



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 Rhino Camp



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

See below for Ecotourism Kenya's full report:

Environmental Criteria

Environmental management

The camp is guided by the corporate environmental policy which shows commitment to responsible and sustainable tourism, nature conservation, improving local communities' wellbeing, and raising awareness among tourists. The policy highlights actions on management of the land, water, energy, sewage and solid waste. It conducts its annual self-environmental audit as required by *EMCA 1999 (Environmental Management and Co-ordination Act)*. The facility has an environmental management system with management plans for water, waste management, and emergency response, health & safety measures.

Environmental conservation

The camp is built on low environmental footprint and blends well (Earth tones - green, beige and brown) with the local surroundings. The guest tents are made of canvas raised on sand and gravel. They are semi-permanent hence can easily be removed to allow vegetation regeneration. The camp is unfenced which allows wildlife to move freely. Murram – gravel – is applied on footpaths to demarcate paths. Natural vegetation within is relatively undisturbed. The facility management plays a significant role in the management and operations of OI Pejeta Conservancy. Further, the camp contributes prerequisite conservancy fees and lease fees. Visitors at the camp are encouraged to participate in low impact activities such as guided nature walks, and bird watching.

Waste management

Waste water management

Grey water from the guest kitchen is managed through a grease trap compartment before draining into a soak pit. Grey water from the guest tents, staff quarters and public areas is managed through soak - pits. Water effluent tests are conducted in compliance with *Environmental Management Co-ordination (Water Quality) regulations of 2006*. Black effluent from the guest tents, staff quarters and public areas is managed through septic tanks. EM1 Biological enzyme – (Bio-clean) is added to enhance sludge digestion.

Solid waste management

The camp's waste separation (paper, plastics, metals and glass) is conducted at source and the bins are clearly labeled. The waste is further separated at the waste holding area. Organic waste is composted in a properly lockable pit to keep off wildlife. Plastic, glass, metallic and electronic waste is disposed to recycling firms through Gamewatchers central purchasing office in Nairobi. Few used wine bottles are decorated with beads and used to serve water at the guest tents. The water is bought in 18 liters dispensers and poured into glass bottles. The initiative is aimed at solid waste reduction. Further the camp provides re-usable aluminum bottles for use by the guests while at the camp. This initiative is aimed at awareness creation to clients and plastic waste reduction.

Waste / Used Oil

Waste fuel oil is collected in a 200 litre reservoir. The storage area is properly contained from rain or any accidental spillage to the environment.

Pollution

Paraffin lanterns are used on the pathways to minimize on light pollution at night.

Resource management

Energy management

The camp is entirely powered by solar energy fixed with power inverter battery system. Each guest tent is fitted with a solar panel and battery system for lighting. Solar power is used for lighting, and running refrigerants. The facility has one (1) efficient Kuni booster used for water heating. The boiler is run on Kuni briquettes. Low wattage energy saving bulbs is fixed throughout the premises. Main switches are easily accessible in all the guest tents to conserve power. Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) is used for guests cooking whereas sustainably obtained fuel wood (Fuel wood –Eucalyptus - is obtained from Kakuzi) is used to cook at the staff quarters. The facility has a Charcoal cooler used for storing fruits and vegetables. Rechargeable torch batteries are used at the facility. Guests are briefed on energy conservation upon arrival whereas employees are sensitized during departmental meetings.

Water management

Main water source for the camp is Ol Pejeta Conservancy. The water is solar pumped on a high elevation for supply through gravity to the entire premises. It is stored in three (3) reservoirs with a total capacity of 15,000 litres. The water is metered at the main outlet and recording conducted daily to monitor usage. The facility is fitted with safari showers '20 liter bucket shower system' to reduce and monitor water use. Visitors are sensitized on water conservation during arrival briefings. Sensitization information is also availed in the tents folders encouraging guests to use water sparingly. Guest tents are fitted with dual flush toilet cisterns for water use efficiency.

Purchasing and supplies

Environmental consideration

Vegetables and fruits are packed in reusable crates while meat and dairy products are stored in cool boxes.

Chemical use

The camp uses biodegradable bathroom amenities from New Ubuntu Organic Soaps in the guest tents. Fuel (diesel) is stored in two (2) tanks each with 250 liters. The reservoirs are contained in a non –porous, banded structure to prevent accidental spillage. Gas is bought in 50kg and 12kg cylinders.

Health and safety

Environmental Health and Safety

The camp has a clear health & safety policy showing commitment to; continued improvement, compliance with legal requirements, and ensuring a safe and healthy work environment for staff and guests. It has an emergency plan to enhance safety preparedness on security and health and safety. The camp has an adequate and conversant team of trained fire marshals. The camp has a well-equipped first aid kit at main office and team of 12 staff trained on first aid skills. Further it is linked to flying doctors for emergency response. Emergencies for staff are referred to Kamoc and Sweetwaters Clinic which is the nearest health facility.

Occupational Health and Safety

Firefighting equipment such as fire extinguishers and fire blanket in the kitchen are serviced and strategically located. A fire alarm is available and fire assembly point is properly marked and displayed within the premises. Precautionary and safety signage are well fixed in the fuel and gas storage sections. The camp conducts an annual fire safety audit and risk assessment to comply with *Factories and other places of work (Fire Risk Reduction) Rules 2007*. It also conducts a safety and Health Audit to comply with *the Occupational Safety and Health Act, 2007*. In addition it is registered as a workplace with DOSH – Directorate of Occupational Health and Safety.

Social cultural criteria

Training and education

The camp has an in-house training program. Employees are trained on health and safety, hygiene and housekeeping. The facility chefs are taken for refresher training at Kenya Utalii College or Lakuku – a cooking training school in Karen.

Benefits to staff and local community

The camp provides employment opportunities to the locals- approximately 40% of the permanent employees are hired from the local area. Casual labour is obtained locally. The facility purchases locally where possible. Fruits and vegetables are obtained in the local Nanyuki Town-supplied by Kamindo Stores. It is a member of “Pack for a Purpose” initiative where visitors are encouraged to donate items that may be of need in their areas of travel. The facility contributes to the Ol Pejeta Conservancy, including monthly payments for leases, and conservancy fees. The money is collected in a kitty by the Conservancy and used for community development initiatives. Community wellbeing initiatives are done through the Ol Pejeta Conservancy. The conservancy carries out various projects in community based tourism, community health care on (hygiene, health and water supply), infrastructure (re-surfacing of roads) and community water developments (Waichekeheri and Eleri piped water, Marura and Tigithi Women’s Group donation of water-catchment tanks).

Culture preservation

The guests are sensitized on the local culture by the camps guides who form a percentage of the locals.

Visitor communication and education

The camp has a resource area equipped with reading information materials such as; Africa Geographic magazines, Books on Kenya, Birds of Kenya, Mammals and birds list. It also provides information on local wildlife conservation projects and initiatives by Ol Pejeta Conservancy. Some of the initiatives include the Rhino Conservation and Chimpanzee Sanctuary. Visitors are briefed upon arrival on the camp’s operations, Conservancy model & code of conduct and environmental values. Sensitization is also emphasized during meal times both by the management and staff. The guest tents are equipped with comprehensive room information folders to brief the visitors on environmental conservation activities and initiatives. The camp has various publications and magazines notice for visitors’ information package.

Staff communication and education

The camp has a staff committee which represents staff issues to the management. The staff is briefed on environmental values during departmental/daily meetings. Employees at the camp are registered under KUDHEIHA workers Union.