



The African Nature Based Tourism Platform - Connecting funders to beneficiaries in 11 countries in eastern and southern Africa

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The newly launched [African Nature-Based Tourism Platform](https://www.naturebasedtourism.africa) is 8 months into its first year of the three-year project phase. It is an innovative collaboration to channel vital COVID-19 relief and recovery funding to communities and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) involved in nature-based tourism in Africa.

Africa witnessed an estimated 90% drop in international tourism arrivals between April and December of 2020 (UNWTO, 2020). This translated into an estimated loss of \$87 billion in revenue, 12.4 million jobs, and between 70-90% of conservation funding (WTTC, 2020).

“The COVID-19 crisis has crippled economies and industries all over the world, and nature-based tourism has been one of the leading economic casualties. For many African countries, this means a significant loss of funding for their conservation operations, local community livelihoods, and tourism enterprises.” Dr. Nikhil Advani, Project Manager.

In response, with funding from the [Global Environment Facility](https://www.gefworld.org/) (GEF), the African Nature-Based Tourism Platform seeks to connect funders to communities and small and medium enterprises involved in nature-based tourism in 11 African countries.

Launched in April 2021, the platform has now succeeded in conducting over 500 surveys among communities and SMEs across the project focal countries, and data suggests a reduction of 58% of the staff complement across the enterprises surveyed to date. ** The surveys are collecting baseline data of how communities and SMEs are involved in nature-based tourism, their financial and staffing situation prior to the COVID-19 crisis, how the pandemic has affected this, and relief and recovery opportunities they are interested in exploring.

In addition, the platform enhances knowledge sharing between relevant stakeholders, seeks to connect potential beneficiaries to funders, facilitates the development of funding proposals from communities and SMEs, and serves as a hub for everyone involved in the sector to share and access information.

With data collection wrapping up, the platform is now turning its primary focus to securing funding resources. “The goal is to mobilize at least \$15 million to support communities and SMEs to recover

from the pandemic and build greater resilience into the nature-based tourism business model into the future. The types of financial support we are looking to make available to beneficiaries include grants, loans, equity, and quasi-equity, among others. The sources for this financial support include governments, individual donors, institutional donors, banks, and investors, among others.” Dr. Nikhil Advani, Project Manager.

The African NBT Platform welcomes the opportunity to further explore funding resources that will allow nature-based tourism enterprises to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic in a sustainable way, and build back better to increase resilience to future shocks and stressors.

** Stats as of 8 December 2021

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For more information, please email us at info@naturebasedtourism.africa, or visit the [Contact Us](#) page.

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