

Africa could see \$168bn tourism boost in next decade

A new report by the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) says that Africa's travel and tourism sector could grow by \$168 billion and create over 18 million new jobs in the next 10 years. The report, titled "Unlocking Opportunities for Travel & Tourism Growth in Africa," says that this growth is possible if three key policies are implemented. The report recommends that African countries improve three key policies to unlock annualised growth of 6.5%, reaching a contribution of more than \$350bn.



Source: redcharlie via [Unsplash](#)

The report includes a policy package focused on improving Africa's growth based on **air infrastructure, visa facilitation and tourism marketing**.

The tourism and travel sector is a powerhouse sector in Africa, with a contribution of more than \$186bn to the region's economy in 2019, welcoming 84 million international travellers. The sector is also essential for employment, providing livelihoods to 25 million people, equating to 5.6% of all the jobs in the region.

Speaking at the global tourism body's Global Summit in Kigali today, Julia Simpson, WTTC President and CEO, said: "Africa's travel and tourism sector has witnessed an extraordinary transformation. In just two decades, it has more than doubled in value, significantly contributing to the continent's economy.

"Growth potential for travel and tourism in Africa is massive. It has already more than doubled since 2000, and with the right policies could unlock an additional \$168bn in the next decade. Africa needs simplified visa processes, better air connectivity within the continent, and marketing campaigns to highlight the wealth of destinations in this breathtaking continent."

Highlighting Africa's travel and tourism potential

According to Zubin Karkaria, founder and CEO of VFS Global said: "We are excited to partner with WTTC to uncover the extensive opportunities that travel and tourism offers in Africa."

"Having established our presence in Africa since 2005 we are today the trusted partner of 38 governments who we serve across 55 cities in 35 countries in Africa. VFS Global recognises the tremendous potential of Africa and remains deeply committed to supporting the continuing development of travel and tourism to and from the continent.

"This report not only highlights the diverse prospects for economic growth, sustainable tourism, and cross-cultural collaboration but also provides valuable insights for governments to formulate policies and offers businesses a well-defined roadmap for expansion in this thriving market."

This report delves into the historical journey of the travel and tourism sector in Africa. It's a story of facing challenges head-on, from the Global Financial Crisis in 2008 to the setbacks caused by disease outbreaks, and political instability.

Despite all of these challenges, the travel and tourism sector is on a path to recovery.

According to the global body, 2023 is projected to be a year of near-full recovery, only 1.9% shy of 2019 levels, as well as the creation of an additional 1.8 million jobs.

Opportunities for Africa

The report highlights also the opportunities for the sector, which include strategic investments improved connectivity, streamlined visa processes, reduced carbon footprint through low-carbon energy adoption, and enhanced water efficiency.

These could unlock the potential for sustainable growth, job creation, and economic development in the African travel and tourism sector.

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