Building Support for Rubondo Island National Park, Tanzania: What is the Role of Wildlife Tourism?

Sadie Stevens, Bridget Amulike, Tom Serfass
Tanzania National Parks Authority

- 16 National Parks
- Parastatal
- Resource protection and tourism
- International tourism as revenue source
Diversity of Wildlife...
Low tourism

Insufficient funding for management activities
2 major goals of Park management:

- Increase international tourism
- Increase local support
Flagship Species

Popular, charismatic species that serve as symbols and rallying points to stimulate conservation awareness and action.

Local support and global fundraising
Surveys of Children – Wildlife Preferences and Flagship Species
Considerations for Choosing A Local Flagship:

• Knowledge:
  ✓ Readily associated with locally important habitats
  ✓ Distinctive
  ✓ Known to the target audience

• Associations:
  ✓ No conflicting/confusing messages

• Visibility:
  ✓ Able to be viewed and directly related to conservation goals

• Attitudes:
  ✓ Positive associations
  ✓ Endearing behavioral and physical traits
  ✓ Not feared
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Ability to identify
Attractive, useful, well-liked, wanted nearby
• Total of 13 species
• Variation in characteristics, interactions
• “Viewability”
• Those thought to have potential as international flagships
Giraffe
Hippopotamus
Crocodile
Silver cyprinid
Fish eagle
Large-spotted genet
Sitatunga
Monitor lizard
Spotted-necked otter
Vervet monkey
Elephant
Little egret
Egyptian goose
7 primary schools, each in different communities
Familiarity

Unacceptable, invalid, or blank  Acceptable

Number of responses
Attractiveness

The diagram shows the responses (%) for various species, with categories for 'Not sure, no opinion, no or invalid answer', 'Unattractive', and 'Attractive'. The species include Fish Eagle, Genet, Monitor Lizard, Spotted-necked Otter, Sitatunga, Silver Cynipid, Vervet Monkey, Hippopotamus, Crocodile, Little Egret, Egyptian Goose, Elephant, and Giraffe. The responses range from 412 to 52, with the highest being 764. The legend indicates the percentage distribution for each category.
Usefulness

Responses (%)

Not sure, no opinion, no or invalid answer  Useless  Useful

Fish Eagle  Genet  Monitor Lizard  Spotted-necked Otter  Sitatunga  Silver Cyprinid  Vervet Monkey  Hippopotamus  Crocodile  Little Egret  Egyptian Goose  Elephant  Giraffe
• Other reasonably well-liked and desired species: sitatunga and fish eagle
• Introduced species – elephant and giraffe
• Little liked or desired species: crocodiles and hippopotamuses.
International Flagships?
Probably don’t even need to ask...

Fish-
- Only effective use of fish is not for wildlife viewing...
- Conflict?

Egyptian goose-
- Large African range
- Introduced in some areas of US and Europe
However....

- Fish eagle – bad omen, witchcraft, livestock
- Sitatunga – identification
The wildlife viewing interests of visitors to Tanzania
Previous Research

Usually specific to the site or experience

Suggests that tourists like:
• Large mammals
• Iconic species ("Big 5")
• Species that are: brightly colored, “cute,” “charismatic,” elegant, or closely related to humans
• Rarity, presence of young, diversity, behavior, oddities, attention-attracting sounds
Short survey of non-East African travelers at Kilimanjaro International Airport
• Interest in seeing 20 wildlife species on safari
• Awareness of 20
• Rank interest in 7 of the 20
• Levels of knowledge for 7 of the 20
• Species diverse in size, characteristics, fame
• Those on Rubondo thought to have potential
1. Buffalo
2. Bushbuck
3. Chimpanzee
4. Crocodile
5. Elephant
6. Fish eagle
7. Genet
8. Giraffe
9. Goliath heron
10. Hippo
1. Buffalo
2. Bushbuck
3. Chimpanzee
4. Crocodile
5. Elephant
6. Fish eagle
7. Genet
8. Giraffe
9. Goliath heron
10. Hippo
11. Jackal
12. Leopard
13. Lion
14. Mongoose
15. Monitor Lizard
16. Rhinoceros
17. Serval
18. Sitatunga
19. Spotted-necked otter
20. Vervet monkey
• **249** participants in December 2009
• **146** from outside of East Africa
Self-reported level of knowledge regarding wildlife species

Chimpanzee | Crocodile | Elephant | Fish eagle | Hippopotamus | Sitatunga | Spotted-necked otter

- Very
- Somewhat
- Not at all
- Invalid or no response
Percent of participants that had not “heard of” the species prior to survey

- Sitatunga
- Genet
- Spotted-necked otter
- Serval
- Goliath heron
- Fish eagle
- Monitor Lizard
- Bushbuck
- Vervet monkey
- Mongoose
- Jackal
- Rhinoceros
- Lion
- Leopard
- Hippopotamus
- Giraffe
- Elephant
- Crocodile
- Chimpanzee
- Buffalo

Percent of participants
Having “Seen” Species

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Percent of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chimpanzee</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crocodile</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elephant</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hippopotamus</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish eagle</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotted-necked otter</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statungia</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Level of Interest In Viewing Various Species

Percent of participants

Very interested  Interested  Neutral  Uninterested  Very uninterested  Not sure

Goliath heron  Spotted-necked otter  Fish eagle  Genet  Mongoose  Monitor Lizard  Bushbuck  Vervet monkey  Serval  Crocodile  Buffalo  Jackal  Chimpanzee  Rhinoceros  Hippopotamus  Elephant  Giraffe  Lion  Leopard
Discussion

• Sample size and extrapolation
• Specific market segments
• Characteristics of species and interest (e.g., large, rare)
• “Fame” and interest
• Role of outreach
International Flagships for Rubondo

- Species introduced, more easily seen elsewhere
- Locally disliked/dangerous species
- Market segments, niche tourism
- Other species?
- Suites of species
Flagships for Rubondo
(Local and International)

- Common ground (local preferences and niche tourism)
- Species not investigated
- Community involvement/voting, tour operators
- The role of education and marketing
Another focus? (adventure tourism, ecosystem services)

Suites of species

Diversity

Add on
Thank you

Kilimanjaro International Airport

Village Governments of Butwa, Ikuza, Izumacheli, Katemwa, Maisome, Muganza, and Nkome

Wilson H. Elkins Professorship

The staff of Rubondo Island National Park
Thank You!