufadhili:
Helena Kulanga from a village surrounding Ruaha National Park is one of 522 beneficiaries of the students' sponsorship provided by the Resilience Natural Resource Management for Tourism Growth (REGROW) project being implemented in the southern tourism circuit by Tanzania National Parks.



Saadani Baobab:
A baobab tree that was used for hanging sturbon slaves to death at Saadani Village.



Saadani Warthog:
Warthogs graze along with goats at a household's compound.

Windfall As Royal Tour Film Brings the World to Tanzania

By Adam Ihucha

– Tourism industry stages a comeback, with earnings surging from \$1.95 bn in July 2022 to \$2.99 bn in July 2023.

– Tourist arrivals increased by 37.2 percent, hitting a record 1,658,043 visitors.

– Europe and the U.S remain primary sources of tourists visiting Tanzania for leisure and holidays.

Tanzania's Royal Tour film content, its strategic premiere U.S market and timing have started paying dividends in terms of commanding significant traffic of tourists and returns.

Produced by Peter Greenberg, the maiden film featuring President Samia Suluhu Hassan, as his key guide—showcasing Tanzania's rich cultural, wildlife heritage and array of investment opportunities through her leadership eye, was launched in New York, U.S on April 18, 2022.

What makes the “Royal tour” series different from most tourism-related programing is that, aside from presenting an informal and personal side of a leader, it presents a 360-degree view of a Tanzania, the home of number one Safari destination in the World, housing four of the most coveted adventure hotspots on earth: the Serengeti, Mount Kilimanjaro, Zanzibar, and Ngorongoro Crater compounded by the kind hearted people of Tanzania.

A year-plus after the President Dr. Samia launched the film in the American market, Tanzania's tourism industry is incredibly booming, making an outstanding recovery nearly four years after its revenues plummeted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fresh data from the Bank of Tanzania indicates that tourism has staged the remarkable comeback, raking in \$2.99 billion in foreign exchange in the year ending in July 2023, compared to \$1.95 billion in the year ending in July 2022.



According to the Bank of Tanzania, this represents a 33 percent surge in service receipts, reaching \$5.49 billion in July 2023, up from \$4.12 billion in July 2022. The bank also noted that this resurgence in tourism and increased earnings from gold have played a pivotal role in boosting Tanzania's service earnings to over \$5 billion for the first time in its history.

The recovery in the tourism industry is highlighted by a 37.2 percent growth in foreign arrivals, totaling 1,658,043 visitors during the year—reaching an all-time high.

The previous record for tourism earnings in Tanzania was \$2.5 billion, achieved in 2019 when the country welcomed 1,527,230 tourists.

Europe and the United States remain primary sources of tourists visiting Tanzania for leisure and holidays, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA)'s Conservation Commissioner, William Mwakilema was so grateful to President Dr. Samia's painstaking efforts in promoting the country through the Tanzania Royal tour film to open-up endless opportunities not only for our tourism value chain, but the entire economy as the film marketed Tanzania investment destinations to the global scene.

“As her subordinates, we have, we are now and will continue working overtime together with private sector to roll out a red carpet, refurbish tourist vans, and renovate hotels as part of grand preparation to welcome the influx of tourists”. Mwakilema said.

Few month after the grand debut, the key destination marketing executives in the USA were upbeat, saying that the Tanzania Royal tour film was the right shot at the right moment and would spur -

of the government in creating a conducive environment for the private sector to play its role so that the country can reach the target of five million tourists per annum within a timeframe.

During the premiere of the documentary, President Samia took the liberty to assure millions of potential tourists once again that Tanzania is the best place to spend their vacation, “We are very friendly. You will never regret visiting,” she added.

President Dr. Samia, who visited the US for business and diplomatic intentions, used the launch of the Royal Tour documentary to promote and improve the marketing of Tanzania's tourism to the world.

The Royal Tour film is to be spread for viewing on multiple platforms in America—a strategic move to spread awareness and promote tourism digitally.

By the end of the presentation, it's likely that viewers' interest in visiting the country will be higher than before they had watched it. Even Tanzania's familiar aspects are enhanced because everything is shown from the personal perspective of the country's leader.

“The Royal tour film is part of our ambitious commitment as the ruling Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) through our general elections manifesto of spurring tourism industry to grow by leaps and bounds to create meaningful employment and leapfrog other economic sectors” said the National CCM youth wing leader, Mr Kenan Kihongosi, adding:

“The CCM manifesto clearly stipulates that tourism will attract five million tourists who will leave behind nearly \$6.6 billion by 2025 with expected real multiplier effects to a critical mass of common folks in Tanzania, particularly women and youth”.

Indeed, holidays in Tanzania are paradise, as the country fascinates with its wealth of nature and its diverse animal world.

tourism industry more than ever before, as it was an eye opener for majority outdoor enthusiasts in their vast country.

“Americans are extremely eager to get back out into the world once again and Tanzania is uniquely positioned to offer them world-class nature and wildlife experiences that are authentically experiential in a way no other destination can offer,” said Mr. David DiGregorio Managing Director CornerSun Destination Marketing LLC in New York City told this journalist.

For her part, the Association of Black Travel Professionals (ABTP) CEO, Ms Shawnta Harrison said the Tanzania Royal Tour film has moved the majority of African-American travellers who are planning their holiday elsewhere in Africa and the Caribbean.

“Now were working to see how we can develop the new tourism product, probably to be named as discover the ancestors roots in order to tape the potential market as we believe with the Royal tour film majority are excited to come and explore their descendant's culture” Ms Harrison explained.

“We knew from the onset that the Tanzania's Royal tour film was an apt branding strategy that would go a long way in stimulating tourism, thus putting the Country into a better position to achieve its five million visitors target by 2025” Tanzania Association of Tour Operators (TATO)'s CEO, Mr. Sirili Akko said.

Mr Akko who attended the premiere of the film in the U.S said that the choice of the debut country and timing were extremely imperative and no wonder it had played an important role in rebooting the tourism industry hobbled by a brutal wave of Coronavirus.

He said the industry looks forward to the continuing commitment -

Anonymous Travellers' Quotes

"No WiFi out here, but I found a better connection."



"My favourite childhood memory is my parents paying for my holidays."

"I wish I was a postcard. For under \$2 you can travel the world to any location in the world."



I've been to almost as many places as my luggage." –Bob Hope

"I want someone to look at me the way I look at a travel brochure."



Southern Tourism Circuit offers Four Intertwined destinations

By Deus Bugaywa



The overarching goal of the southern circuit's project is to promote nature-based tourism and to contribute to diversifying livelihoods in selected communities.

The multi-billion shillings worth project is linking the four national parks to increase the number of local and foreign visitors and to make the industry thrive in the southern circuit as it is the case in the northern one.

The four national parks do not only share the same ecology but also are intertwined to form a striking rectangle for tourists.

It is conveniently situated, making it easier for a tourist to enjoy four different destinations with various landscapes, scenarios and escarpments within a short span of time. While Nyerere National Park is the Africa's wild dogs' stronghold with a largest number of elephants, Udzungwa Mountain National Park is part of a chain of 23,700-square-kilometre Forest Mountains straddling the coasts of Tanzania and Kenya.

Dubbed the Eastern Arc Forests, the woodland is highly important for the livelihood of millions of people, as it serves as a water tower, providing Dar es Salaam City, home to about 10 per cent of Tanzanians, with the precious liquid. The forests also generate a significant percentage of Tanzania's electricity through hydroelectric power plants, let alone providing medicinal plants, fuel wood, forest foods and building materials for the surrounding communities.

A trip to the Tanzania's southern tourist circuit, trekking within the Udzungwa Mountain National Park and viewing the water falling from the height of 170 metres at Sanje, is not only the most rewarding adventure, but is also an expedition worth attempting.

The promotion of part of the former Selous Game Reserve to Nyerere National Park has given packages of the tourists' attraction-rich Tanzania a new height. Named after Julius Nyerere, founding Father of the East African Nation, the new spot with the size of 30,893 square kilometers is now the largest national park in Africa.

Nyerere National Park, along with the 20,000-square-kilometer Selous Game Reserve remainder, is strategically connected to other three eye-catching national parks — Mikumi, Udzungwa and Ruaha. The Government of Tanzania, through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, is implementing a Resilient Natural Resource Management for Tourism and Growth (REGROW) project to strengthen the management of the Tanzania's four southern national parks.



A tourist gets a chance to swim in one of the waterfalls' pool before climbing 1,600 metres above sea level to explore a stunning view of Kilombero Valley Ramsar Site. While still at the Udzungwa Mountain National Park, a tourist sees six species of monkeys, including the endemic Sanje Crested Mangabey and Iringa Red Colobus.

Udzungwa, one of the world's 34 biodiversity hotspots and of 200 World Wildlife Fund eco regions of global critical importance, is, indeed, among the Tanzania's outstanding pristine.

North western side of Udzungwa lies Ruaha, an endless, treeless, shimmering national park riven with trenchlike watercourses.

Here a tourist finds huge herds of topis, zebras, roans, sables, kudus and impalas roam the soft black cotton grassland, wading through their reflections in the surrounding heat haze.

Surrounding the brittle grass of the plains are the Miombo woodlands, creeping up the granite escarpments in shades of green, yellow and red, with baobabs rising from the low canopy like overgrown jungle temples.

These welcoming, shady woodlands are ideal places for picnics, as a tourist prepares for heading for Mikumi National Park.

Mikumi, the Tanzania's fourth largest national park situated a few-hour drive from Ruaha National Park, is another hotspot for tourists interested in spotting the Big Five, namely elephant, lion, cheetah, buffalo and rhino.

Besides the Big Five, other animals easily sighted within Mikumi are eland, hartebeest, buffalo, wildebeest, giraffe and zebra, among others. Wild dogs come and go in the park.

The unforgettable experience safari makers get while at Mikumi National Park is the open horizons of the Mkata floodplain teeming with abundant wildlife, including over 300 species of birds.

Driving from Mikumi to Nyerere National Park is an extra trip full of nature delights; it takes a tourist across rivers, villages and farms on the foot of the Uluguru Mountains also covered by the Eastern Arc Forests.

Seth Mihayo, Senior Tourism Officer with Nyerere, says a visitor to the national park enjoys boat safari along the mighty Rufiji River.

The boat safari brings the tourist into close contact with hippo, crocodile and amazing birdlife, as the park hosts over 400 bird species.

"The boat may approach an elephant, waterbuck and other wildlife at close range as the animals sip water along the river banks.

"Crocodiles glide into the water and hippos grunt and blow steam for fear of the boat's proximity," he explains.

Game drive at the park enables a tourist to have good photographic opportunities and the chance to explore different sections of the vast park.

The Nyerere National Park though is famous for its elephants and wild dogs, frequently seen also are lions, buffalo, bushbuck, impalas, elands, baboons, zebra, wildebeest and greater kudu. A walking safari is an unforgettable experience within Nyerere National Park, it gives a visitor an intimate feeling for African wild, Mihayo explains.

"A tourist comes into direct contact with nature in an unspoiled wilderness and sees different foot prints and droppings of different wild animals and small creatures that can't be seen during game drive," he adds.

Dar es Salaam, the city closely placed to both Nyerere National Park and Zanzibar or Spice Islands as they are fondly known, conveniently links up all of four national parks, preventing a tourist from stressful itinerary planning.

Golfers to Rub Shoulders With Wildlife in Serengeti's Lifetime Twofer

By Adam Ihucha



Set amidst the hills of the Fort Ikoma, Serengeti golf course once is ready will offer stunning views of the wildlife sanctuary in the world.

Tanzania conservation agency is currently investing multi-million dollars in developing a state-of-the art recreational facility, as it seeks to unlock the potential for leisure travel.

The Tanzania National Park Conservation Commissioner William Mwakilema, unveiled an ambitious plan that will see a pioneer top quality golf course built near the world-renowned and Africa's premier national park of Serengeti.

The 18-hole golf course being constructed within 400 acres at Fort Ikoma, an area that serves as a buffer zone for Serengeti District and the Serengeti National Park, will be among the world's few golf courses within or near national parks.

Billed to be one of the world's exclusive and longest golf course with an array of challenging features, the golf course promises the ultimate African golfing experience, where golfers share fairways with giraffe, zebra, impala and monkeys, while viewing bigger game behind the park.

During a round of 18, golfers are likely to encounter aquatic life at various watering holes, while majestic, yet inquisitive giraffe, zebra, cheetah nonchalantly observe their swing from their unique vantage points.

"For those who crave for a world-class golf course and the ultimate leisure in breathtaking landscapes and awe-inspiring wildlife, then the Serengeti National Park's golf course could be soon their destination," Conservation Commissioner Mwakilema said during the ceremony of a foundation stone laying for the proposed facility.

"At the Serengeti National Park's golf course they will enjoy fresh air, birds singing, awe-inspiring wildlife migration, breathtaking landscapes, peace and tranquility that we all crave for," -

the TANAPA Chief explained.

The Serengeti National Park's golf course project bankrolled by the TANAPA Investment Ltd, a commercial wing of the conservation agency, at the tune of \$3.2 million, or Sh7.5 billion, is expected to be completed in 2023 should the cash flow remain constant.

The TANAPA Investment Ltd, a newly established subsidiary company with topnotch professionals in different fields, will be undertaking all projects involving the country's national parks and beyond as part of the conservation agency's strategy for diversifying its revenue sources.

Environmental Impact Consideration, feasibility study and business plan have concluded that the Serengeti National Park's golf course ticks all the boxes as a viable project.

Being built at the Fort Ikoma situated on top of the most easterly of a series of low hills about one mile north of the Grumeti River, the golf course will offer a stunning view of the wildlife grazing and elite sporting under one roof.

Conservation Commissioner Mwakilema said the golf course would attract around 3,000 global golfers annually, who, in turn, will leave behind an average of \$857,632.93, equivalent to Sh2 billion and leapfrog other economic sectors with substantial multiplier effects to a critical mass of poor people around.

Laying the foundation stone, the TANAPA Board Chairman, retired General George Marwa Waitara, said the proposed ultra-modern Serengeti National Park's golf course is part of the nation's comprehensive strategy for diversify its mainstream tourism products as it seeks to boost tourist numbers, extend length of stay and revenue.

General Waitara believes the new tourism product will complement efforts by the government under President Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan in stimulating tourism growth to achieve five million tourists and \$6.6 billion earning in 2025.

Analysts say the new tourism product would be a major boost to the tourism industry, as it will capture the growing market segment of tourists who look beyond wildlife, mountain and beach.

The Chairman of Tanzania Golf Union, Mr. Gilman Kasiga, welcomed the Serengeti National Park's golf course project, appreciating TANAPA Investment Ltd, for the great innovation, saying the recreational facility would go a long way in spurring sports tourism in the country.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) says tourism and sports are inter-related and complement each other. Sports – as a professional, amateur or leisure activity – involves a considerable amount of traveling to play and compete in different destinations and countries.

Sport events of various kinds and sizes attract tourists as participants or spectators, prompting destinations to try to add flavours to them to -

distinguish themselves and provide authentic local experiences. As per the Allied Market Research report, titled Sports Tourism Market by Product, the global sports tourism industry was pegged at \$323.42 billion in 2020, and is expected to reach \$1,803.70 billion by 2030, growing at an annual growth rate (CAGR) of 16.1 percent between 2021 and 2030.

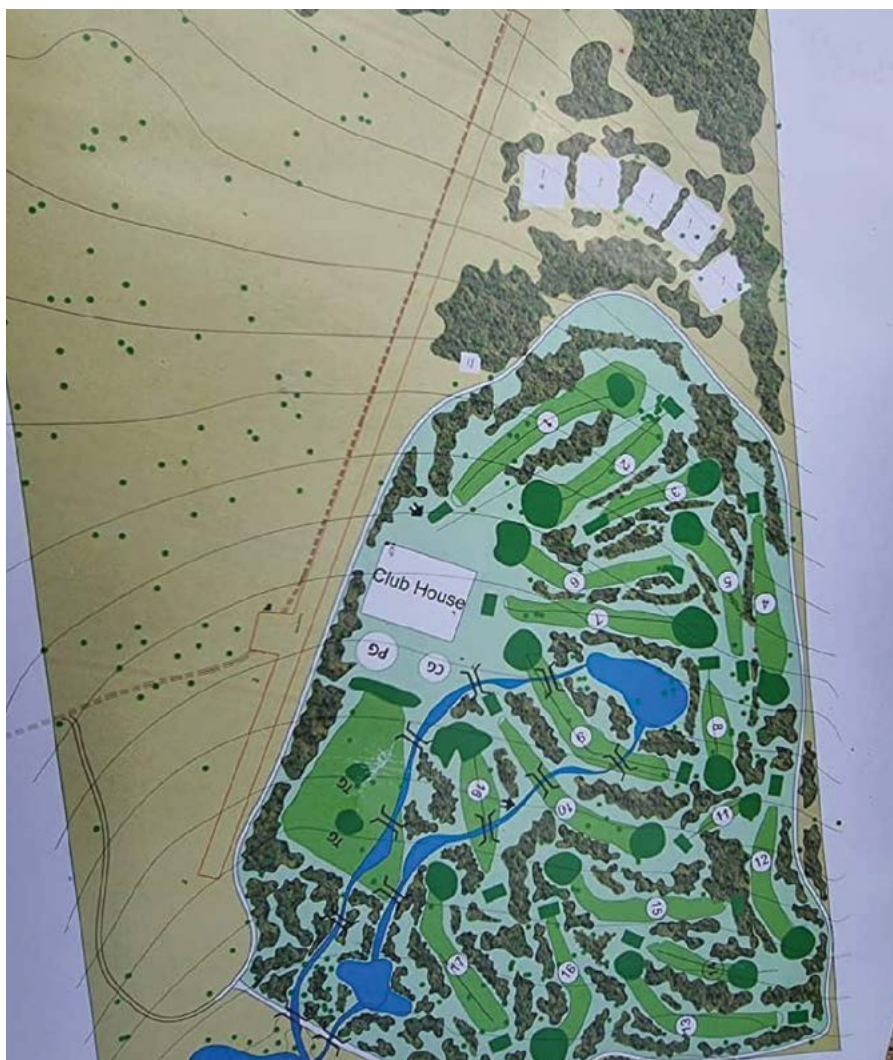
Serengeti National Park is undoubtedly the best-known wildlife sanctuary in the world, unequalled for its natural beauty and scientific value, it has the greatest concentration of plains game in Africa.

The planet's remaining largest wildlife migration with an annual loop of two million wildebeest across the Serengeti and the Maasai Mara Reserve is a key tourist allure, generating multi-million dollars annually.

Nearly 700,000 tourists who visit the legendary Tanzania northern tourist circuit annually explore the Serengeti and have been fascinated by its millions of wildebeest each, driven by the same ancient rhythm, fulfilling their instinctive role in the inescapable cycle of life.

From the sprawling Serengeti plains to the champagne-coloured hills of Masai Mara, over 1.4 million wildebeests, 200,000 zebra and gazelle, relentlessly tracked by Africa's great predators, migrate in a clockwise fashion over 1,800 miles each year in search for rain-ripened grass.

There is no real beginning or end to the wildebeest's journey. Its life is an endless pilgrimage, a constant search for food and water. The only beginning is at the moment of birth.



TANAPA Scoops Top European Quality Choice Award

By Catherine Mbeni

The profile of Tanzania tourism destination has raised a rung higher, as its national parks custodian scooped a prestigious European Quality Choice Diamond award in 2022.

The award, which the European Society for Quality Research (ESQR) offers, is the third in a row to be won by the Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA), thanks to its all-inclusive practices in conservation and tourism services.

The state-run conservation and tourism agency manages a total of 21 national parks covering an area of 99,306.50 km² (38,342 square metres) approximately the land area of Croatia. Senior Assistant Conservation Commissioner – Eastern Zone, Massana Mwishawa, and Assistant Conservation Commissioner, Beatrice Kessy, who was in charge of Business Development portfolio, joined the World legends of quality products and services at the ESQR's red-carpet reception held at the Hotel Le Plaza in Brussels, Belgium, to receive the ultimate annual quality choice diamond prize 2022.

"Tanzania National Parks has been crowned as the recipient of the quality choice diamond prize 2022, owing to its best practices in conservation and tourism services," the ESQR CEO, Mr. Michael Haris, announced during the gala dinner and the award giving ceremony. ESQR annually recognises top companies, public administrations and organisations, which excel in their services or products and continue pushing the limits of quality with innovations.

The award-winning entities, which are recognised for their hard work and commitment to quality, in the presence of the international business community, are selected by ESQR based on the results of the ESQR polls, consumer opinions, and research and market study. Whereas in 2020, TANAPA



won the ESQR's Best Practice Gold Award, in 2021, the entity received the Quality Achievement Platinum Prize, and in 2022, Quality Choice Diamond Honou, implying that the national parks' custodian has been persistent in conservation and tourism services. Commenting, the Acting Ambassador of Tanzania to European Union, Kingdom of Belgium and Luxembourg in Brussels, Belgium, Mr. Juma Salum, showered praises to TANAPA for a job well done in conservation drive and tourism services, prompting recognition by the international community.

In his remarks, TANAPA Conservation Commissioner William Mwakilema said: "No doubt, our efforts to conserve flora and fauna within the 22 national parks, the customised tourism services, innovation, and experience have brought us at the red-carpet reception to receive the ultimate prize of ESQR as the winner of quality choice diamond." "We are deeply grateful for continued support from satisfied tourists and green supporters whose anonymous votes enabled our victory. We feel extremely honoured and humbled by such a prestigious ESQR decoration," said Mr. Mwakilema, adding:

"Although we have previously won a number of awards, this ultimate prize is truly inspirational. It's incredible to be nominated as the finest service provider in the tourism industry and as a conservation driver." He pledged: "I promise all tourists and nature enthusiasts that we are dedicated to ensure all 21 -

national parks remain wild for them to enjoy connecting with nature."

The award, Conservation Commissioner Mwakilema, said, would create a buzz among the staffs, giving them a better sense of confidence as well as a rise in engagement and productivity, knowing that their hard work is internationally recognised.

"Equally important, the prize comes with an intensified client awareness and recognition, as tourists will feel confident in Tanzania's credibility and will have more trust and loyalty to the tourism destination than ever before," the TANAPA chief noted. Mr. Mwakilema said the award would also complement efforts of the Tanzania President, Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, and her administration in driving growth in the tourism industry for it to contribute significantly to the economy. "The prize will go a long way in invigorating tourism, thus putting the country at a better position to achieve its five million visitors target by 2025," he explained.

Tourism remains at the centre of the Tanzania's economy in terms of contribution to its GDP, foreign currency and jobs, let alone the integral role the industry plays in connecting other sectors with the global economy. In real terms, tourism is the Tanzania's money-spinning industry, as it creates 1.3 million decent jobs, generates \$2.6 billion annually, equivalent to 18 per cent, as well as 30 percent of the country's GDP and export receipts, respectively.



London Cabbies: 'Tanzania is a Best Kept Secret'

By Edmund Salaho

London taxi drivers, who successfully climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, the Africa's highest peak, have a lifetime gift for Tanzania.

The apparently satisfied members of 'Cabbies Do Kilimanjaro' from London have vowed to be 'goodwill ambassadors' and to woo other potential tourists in the UK to visit the country every year.

"Come to Tanzania, it is Africa's well-kept secret, with an unforgettable experience," Mr. Daren Parr told TANAPA TODA at Mweka Gate shortly after the crew descended from the roof of Africa. "I feel like I left part of myself on the peak of Kilimanjaro," he added.

Mr. Parr said his team had fallen in love with Tanzania's vast endowment of tourism assets, comprising opportunities for fabulous wildlife safaris, a -

lifetime hiking adventure, cultural tourism, and other incredible tourism activities.

"Tanzania is home to the world's finest national parks, Kilimanjaro is the world's freestanding mountain, and Serengeti is, no doubt, number one safari destination on the planet," noted Mr. Parr, admitting: "Honestly the country has so much more to offer than my words".

"Much as the world is opening up now, hundreds, if not thousands, of people across the UK will be interested in joining us on our next trip," he explained. Sarah Tobias, Mr John Dillane and Stella Wood said the 'Cabbies Do Kilimanjaro' would continue promoting the remarkable mountain and other Tanzania's endowments in the UK, provided the country adhered to one condition: "Big Expeditions and Safaris should be the sole tour operator to host us".

The Cabbies Do Meru and Kilimanjaro 2022 anticipated raising over \$8,000 for disabled and underprivileged children in London, and over \$2,700 for a Tanzanian orphanage home. The London taxi drivers also implored the Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) to refrain from adding or taking away anything from the mountain, lest it ruined the country's thorough conservation legacy.

"The reason we come back is because TANAPA has maintained its parks so well, here we connect with nature," said Mr Parr, stressing that the Big Expeditions and Safaris' extraordinary services had impressed them. "They catered for everything we needed," he said. The TANAPA Conservation Commissioner, Mr. William Mwakilema, appreciated the Cabbies Do Kilimanjaro team for its best offer of promoting Tanzania as the -

top-notch tourism destination not only in the UK, but also across the entire European bloc.

The TANAPA Assistant Conservation Commissioner, Ms. Beatrice Kessy, who was in charge of Business Portfolio, said the Cabbies Do Kilimanjaro's offer would go down in history as one of the best deals for the Tanzania's tourism industry.

"I know how influential cabbies are in London, their word of mouth will certainly inspire a significant number of tourists from the UK to visit Tanzania in the near future," Ms. Kessy affirmed.

Overwhelmed with joy for satisfying her clients from Cabbies Do Kilimanjaro, the Managing Director of Big Expeditions and Safaris, Ms. Angela Minja, pledged to continue offering tourists best services.

Tanzania is home to some of Africa's most famous national parks and natural attractions, including the majestic Mount Kilimanjaro -- the Africa's highest peak situated at 5,895 metres above sea level, which is the Tanzania's most iconic image. The World Heritage Site was formed over 1 million years ago by volcanic movements along the Rift Valley followed by three cones about 750,000 years ago, namely Shira, Mawenzi and Kibo where Uhuru Peak -- the highest point and one of the world's seven summits -- is. Tourists do not visit Kilimanjaro for the wildlife, but rather for the chance to stand in awe of the beautiful snow-capped mountain and, for many, to hike to the summit. The mountain rises from farmland on the lower level to rainforest and alpine meadow and then to the barren lunar landscape at the peaks.

The slopes of the rainforest are home to buffaloes, leopards, monkeys, elephants and eland. The alpine zone is where watchers find an abundance of birds of prey. Besides the mountain, safaris and wildlife-related adventures are another reason many tourists visit Tanzania.



"I'm humbled with the deal. I promise Cabbies Do Kilimanjaro and all tourists that we are dedicated to ensure all 21 national parks remain wild for them to enjoy connecting with nature," Mr. Mwakilema pledged.

Serengeti National Park is a vast treeless plain with millions of animals living or passing through in search for juvenile grasslands.

The park is most famous for the annual wildebeest migration, the Big Five and nearly 500 species of birds. Tanzania's second largest national park attracts tens of thousands of tourists between June and September each year, the best months for wildlife viewing.

March to May is the wet season in the park while June to October is the coldest period. The most impressive annual migration of over 1.5 million wildebeest and hundreds of thousands of zebras and gazelle takes place in May or early June.

Established in 1970, Tarangire National Park is another fantastic area for wildlife viewing in dry seasons -- July to September -- when the highest concentration of migratory wildlife throngs the Tarangire River banks. The park is known for its large population of elephants and baobab trees -

trees that dot the grassy landscape, and for wildebeest, zebra, buffalo, impala, gazelle, hartebeest and eland crowding the lagoons.

With over 300 species recorded, including buzzards, vultures, herons, storks, kites, falcons and eagles, Tarangire is excellent for birdwatching.



How Arabic Trader’s Accent Coined Defunct Village Name Into Saadani

By Adam Ihucha

Saadani Village used to be known as Utondwe many years ago, referring to snails caught in the Indian Ocean. What prompted residents to change the name of their village then? Sadik Luhunde, one of tour guides at Saadani, sheds light on this and other historical accounts on the village surrounding Tanzania’s sole national park offering aquatic, maritime and terrestrial tourist hot spots:

Saadani Village started serving as a fishermen camp since the 18th century. A sole Arab trader Seyid Bin Muhamad used to exchange trophies for clothes, beads and other western manufactured goods. A bell of a clock on the wall of his shop rang at each o’clock hour, reminding fishermen to go to mosques for prayers or to the ocean for fishing.

Upon hearing the bell, some fishermen rushed to the shop asking the trader what the exact time was. The trader’s patience waned, nevertheless, compelling him to shift the clock from the shop to the living room. When the fishermen went on consulting him, he kept telling them in his Arabic accent ‘saa dani’, meaning saa iko ndani in Kiswahili, which can loosely be translated as the clock is inside.

This is how the name of Utondwe was coined into Saadani even after the Arabic trader left the village. When the national park was established in 2005, the name was picked to, among other reasons, uphold the history of the village.

Shilawadu

The second tale is about a popular Kiswahili acronym among local tourists, in particular. Shilawadu (Shirika la Wambeya Duniani), was initially crafted at the Utondwe Village. Fishermen have a joint for playing draughts board at the village. The centre has a gossip leadership whose role is to reveal whatever is covetously done across the village.

Coexistence

It is not surprising to see Utondwe or Saadani villagers brushing shoulders with wild-life animals, particularly warthogs and baboons, around their households. Sending a kid to the market to buy bananas and other sweet fruits is tantamount to testing the baboons’ patience at the village.

The wildlife animals will definitely slap the kid and grab the fruits. Save for such a challenge also regularly experienced at Saadani Primary School, the villagers amicably coexist with the wildlife animals to the extent that warthog are more comfortable to deliver within the households’ compounds than in the park.

An attempt by the management to repatriate the warthogs to its adjacent Saadani National Park proved futile. Romanus Mkonda, the national park’s Conservation Officer responsible for Public Relations says their meat being so delicious to lions than of other wildlife animals, the warthogs had no another option but to return to the village situated along the buffer zone.

Awareness

Subsistence hunting of warthogs elsewhere in Tanzania is rampant. However, owing to the Islamic region outlawing pigs, Saadani has successfully turned into a refuge for warthogs considered to share roots with pigs.

After the failure of its attempt to repatriate the wildlife animals to the park, the Saadani National Park’s management has opted for enhancing awareness among the villagers on how they can continue coexisting with the warthogs, baboons and other stray animals. Elephants, for instance, encroach on the village regularly in search for fruits of mkunazi (Chinese date palm) trees.

Villagers plant mkunazi trees for the sake of traditional beliefs and extracting medicines.

They use the backs of mkunazi for treating migraine, among other ailments. They also believe that when a villager, who is mean, plants mkunazi in his backyard, the tree will not grow, and in case it grows, it will not bear its tasty yellowish fruits.

The tree is also believed to prevent lightening from striking property or family members if planted within a household. Any person visiting the household with a bad motive at night will end up seeing an ocean or flames of fire razing in a hollow pit, instead of a household. In their search for the mkunazi trees, therefore, elephants also destroy banana plantains and other crops surrounding the households often fenced by coconut leaves or reeds.

Mbuyu Kinyonga

Also found at Saadani Village is a huge baobab tree which dates back to colonial era. A slave, who refused to go to work in plantations in the west or was caught protesting against the tyrant regime then, was hanged to death at the tree. Once approved dead, the body of the slave was dropped into a mass grave besides the tree. A chain used for hanging slaves could be seen some few years back, but the tree has engulfed since.

Remains of a boma (fort) built by the German colonial regime are a stone’s throw away from the baobab tree. Slaves from landlocked countries were kept in the boma before they were sent to Zanzibar where they were sold and shipped to western countries.

When slave trade was at its peak, new bomas were built in Bagamoyo. A huge ship could not anchor at Saadani due to shallow water along village’s shores. Immediately after the slave trade was abolished, the Saadani boma was transformed into the village’s first primary school premises for Standard I to Standard IV classes.

Tanzania Braces for High-End Tourists as Harpist Breaks World Guinness Record Atop Kilimanjaro Mountain

By Patty Magubira

High end tourists are likely to stream in Tanzania once Siobhan Brady is confirmed to have broken her own Guinness World Record for playing harp on the World’s highest free-standing mountain.

Just before her dust has settled, two high profile tourists, namely Che Smith -- Chicago rapper popularly known at stage as Rhymefest Smith, and Tracey Crouch -- Member of Parliament for Chatham and Aylesford, UK, arrived in Tanzania.

“Whatever it is we’ve been looking for throughout our lives, is coming into focus at the moment,” the US artist, writer, political organiser and teacher says in his Instagram post as he admires colours and light of the sunrise in the sky at Serengeti National Park also in Tanzania. In 2005, Rhymefest won a Grammy for co-writing the mega-hit ‘Jesus Walks’ along with his childhood friend -- Kanye West.

The UK MP had, in turn, scaled Mount Kilimanjaro along with six other women in aid of a breast cancer charity. Tracey, the former sports minister, who cannot wait to see the night sky on the mountain, has recovered from breast cancer herself following support from Breast Cancer Kent.

Why have the duo opted for Serengeti and Kilimanjaro, it remains to be seen; but upon descending the awesome mountain on Tuesday July 25, 2023, Siobhan showered praises on the tourist site, admitting that its summit had spectacular views of mountain scenery, especially picturesque.

“It was absolutely stunning; every single walk was just beautiful. I hope documenting it will inspire people from all over the world to travel to the summit, more people need to know about it,” she says. Siobhan and 19 other members of her team sent harp all the way from Ireland to the summit to raise funds to assist people with cystic fibrosis and to showcase the beauty of Tanzania.

They trekked for five days to reach the summit and two days to descend. “I had so much fun with the entire team, including the guides, they were just amazing, I laughed the entire way up,” she explains.

It took Mauly Tours’ porters and guides one-month rehearsals of carrying a 40-kilogramme chest laden with lever harps to the summit. Siobhan, a 24-year-old biological science Professor turned musician from Limerick, Ireland, spent barely 25 minutes to pluck and strike the harp to produce the Little Bird notes (https://youtu.be/YdOF_qYWx-s), among others.

She promises to promote Mount Kilimanjaro back home in her bid to attract many tourists of her like from across the globe to ascend to the snow-capped roof of Africa which sticks out a stone’s throw away from equator.





Cystic fibrosis, a disorder that damages lungs, digestive tract and other organs, is an inherited disease caused by a defective gene passed from generation to generation. The disease affects cells that produce mucus, sweat and digestive juices. Siobhan dedicates the Guinness World Record on the Kilimanjaro summit to her late colleague Desmond Gentle with whom she performed at the peak of Singla Pass in India.

Barely 10 days after they left India, Desmond died of thrombosis at the age of 69. “The week before he died, he said he wanted to perform again on Kilimanjaro, so we did it in his memory,” Siobhan explains.

Tanzania Association of Tour Operators (TATO) chief executive officer Sirili Akko says the artist’s challenge to the Kilimanjaro summit offers the mountain a high-profile visibility.

“We appreciate the towering efforts she has put in place to raise the profile of the destination Tanzania higher in Ireland, the entire English-speaking market, to her fans and to the music lovers around the globe,” says Sirili, adding: “Her meticulous initiative has not only put her on the Guinness World Record, but also positioned Tanzania in the rightful position in the Guinness Book as the most world premier destination for all nature-based tourism products.” Ireland’s envoy to Tanzania Mary O’Neil is upbeat the traditional harp, which is her country’s national symbol, will cement long standing ties between Tanzania and Ireland which date back to generations.

“Now that COVID-19 is finished, the skies are open and people are travelling again, Irish tourists should come to Tanzania to find between the beaches of Zanzibar, the plains of Serengeti and the beautiful mountain of Kilimanjaro. “Listening to the Highest Harp Concert team, the welcoming they see and the friendliness; they feel very much at home,” the envoy says.

Green and fresh sight with full of oxygen at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro reminds Mary of -

Ireland. “There’s something for everybody,” she stresses. Samira Mauly, one of the directors of Mauly Tours, which guided Siobhan and her team to the summit, says besides Siobhan, the firm has been guiding a couple of heads of state, envoys and celebrities, including Tanzania’s own President Samia Suluhu Hassan and former football player with Everton Morgan Schneiderlin. Dr Samia attempted to scale the mountain during the production of a documentary dubbed Tanzania: The Royal Tour in her bid to promote the mountain and to attract investors in the same. The President assumes the role of a tour guide to Peter Greenberg, US tourism editor with NBC’s Today, CNBC and MSNBC, in the film launched in New York on April 18, 2022.

Dr Samia showcases Tanzania’s rich cultural, wildlife heritage and an array of investment opportunities in the film.

“The Tanzania Government is happy to see Siobhan following footsteps of President Samia Suluhu Hassan,” says Dr Hassan Abbas, the Permanent Secretary in Natural Resources and Tourism Ministry, as he saw off the Highest Harp Concert’s team ascending at Machame Gate. A blessing in disguise Travel and tourism were hardest hit when the COVID-19 was at its peak, with tourists’ arrivals in Tanzania falling from slightly over 1.5 million in 2019 to 620,867 in 2020. The drop triggered a devastating plunge in revenue collections to \$1.7 billion in 2020, down from an all-time record of \$2.6 billion in 2019, compelling both the public and the private sectors to carry out a number of response measures.

They jointly engaged an international marketing company to promote Tanzania as a top-notch tourism destination in the US and organised Travel Agents FAM trips to the country.

As we speak, the country’s central bank says in its report on the state of the economy between May 2022 and May 2023 that tourism had registered \$2.87 billion from over 1.6 million tourist arrivals during the period in review.

Three Tanzania’s National Parks Name Top Destinations for Outdoor Enthusiasts

By Catherine Mbena



“We have been working extra time to conserve these national parks, we are extremely happy that the world has at last recognised our scrupulous efforts,” Mwakilema explained.

Tanzania’s Serengeti, Kilimanjaro and Tarangire national parks have been voted best sites for outdoor enthusiasts, flying the country’s flag high as the premier tourism destination.

All located in Africa’s richest tourism circuit north of the country, the sites have featured prominently among the best 25 national parks from across the world, thanks to traveller’s views through Trip Advisor.

“Serengeti becomes the top destination of outdoor enthusiasts in Africa and the third in the world,” writes Trip Advisor, the world’s largest travel platform. Travellers have through their reviews to Trip Advisor also chosen the country’s Tarangire and Kilimanjaro national parks best destinations in the world. The Travellers’ Choice Award comes every year through the Trip advisor’s programme.

Tanzania National Parks Conservation Commissioner William Mwakiema received the news with gratitude, saying it was a vote of confidence to Tanzania’s destination from the global consumers.

Also overwhelmed by the news is the TANAPA Assistant Conservation Commissioner, Ms Beatrice Kessy, who was In-Charge of Business Portfolio, saying global consumers had been impartial in recognising Tanzania’s natural beauty Outdoor visitors to Serengeti should prepared for being -

astonished by the vastness of the national park where the land moves on forever. While at the park, they can witness the famous Serengeti annual migration, the largest and longest overland migration on earth.

The vast plains of the Serengeti comprise 1.5 million hectares of savannah, harbour the largest remaining unaltered migration of two million wildebeests plus hundreds of thousands of gazelles and zebras engaging in a 1,000-kilometre-long annual circular trek spanning the two adjacent countries of Tanzania and Kenya, as their predators follow them. Situated above 8,850 feet, Kilimanjaro National Park, in turn, protects Africa’s highest roof and the world’s tallest free-standing mountain, rising to nearly 20,000 feet.

On ascent, the mountain’s foothills morph into lush forests, serving as home to elephants, leopards and buffalo. Further up are moorlands covered in giant heather, then alpine desert land. Higher still come the ice and snow that make Kilimanjaro famous. A hike to the top, namely Uhuru Peak, takes six to seven days.

Ms Kessy said the Mount Kilimanjaro summit, a leading tourist destination situated at about 5,895 metres above sea level, roughly attracted 50,000 climbers from across the world annually.



Named for the river that runs through its stunning landscape, the Tarangire National Park offers visitors a unique experience of Tanzania.

The park is home to the country's largest population of elephants. You can see herds of up to 300 digging the Tarangire riverbed during dry seasons. It also features other native wildlife ranging from impalas to rhinos and hartebeest buffalo. Though safaris are a popular attraction in the area, experiencing native vegetation such as baobabs or trees of life as they are popularly known and the park's complex network of swamps delight nature lovers.

With nearly 1.5 million tourists visiting the country annually, Tanzania's wildlife tourism continues growing, earning the national coffers \$2.5 billion, equivalent to about 17.6 percent of the GDP, -

cementing the industry's position as the leading foreign currency - earner. Additionally, tourism directly provides Tanzanians with 600,000 jobs, let alone over one million other people also earning their incomes from the industry's value chain.

Although the industry was severely hit after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, national and regional recovery plans have apparently started paying dividends.

Pictorial

Photos by Edmund Salaho

The Chairman of the Board of Trustee of the Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA), retired General George Waitara (Right), shares experiences with tourists on walking Safari at Arusha National Park on Wednesday September 20, 2023. A day trip Walking Safari gives a tourist an opportunity for walking freely alongside wildlife.



Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) Conservation Commissioner William Mwakilema (Right) and the Chairman of the Board of Trustee, retired General George Waitara (Left) guide newly elected members of the TANAPA Board of Trustees when the board toured Arusha National Park on Wednesday September 20, 2023.



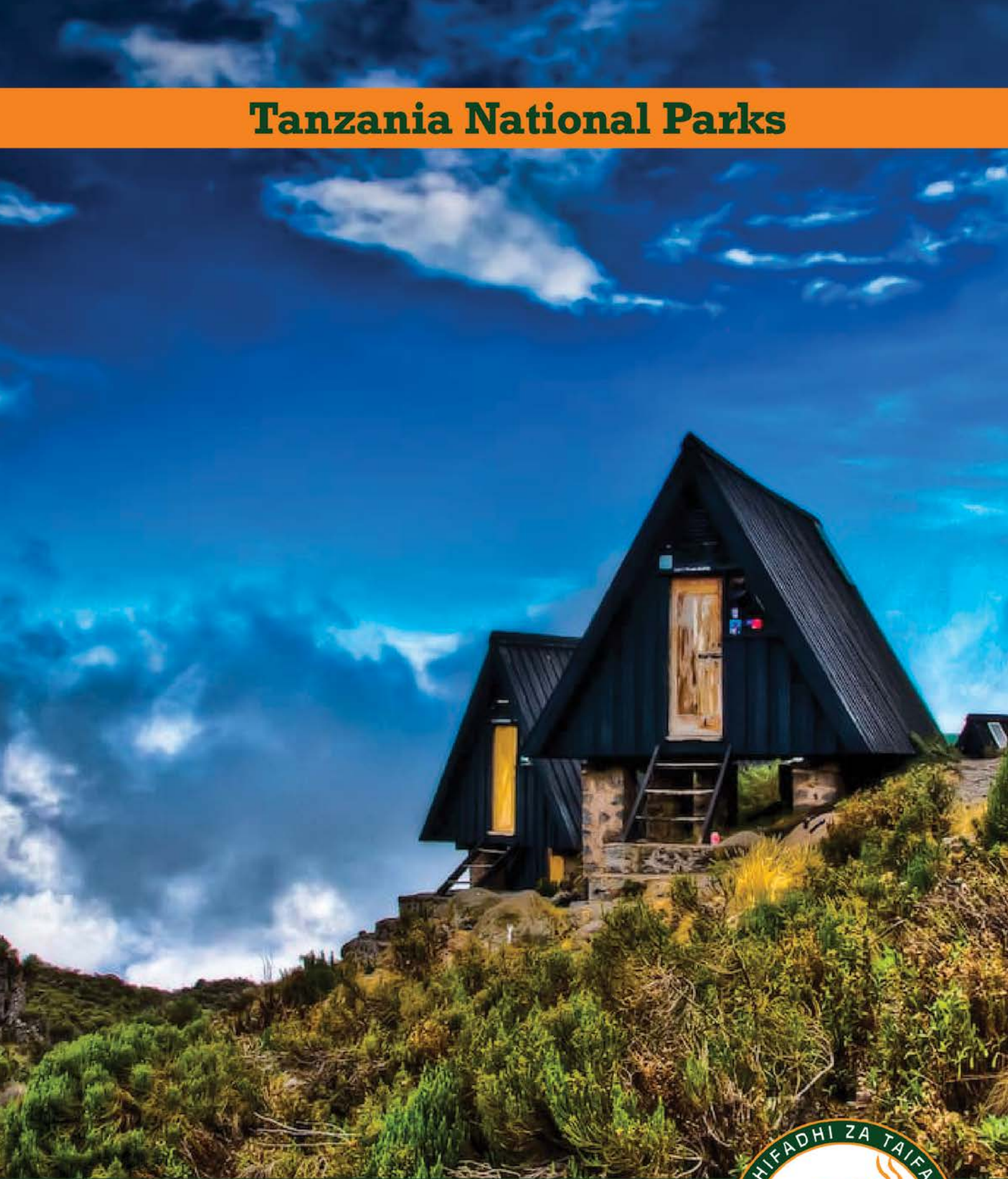
The Chairman of the Board of Trustee of the Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA), retired General George Waitara (Second Right) explains to new members of the TANAPA Board of Trustees (some not in picture) on one of tourist attractions at Arusha National Park when the board visited the park on Wednesday September 20, 2023.



Members of the Board of Trustees of the Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) pose for a souvenir picture at Arusha National Park on Wednesday September 20, 2023.



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