



Linking Communities, Tourism & Conservation

Ecotourism Kenya promotes responsible tourism practices within the tourism industry. This entails encouraging the adoption of best practices in the use of tourism resources, working with local communities and managing wastes and emissions.

The Ecotourism Kenya Eco-Rating Scheme judges tourism facilities against various Sustainable Tourism Measures and awards either a Bronze, Silver or Gold rating.

Porini Amboseli Camp



Porini Amboseli Camp has been awarded a Gold Eco-Rating.

See below for Ecotourism Kenya's full report:

Environmental Criteria

Environmental Management

Porini Amboseli Camp has an elaborate corporate environmental policy committed to tourism management, nature conservation, improving local communities' wellbeing as well as impacts and management of the land, water, energy and sewage and solid wastes. The environmental management system (EMS) guides its operations and enhances planning for impact reduction, implementation and operation, monitoring and management review. Annual self-environmental audits are conducted as required by EMCA 1999.

Environmental Conservation

In tandem with promoting environmental conservation practices, Porini Amboseli camp conducts low environmental impact activities such as village visits, bird watching and nature walks for its visitors. A conservancy fee is admitted to guests visiting the camp; the money is used in conservation activities. The camp is the founder of Selenkay Conservancy, established to enhance environmental conservation, promote wildlife protection and provide economic gain to the landowners. The camp forms part of the conservancy's management and has employed 25 community rangers for patrols and operations of the conservancy. Through its rangers, the conservancy works closely with Kenya Wildlife Service in wildlife monitoring, poaching prevention and reporting on incidences such as medical treatment for wildlife. Through Selenkay Conservancy, and Eselenkei Group Ranch; the camp supports the 'Living with Lions' predator project and has provided it a research camp within the conservancy.

Waste Management

Waste Water Management

There are 9 soak pits in the camp into which all grey water from the kitchen, guest rooms and staff quarters drains. Black water from guest rooms and public areas is managed through two main septic tanks. There are two long drop toilets in use at staff quarters. Grease traps filter oils and grease from the kitchen effluents.

Solid Waste Management

Waste separation at the Camp is done at the source with the help of clearly labelled bins (plastics, organic, tins, etc). Plastic, metallic and glass waste is put in larger waste holding containers for disposal via Nairobi (Gamewatchers Central Stores) to Taka Kenya – a waste management and recycling firm. Organic waste composted in a tightly sealed pit within the premises. In attempt to reduce on plastic waste, the camp purchases drinking water in 18 litre dispensers. The water is later served to guests using properly sanitized and decorated wine bottles. The decorating is done out of beadwork from the local Masai women groups.

Pollution

Solar lanterns are used to light the pathways at night, to reduce on light emission and pollution.

Resource Management

Energy Management

The camp's main power source is solar and energy consumption is metered at source. Each guest tent is fixed with an individual panel and backup battery to supply light to the camp. There is no generator and an additional centralized backup solar energy system is in place. The power is used for lighting and running the camp refrigerators and freezers. In attempt to promote energy conservation, the camp has a centralized charging point; guests are encouraged to charge their cameras in the game drive vehicles as there are no sockets in the guest tents, staff members are sensitized through daily briefings and guests upon arrival and room information folders. Energy saving bulbs is also installed throughout the facility. Liquefied Petroleum gas (LPG) is used for guests cooking whereas sustainably sourced fuel-wood is used for staff cooking. Water heating and baking for the facility is conducted through the use of an energy efficient boiler that uses charcoal briquettes.

Water Management

The facility's main water source is a borehole. Water is pumped using solar power into a 20,000 litres reservoir then supplied throughout the Camp via gravity. Consumption is metered and monitored at the source. Safari showers with 20 litre buckets are installed in the guests' tents. There are also water-efficient dual flash toilets in the tents. A reverse osmosis treatment plant is used at the facility to treat water used in the kitchen and for staff to drink, hence; reducing on bottled water usage. A float switch in the reservoir helps to avoid spillage. Any leakages in the Camp are routinely reported to the repairs and maintenance team.

Purchasing and Supplies

Environmental Consideration

Purchases for the facility are done in bulk and fruits and vegetables are packed in reusable crates whereas meat is packaged in cool boxes.

Chemical Use

The Camp uses Blue Ring chemicals for general cleaning whereas biodegradable, Cinnabar Green, bathing soaps and solutions are used within the facility. Due to the scarcity of water, laundry is conducted at Nairobi.

Liquefied Petroleum gas is purchased in 50 kg and 12kg cylinders whereas diesel is stored in 200 litres containers in a properly secured area.

Health and Safety

Porini Amboseli camp has an elaborate health and safety system in place. A health and safety policy has been established with commitment to compliance on relevant health and safety regulations, minimizing injuries and illness, and communication to staff and visitors. A core team of seven staff has been trained on first aid and adequate first aid kits are available within the camp. In addition, the camp has a doctor on call for guest medical care. Staff is attended at Fatima Health Centre and costs covered by the facility. Medical emergencies are referred to Machakos and Makindu hospitals. The camp has an airstrip for and it is linked to AAR and AMREF for emergency evacuation. Porini Amboseli has a Health Clearance Certificate from the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation.

Fire-fighting equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire blanket in the kitchen, are serviced and strategically placed within the facility. Sand buckets are also fixed to compliment the fire extinguishers. Staff is provided with personal protective equipment including boots, uniform, gloves and apron. A fire assembly point is clearly and conspicuously marked within the camp.

Social-cultural Criteria

Training and Education

The camp has an in-house staff training program. Employees working at the camp are trained in-house by the company. In addition, the facility has employed 6 professionally trained guides who are certified under the Kenya Professional Safari Guides Association: (KPSGA) two (2) silver and (4) Bronze.

Benefits to Staff and Local Community

In promotion of the social economic growth, Porini Amboseli camp purchases locally where possible. On weekly basis; the camp purchases a goat for staff from the local community. A group of women from the area also supply honey to the camp. Approximately 94% of the staff are employed from the local community. They are trained internally by the camp. The camp highly values the local culture and guests are briefed upon arrival to the camp and during community or village visits. Village visits include cultural talks by the local elders, and entertainment such as cultural

dances. No cash payments are made during these visits; instead the local people are paid on monthly basis depending on the number of guests visiting the village.

Porini Amboseli has an elaborate Corporate Social responsibility Plan with a designated person spearheading it. The facility engages in various initiatives to improve the wellbeing of the local community. These include education, health, community projects and conservation initiatives. In education, the camp support various schools within and surrounding the Selenkay Conservancy through donations and employing teachers. The schools are Lenkitem Secondary, Iloilero Primary and Ituleta Primary School. Through partnership GIVEWATTS- a clean energy provision company, Porini Amboseli installed a full solar system that provides light in three classrooms at Iloilero School. The camp ensures maintenance of a water pan and provides water for domestic use to two villages in close proximity to the camp. In health, the camp regularly donates anti-venom serum to the nearby Fatima Health Centre at Lenkitem. The serum is in high demand due to frequent snakebites within the region. In November 2013, Porini Camp facilitated the Kenya Wildlife Trust and Lion Guardians on a four-day mobile eye clinic in which 48 eye operations were carried out on community members as well as providing transportation for the patients from the Loirero, Ituleta and Lenkitem areas.

Cultural Preservation

The camp has designated a curio shop within the facility where guests can purchase curios and artifacts. The Curio shop is fully operated and managed by the local community. As a result of the rich cultural values, the camp is only managed by male. Women on the other hand benefit from curios and beads making.

Visitors within the facility are offered local village visits. The system is organized in such a way no cash payments is exchanged. Instead the local people are paid on monthly basis depending on the number of guests visiting the village. Each guest pays Kshs. 1000 whereas children are charged at Kshs. 500. The village visits include cultural talks by the local elders, and entertainment such as cultural dances

Visitor Communication and Education

Guests are briefed upon arrival by the manager on the existing activities of the camp and environmental conservation such as on water. A room leaflet is placed on the guest bed with elaborate information on the water, energy and waste management and community integration. In addition, the camp guest tents are equipped with elaborate room information folders and nature magazines. Room information folders contain available activities within the camp and operations within Selenkay Conservancy. Further it illustrates on the uniqueness of conservancy with detailed information on community projects, conservation activities and guests involvements. Visitors are also given an opportunity to engage and interact with local conservation initiatives such as Elephant Research Centre, Living with the Lions etc. The guests are offered visits to the research centres' in the area. Pamphlets on such are also available in the guest tents for visitors' information.

Staff Communication and Education Other Recognition

Staff briefing are held on daily basis for planning and operations activities. Due to the rich cultural values in the area, the staff committee is established on an age perspective where senior elders spearhead the staff welfare issues. Being in a remote area, all the staff are registered on mobile banking for easier transfer of their salaries. Additionally they are registered with Kentua Sacco.