

Eco Tourism at Karen Blixen Camp

Karen Blixen Camp is an eco friendly luxury camp located in the beautiful Mara North Conservancy. We strongly believe responsible tourism has the capacity to protect a natural wildlife area, alleviate poverty through proper working conditions and contribute positively to the local community





Dear Reader,

Eco Tourism is the Buzz Word in today's tourism - if you Google it, it has more than 18,3 million hits. Yet, nobody really seems to be able to explain what it incorporates, and what qualifies for a property to use it.

Karen Blixen Camp believes that Eco Tourism is responsible and sustainable tourism, that it has the capacity to protect a natural wildlife area, alleviate poverty through proper working conditions and contribute positively to the local community. With the great support from our agents and appraisals from our guests, we know that Eco Tourism has come to stay in the today's traveling market.

The responsibility doesn't end at the property – the ground operators, travel agents and travelers should make a stand, and inquire about the practices of the property they plan to visit. We cannot believe that anyone visiting a camp, in a fragile ecosystem as the Mara, would wish to contribute to deforestation or pollution; that freshly chopped wood is used for heating their shower water or cooking food, let alone that wastewater produced, is led directly into the Mara River.

There is no doubt that the future of wildlife tourism, and survival of many wilderness areas across the African continent looks very bleak; and if we don't begin to take Eco Tourism very seriously, there will be very little left of the Africa we love, for the next generation.

One of the most rewarding events in the last few years has been the consolidation of Mara North Conservancy. The Maasai landowners and the tourism partners have agreed to sign a lease agreement that will protect this area and its wildlife for the next 15 years; safeguarding one of the world's most beautiful places. The Maasai landowners receive a direct and predictable income for setting aside their land for wildlife conservation and we have the privilege to game drive within their homeland area. We are very proud that a dedicated local community and a responsible tourism sector can conserve a wildlife area.

We are also very proud that we opened Karen Blixen Hospitality School and welcomed 8 young Maasai students to our Cooking School in January 2012. The students will learn professional cooking based on the French classical kitchen. In August we opened the Forestry School with the goal to conserve the beautiful Masai Mara Ecosystem. Our school also offers IT as well as foreign language courses for our staff, students and the local Maasai community. Our ambition is to invest in the education and promote employment for tomorrow's young chefs and foresters.

The ideas we have put into Karen Blixen Camp do not have any copyrights, so please let's us share the responsibility.

Yours faithfully,

Jesper Stagegaard
Chairman
Karen Blixen Camp

Martin Søndery Nielsen
Managing Director & Founder
Karen Blixen Camp



A cooking school for Maasai youth

Education is a strategic social investment, benefitting both the local community and the private sector

Education is highly important in Kenya. Parents will do everything possible to secure education for their children. Life in the Mara is no exemption, but for the majority of the young Maasai a full course of secondary or tertiary education is still out of reach. There is simply no secondary school found in the area; and for most families school fees and the cost of living in the cities are too high. Studies show that the education level in the local Mararienda village is very low: out of a population of 2,000 only ten people have attended college education and only two students have registered for their first degree in a university. The research also shows gender

related concerns as only two girls out of 100 pupils graduate with a full primary school education. Lack of affordable education facilities clearly prevents the Maasai youth from expanding their full employment opportunities. More than 50 percent of Maasai youth find themselves in constant unemployment, contributing to the cycle of poverty.

Being located in one of the most famous wildlife areas with visitors from around the world, Karen Blixen Camp relies on our staff to give our visitors that little extra from their safari experience. This is why we have established the Karen Blixen Hospitality School; giving the Maasai youth the possibility of accessing affordable education.

Learning for Life is a project funded by Danida and Karen Blixen Camp. Our goal is to alleviate



extreme poverty through education and job creation. The Cooking School opened in January 2012 offering a comprehensive and practical hands-on understanding of the fundamental cooking skills; balancing between the classical cuisine and modern recipes. Education is full time and students will be prepared for entry-level positions such as commis-chef, demi-chef and chef de partie.

We wish to encourage all our partners, travel agents and guests to support us by visiting our school, engage with the students in *Ready, Steady, Cook!*, donate bursaries or offer employment at camps or lodges in Kenya. We wish to encourage all our partners, travel agents and guests to support us by visiting our school, engage with the students in *Ready, Steady, Cook!*, donate bursaries or offer employment at camps or lodges in Kenya.

Are you a chef or know a young chef who wishes to work as a volunteer teaching our Maasai youth the classical cooking skills, please do not hesitate to contact us.

IT education

Karen Blixen Camp offers IT education for our staff, students and local Maasai community. Our target for 2015 is to make sure that at least 20 percent of the local Maasai children and youth, girls and boys alike have received IT education.

Literacy and Language courses

Foreign languages courses such as German are offered to our safari guides, enabling them to enhance their qualifications and in future offer professional wildlife guiding in German. Adult education is available for those of our staff wishing to become literate in languages as Maa, Swahili and English.

Karen Blixen Camp believes education is a strategic social investment that effectively contributes to the betterment of the local communities as well as the private sector. The direct benefit for us and other camps is access to an international skilled local workforce that gives an outstanding service; competitive with the best restaurants and hotels in the world.

About Danida

Karen Blixen Camp has been granted funding from Danida through its Innovative Partnership for Development Program. IPD has the objective to alleviate poverty through job creation, economic growth and social development.

Companies receiving IPD funding should align their business practices with the principles of the UN Global Compact and support the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Danida is the Danish International Development Agency to developing countries. Please visit www.ambnairobi.um.dk for more information about Danida in Kenya.

Holistic Forestry

Kenya's rich natural wildlife is threatened by widespread deforestation

Only 1.7 percent forest cover remains of the ones vast woodland areas. Commercial farming and wood logging diminished the larger part in the past. Today charcoaling is the biggest threat to the environmental stability of Kenya. It is estimated that 70 tons of charcoal are sold at the Nairobi market every day. This represents an annual destruction of 120 km² of Kenyan forest. Much is consumed by the urban Kenyan households, whom for economically reasons depend on firewood or charcoal for their basic domestic cooking needs. Large quantities are also being exported for the barbeques in the Middle East. Paradoxically, safari tourism has traditionally contributed to this environmental disaster by using unsustainably harvested firewood and charcoal as an inexpensive way for heating up water for guests' showers. Maybe, oblivious of the fact, that they are destroying the very foundation their own businesses are relying on?

Masai Mara is experiencing similar ecological challenges. Precious virgin forested areas have been destructed for commercial (tourism) and household use of charcoal and firewood during the last 20 years. The damage is beginning to

become significant. In some areas, especially around the small villages, the shallow volcanic topsoil is disappearing due to deforestation. Most Maasai women now have to walk at least 5 km in search of firewood. Ambitious reforestation initiatives are vital to restore the previous acacia forest cover and renewable energy solutions must be found.

Karen Blixen Forestry School

Karen Blixen Camp opened our Forestry School in August 2012. We offer technical and vocational forestry for the Maasai youth. Our mission is to conserve the beautiful Masai Mara by teaching the Maasai youth how grow sustainably woodlots providing them with a decent income as well as environmental security for the future.

The Forestry School will teach the students about the Masai Mara climatic conditions, indigenous trees and how to successfully establish, protect and nurture trees into maturity. Students will also learn how to raise awareness about the beautiful Masai Mara by performing speeches for guests.

Growing trees

The forestry team has established a nursery with a holding capacity of 7,000 seedlings. The tree nursery is irrigated by recycling the wastewater from the carwash area utilizing a simple waterway system.

We focus on tree seedlings endemic to the lower Mara River Basin as well as growing endangered tree species. Our future plans are to expand the

degraded forests along the riparian zone of the Mara River to reduce erosion, increase bird and protect wildlife habitat.

Plant trees for conservation

We invite our guests to plant trees for conservation. Walk along the banks of the Mara River, pick your favorite spot and dig a many holes as you can and plant your tree seedlings.





Forestry student nursing some of the 20,000 tree seedlings we are planting out every year

The Woodlands 2000 Trust

The Woodlands 2000 Trust is a Kenyan based organization that offers afforestation consultancy services to companies, farmers and landowners who are interested in commercial and environmental sustainable woodlot farming. The Woodlands 2000 Trust has supported us with advisory on the establishment of the Karen Blixen Forestry School and we are very grateful for their assistance.

The Woodland 2000 Trust was established in 2001 with a grant from the British Government, DFID, Department of International Development's Business Partnership Program, in close partnership with the Tamarind Group. The Trust has facilitated the plantation of 700,000 trees in Kenya.



Olisuk Concession a natural forested area protected by Karen Blixen Camp

Green Technologies

Karen Blixen Camp has been constructed to run in the most environmental friendly manner using the latest green technologies

Being located in one of the most densely populated natural wildlife areas in the world, offering visitor exclusive safari experiences represent many conflicting interests. No matter the precautions taken, human interference will always put pressure on the ecosystem and its wildlife. The important question is: how should one ensure an absolute minimized impact on the environment?

Karen Blixen Camp has 24 hour electricity, powered by an extensive solar panel system. During sunny days the solar panels follow the position of the sun and the solar energy goes into the battery bank ensuring electricity is also available at night or on rainy days. The benefit is obvious; there is no excessive use of diesel fueling noisy generators and our outlet of CO₂ is kept at a minimum.

The total investment in the solar system with 56 solar panels of 175 watt amounted to 135,000 USD. It is estimated that, with good care, the solar system will last us 8-10 years. The equivalent usage of power provided by a generator will cost 54,750 USD per annum or 547,500 USD for 10 years usage. The cost of buying the generator is exempted. In this context, investing in green technologies rather than a polluting generator makes financial sense.

Traditional safari tourism relies on firewood and charcoals as their main source of energy. But with only 1.7 percent of forests left in Kenya, usage of firewood and charcoals is no longer viable.

Previously Karen Blixen Camp used gas for heating our shower water, but has just recently installed solar water heaters for heating water for the outdoor guest showers. Recent development of



Our zero energy cold room: Four walls of sustainable grown charcoal, some chicken wire to hold it all together and an insulated roof - and you have a 40M3 cold room, where the temperature never exceeds 8 Celsius degrees



Eco Tourism is a business imperative. Not only a moral observation. Using green technologies is always an opportunity. Also in Africa. Kenya offers a wide range of very enthusiastic companies who are specialized in the development and sale of green technologies. There is really no excuse not to go green. And it makes great financial sense too

solar technology now allows sufficient energy from the sun to be captured, even on cloudy days. Adding to the benefit, the solar water heaters are centralized into one unit, connected to our main water system, providing hot water for all 22 guest tents on a 24 hour base. We believe the investment in solar water heaters will be returned within 18 months. The benefit is simple; when not using firewood and charcoal we do not contribute to the deforestation of Kenyan woodlands.

A school built of old milk and juice cartons

The late Peter Rosenberg was previously working with Tetra Pack, Kenya, as the Product Director. In 1997 he opened EcoTech, a company recycling used Tetra Packs by melting the old milk and juices packages into blockboards. The combination of plastic and foil makes these blockboards very durable and all weather proof building materials. 800 tons of waste is recycled this way. Tetra Pack has adopted Mr. Rosenberg' initiative for other countries to have their waste handled responsible.

Ramji Haribhai Devani, a large Kenyan company, was established in the late 1970's. The company collects all types of hard plastic and is melting the plastic waste into termite proof plastic poles. Rhino Charge is one of the biggest customers, using the plastic poles in their commitment to protect the Abedare Forest by fencing in the forest.

Karen Blixen Camp has bought 33 tons of EcoTech block boards and 20 tons of recyclable plastic poles to build our hospitality school and boarding unit. With the solar panel system our school will probably be one of the greenest of its kind.

Wastewater treatment is another important matter when running a camp out in the bush. Water for guest showers, and not to mention flushing toilets, creates wastewater. All wastewater produced are led into the sewage system and directed into the septic tank. From here the wastewater is mechanical treated as it runs through channels of charcoal and sand filters, ending in two huge soak pits. The surface water is collected and used for watering our bush garden. We test the grey water by sending samples to the Kenyan National Laboratory to ensure zero out let of polluting agents.

We have installed rainwater catchment on some of roofs at the camp. We estimate that the rainwater will supply us with 20 percent of our consumption for our guest showers and laundry.

Karen Blixen Camp is committed to recycle all our waste produced. However, we must admit it present a very challenging affair to accomplish this obligation. The western world benefit from governmental regulated waste management systems, whereas countries like Kenya still struggle to establish sufficient and effective recycling plants throughout the country. Much depend on the private sector as well as the people working in the takataka (waste) business. We separate our waste and transport the non-degradable waste back to Nairobi. We liaise with a private company who collects it and sell it to recycling companies.

On behalf of Mara North Conservancy we have raised funds to establish a proper waste management system for the communities and the tourism camps across Mara North; making sure all non-degradable waste is transported out of the fragile ecosystem and recycled.

Trade, not aid

The tourism industry is often criticized for not ensuring that enough of its revenue goes back to the host community

Karen Blixen Camp distributes its revenue in many different ways following the principle trade, not aid, making it possible for the local Maasai community to profit from our presence in their area.

Karen Blixen Camp protects 3,400 acres (1,373 Ha) of natural wildlife area as a private concession. Eleven Maasai families have decided to lease their land to us and in return we pay them a fixed bed night fee every time a guest stays at our camp. The bed night fees accumulate to 70,000 USD annually.

We support locally produced goods and use local suppliers. Free ranging and eco friendly Masai goats and lambs are sold by Masai herdsmen and served for our staff. Milk for the staff's morning tea also comes from the local Masai cattle. For logistic and contractual work we hire local trucks and jeeps. We spend 40,000 USD annually using local suppliers, saving us money, time and diesel not purchasing from Nairobi.

When guests previously visited the traditional Masai village the ticket fee often did not benefit the villagers. Together with Tribal Voice, UK, we have initiated a simple ticketing system to ensure direct payment and transparency. When guests visit the local Masai village they are obliged to obtain a ticket at the camp. We keep track of all sold tickets and at the end of each month the total amount is calculated and the money paid. In this way, the villagers are ensured to receive the money they are entitled. On behalf of our guests we forwarded 8,500 USD to the traditional Maasai village in 2010.

The beautiful Maasai artifacts for sale in the gift shop are made by a local women's group. Since we wish to promote trade, not aid, prices are negotiated and the gift shop makes a profit every time a guest buys the artifacts. Last year we bought Masai beadwork worth 3,800 USD and sold everything, making the business profitable for both parties.





Karen Blixen Camp has on behalf of Mara North Conservancy fundraised for the community project *Bright Green, Schools for Sustainable Development* addressing better education and wildlife awareness.

We have, by now, renovated the Aitong Primary School, built a boarding unit for 80 boys and employed 4 extra teachers. We arrange Wildlife Clubs for the Maasai children at 7 schools to promote greater wildlife awareness and have established an IT centre at Aitong Discovery Centre. We hope to make intercultural cyber friendships between the Maasai and other school children from around the world; to enable them to learn about each other's home environment using the concept different homes different lives.

Our livestock project aims to find better solutions on cattle and grazing management. Further, this project addresses human/wildlife conflicts in the hope of reducing the killing of big cat predators as lions, cheetahs and leopards. By now we have purchased 4 predator proof Bomas (enclosures) to keep the Maasai cattle safe. We are now in the process of establishing a Research Centre in close cooperation with the Mara Conservancies to monitor the wildlife population. Last, but not least we will work to create a waste management system across the Mara North Conservancy.

The Obel Family Fund has kindly donated 1 million USD to Mara North Conservancy. We are very grateful for their support.



IFU, Investment fund for developing countries

Karen Blixen Camp is a Kenyan registered company owned by Danish shareholders. IFU, the Investment Fund for developing countries has granted us a loan, as a part of their objective to promote economic and social growth in developing countries.

IFU has invested with Danish companies in Africa for nearly 40 years and is one of the most experienced institutions when it comes to investing in and setting up businesses on commercial terms on the continent. Companies must integrate an ambitious CSR policy to ensure high standards in respect of environment, labour principles, human rights and anti-corruption. Please visit www.ifu.dk for more information on Danish investments in Africa.



Working conditions

Being the single largest sector in the world economy, tourism plays a key role for many African countries. Tourism creates jobs and incomes for millions of people. As such tourism is capable of contributing positively to the UN Millennium Development Goals; alleviating extreme poverty and hunger through full and decent employment

Africa is highly dependent on the global economy, but the global economy is not dependent on Africa. Africa accounts for less than 1 percent of annual global capital inflows and for less than 2 percent of the world trade. The entire GDP of Africa (excluding South Africa and Nigeria) is about equal to that of a small country as Ireland.

According to the World Bank an estimated 44 percent of the African population will continue to live in extreme poverty with less than 1 USD per day. In absolute terms, the number of poor people has nearly doubled, from 200 million in 1981 to 380 million in 2005. Sadly, the financial crisis has pushed another 65 million people into vulnerable employment worldwide. They and their family find themselves living in extreme poverty without

a financial stable job, but reliant on casual, seasonal or own-account labour. To beat the poverty line, 11 millions of jobs must be created every year in Africa. Research shows that nine out of ten jobs are created in the private sector; making private sector led economic growth crucial for employment generation and poverty reduction.

In this light tourism presents a key role, being the single largest sector in the world economy with millions of people depended on the revenue generated. Tourism of today has a huge responsibility of contributing to a better and more just world.

But tourism must be conducted in a responsible manner, adhering to international accepted standards. Tourism is, unfortunately, a fiercely competitive global market, with incentives for putting short-term earnings before long-term social and environmental considerations. Protecting the environment, respecting workers' right, ensuring full and decent employment as well as promoting gender equality is crucial should the tourism industry wish to have a sustainable impact in the developing countries.

Karen Blixen Camp observes the Working Law of Kenya 2007 and respects the International Labor Organization's (ILO) declaration on rights to work. We support the UN Global Compact and

are obliged to submit a yearly communication on our progress. Moreover, we have adopted the UN Millennium Development Goals and are working towards setting our own targets.

Full and decent employment

We employ 120 staff members. 112 are working at the camp in the Mara and 8 are working at the head office in Nairobi. All staff is employed on a permanent contract until retirement. This ensures full and productive employment with job security, rights in case of termination as well as social and medical benefits. We refrain from using casual and seasonal labor. The salary consists of a base salary and travel or housing allowance. In addition we pay 5 percent of our total revenue every month as a bonus salary. Staff works on a monthly schedule with 21 working days, 7 days on leave and an additional 3 weeks holiday a year.

Freedom of association

The International Labour Organization has endorsed workers with the universal right to freely join an association and to bargain. We respect and encourage these rights. All staff is free to join any chosen association. Five staff members have been democratically elected to form the staff committee. The committee represents the staff and act on their behalf, raising questions or matters that worry them. Staff is also able to voice any concern through the monthly staff meetings where the entire staff and the management are represented.

Gender equality

Promoting gender equality is crucial. Poverty is not gender-neutral, but affects men and women in different ways. Women are more likely to be employed in vulnerable jobs – in farming, as unpaid family workers or as own-account workers – with

no or little financial security or social benefits.

Karen Blixen Camp is committed to promote gender equality. Women and men are given the same employment conditions and salary is paid in accordance to qualifications. Women are also given 3 month of maternity leave on full pay. Men are entitled to 14 days paternity leave.



Some of our staff has registered for Kentours Sacco, a cooperative that provides loans on an employee membership base. Every month we reduce a fixed amount from the individual's salary, which is paid into a joint fund. Whenever needed staff can apply for a loan with low interest rate for payment of school fees, hospital bill or even building a house

Of our 120 staff members, only 14 are women. In other words; we are still lacking far behind securing a 50 percent gender ratio amongst our staff. The reasons are barriers within the society as well as lack of education. Women are therefore strongly encouraged to apply.

Medical and social benefits

Medical insurance is important in countries without welfare state funded healthcare systems. Our staff has insurance through the National Health Insurance Fund. NHIF covers the individual and his/her close family in case of in-patient medical help (hospitalization), but not in case of

out-patient medical help. When needed, staff is able to seek medical help at the local Mararienda Health Clinic. Such out-patient activities are paid by the company.

Two doctors, Dr Ingrid Helweg Gichere and Dr Raphael Gichere from Kenyatta National Hospital, Nairobi, are attached for counseling and monitoring of health for all staff. The doctors also come to our camp and inform about HIV/Aids and family planning. Our staff is able to pose any questions on matters that worry them and their families.

Social security is provided through the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), which reimburses social benefits when a member retires from a regularly paid employment or to the dependants

of a deceased member. NSSF also offers funeral grants.

Living conditions

Working in the bush means living in the bush. Our staff accommodation comprises three stone houses; canteen, flush toilets and hot water showers. All staff rooms have a bed, beddings, linen, a mosquito net and a lockable cupboard for private belongings. The canteen serves breakfasts, lunches and dinners. TV with DSTV provides news from the outside world and a DVD shows movies. Twice a year, a football tournament between the camps of the area is arranged.

UN Global Compact

The UN Global Compact asks companies to align their business practices with the ten universal accepted principles:

Human Rights

1. Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights;
2. make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Labour

3. Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
4. the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
5. the effective abolition of child labour; and
6. the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Environment

7. Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
8. undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
9. encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Anti-Corruption

10. Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

The UN Millennium Development Goals by 2015

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development





After the creation of Mara North Conservancy in 2009 we have experienced a good increase of cheetahs and have often counted up to 15 in the conservancy

Mara North Conservancy

Karen Blixen Camp is located in the beautiful Mara North Conservancy. We protect 30,000 Ha of stunning natural wilderness in close partnership with the Maasai communities and our tourism partners

Mara North Conservancy is one of the most densely populated wildlife areas within the Masai Mara Ecosystem. The conservancy forms the vital north western corridor of the Greater Masai Mara Ecosystem. It is the favored habitat for a large variety of very unique African wild animals and serves as key dispersal area for the annual great wildebeest migration.

Mara North is home to the Leopard Gorge, a vital birthing and maternity ground for the big cat predators, made world famous by the BBC's Big Cat Diary. Five prides of lions amounting to 52 family members, seven cheetahs and at least six leopards has made the conservancy their homeland area. In the northern corridor the scenic Lemek Hills make an important wildlife refuge, particularly to a pack of highly threatened African wild dog.

Community and tourism conservation

Communities living in natural wildlife areas must be provided with the economic incentives to set aside their land for wildlife conservation. The Mara North member camps guarantees the Maasai landowners fixed monthly lease payments for the privilege to game drive within their beautiful homeland area. The lease payment is not subject to the number of conservancy tickets sold and therefore entirely unaffected by possible fluctuations of tourism. The concept is truly innovative and marks the first time that the Masai landowners in this area have received direct, predictable and transparent income from wildlife, allowing the community members to plan ahead for the future.

Ecosystem Management

Professional wildlife management is crucial. Brian Heath, Seiya Ltd. has been appointed as Mara North Conservancy' Conservation Manager with Marc Goss as the daily Manager and Benson Ketere as Head Warden of the ranger surveillance team. Seiya Ltd. is an international recognized conservation company with over 40 years of wildlife conservation experience.

Mara North employs 30 rangers to protect the conservancy and its wildlife. Their foremost objectives are anti-poaching enforcement, controlled grazing zones for livestock, restoration of natural habitats and response to human/wildlife conflicts.

Poaching has been and is a very current threat to wildlife. Elephants are still being shot in great numbers to remove and sell their tusk for ivory productions. Plain game as zebras or wildebeests is caught in snares to be sold at the growing worldwide bushmeat market. Marc Goss and his rangers will, when necessary, arrest and hand over suspects to the Kenyan Wildlife Services and the Kenyan Police. The day and night surveillance of the wilderness area most definitely prevent poachers to access and destroy wildlife within the Mara North Conservancy.

Human-wildlife conflicts occur in areas where man and wild animals live side by side. The Maasai have never hunted the plain games for meat, but

Exclusive and private wildlife area

Mara North Conservancy is of the exclusive use of the eleven member camps. Guests visiting our area are ensured of a truly private safari experiences with controlled vehicle density and sound ecotourism practices. The number of beds per camp has been restricted to ensure minimum impact. Starting in 2011, only Land Cruisers and Land Rovers are allowed and must be accompanied by a professional safari guide. Mara North camps and their guests must adhere to a professional code of conduct when game driving. Mara North was established as a not-for-profit public company on the 1st of January 2009.



*Three siblings of the famous Leopard Gorge pride.
The picture are from March 2009, so today they are
almost grown ups*



entirely depended on their livestock. However, traditions have prescribed for every young warrior to kill a lion in order to reach his manhood. This practice has unfortunately not completely ceased to exist. Young Maasai warriors will still kill the big cat predators in retaliation for attacked livestock. Marc Goss and his rangers are responding to any human-wildlife conflicts occurring within the area to discourage retaliation and find a joint solution for future co-existence. Mara North Conservancy has introduced a compensation scheme in the event of predator-livestock conflicts. The scheme works as an insurance fund with the landowners paying 50 percent and the member camps the other part. The cost to the individual landowner is on average 21 USD per year. Moreover, we are introducing predator proof enclosures (bomas) to keep livestock safe at nights as well as recommending better herding practices.

Controlled grazing and zoning for livestock is important to accommodate both wildlife and livestock. Mara North Conservancy keeps certain zones and hours restricted for grazing. Cattle grazing are permitted in areas, where they do not interfere with wildlife such as the predators.

The story behind

The Masai Mara is one of the most beautiful wildlife areas in the world; famous, for the great migration. However, only a relatively small area of this unique ecosystem is protected by the Kenyan Government. The Masai Mara National Reserve was established in 1961 and protects an area of 1,510 km². On the north, west and the east border of the National Reserve the Masai Mara Ecosystem was divided into several group ranches under communal land trust.

During the early 1980s the Maasai were given permission to re-inhabit their traditional homeland areas. The Kenyan Government subdivided these group ranches into 60 Ha plots, issued to individual Masai landowners, making it difficult to create a sustainable, well coordinated and effective wildlife protection with recognizable benefits for the wildlife and the communities.

Prior to the establishment of the Mara North Conservancy, the wildlife area was known as Koiyaki-Lemek and was under management of

the Koiyaki-Lemek Wildlife Trust. Ten different associations with 143 directors were responsible for collecting and distributing park fees as well as protecting the area; a very challenging task with different political interests. It is estimated that the Koiyaki-Lemek Wildlife Trust generated approximately 2.5 Mill USD from the years 2005 to 2007, but only managed to distribute 20 percent of this revenue to the Maasai landowners, giving each landowner a total of 8 USD per Ha per year. Furthermore cattle grazing, human settlement as well as development of new tourist establishment was uncontrolled.

During the fall of 2008 the founding member camps of Mara North decided to address the Maasai leaders to find a sustainable and long term solution for the conservation of the area. Numerous meetings were held beneath the shade of acacia trees, before the 750 Masai landowners decided to lease their land to the Mara North Conservancy.

Today, the twelve Mara North member camps are obliged to pay 112,000 USD per month in fixed lease payments, which on a yearly base accounts to 1.3 million USD (using the exchange rate 80 ksh to the dollar). 83 percent is distributed as lease payments, paid directly into the individual landowner' bank account and 17 percent is allocated for conservation management with employment of rangers, vehicle surveillance and maintenance of infrastructure. As a result, each Maasai landowner is secured 37.50 USD per Ha amounting to at least 2,220 USD per year. In comparison farmers will pay approximately 22 USD per Ha for leasing the wildlife area for cultivating.

Our contribution to Mara North

Karen Blixen Camp is founding member camp of Mara North Conservancy. We guarantee the payment of 27,500 USD per month. This makes us the single largest contributor with 330,000 USD per year in fixed lease payments. Martin Sonderby Nielsen, Managing Director of Karen Blixen Camp, is member of the Executive Board of Mara North Conservancy and acts as its Treasurer. Katrine Sonderby Nielsen, CSR Manager of Karen Blixen Camp, assist with fundraising and communication work.





Mara North Conservancy Rangers on foot patrol near Maternity Bush, an central area of the Conservancy. Every month hundreds of snares are found by rangers



Stay in Touch...

We are very happy to share our knowledge as well as learning more about green technologies and eco tourism practices. We welcome any question or comment you might have, so please don't hesitate to contact us.

Send us an email on info@karenblixencamp.com, give your comments on our guestbook on www.karenblixencamp.com/guestbook or simply post your favorite photos on our Facebook wall on www.facebook.com/karenblixencamp.

You are also welcome to go to our wildlife blog as well as our Facebook and read about the most exciting wildlife sightings from the savannah or follow our cooking school project.

Many thanks,
Karen Blixen Camp



www.karenblixencamp.com