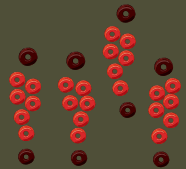




# MARA NORTH CONSERVANCY



PROMOTING PARTNERSHIPS IN CONSERVATION

MNC believes that responsible tourism has the capacity to protect natural wildlife habitats, support community development and alleviate poverty. Our aim is to create a best-practice, world-class conservancy with long term commitment to the environment, wildlife and local communities.



# MARA NORTH CONSERVANCY

For countless years Africa's big migratory herds of wildlife have roamed across the open savannas with the seasons. Our national parks attract millions of visitors each year yet are far too small to conserve Kenya's wildlife spectacle or support the proliferation of lodges and safari vehicles. To provide the space wildlife and tourism needs to thrive, the Kenya Wildlife Service launched the "Parks Beyond Parks" campaign in 1997. If the communities that had lived with wildlife for generations were to set aside their land for conservation, surely wildlife, tourists and most of all the landowners themselves all stood to benefit? The idea seemed fanciful and audacious at the time. Yet today wildlife is finding safe haven outside parks as communities set up conservancies across Kenya to attract new tourism enterprises.

The conservancies are fast becoming the most innovative and exciting feature of Kenya's wildlife and tourism industry. No place makes the point better than the Mara North Conservancy.

A rolling savanna of more than 28,000 hectares, the Mara North Conservancy is home to a spectacular array of plants, reptiles, birds and mammals, including elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion, leopard and massed concentrations of wildebeest, zebra, gazelle and other migratory wildlife. Leopard Gorge in the heart of the conservancy is famous as the setting of countless BBC Big Cat Diaries and National Geographic documentaries.

Bordering the Maasai Mara National Reserve, the conservancy is vital for sustaining the famous Serengeti wildebeest migrations and the highly threatened African wild dog and black rhino.

Mara North Conservancy has struck a novel and innovative partnership between the Maasai land owners and a consortium of tour companies to sustain wildlife, improve livelihoods and develop a high quality tourism destination. The partnership has the support of local and national governments as well as conservation organizations in protecting the abundance of wildlife and developing the lives of community members in the conservancy and beyond.

Mara North Conservancy is showing how wildlife, communities and tourism all stand to benefit from a new brand of conservation.



**David Western**

Chairman, African Conservation Centre. Former Director of the Kenya Wildlife Services



## ONGOING ACTIVITIES

- MNC has signed 750 lease agreements for a period of 5-15 years. These lease agreements mark the very first time that the landowners have received direct, fair and transparent income from wildlife conservation.
- The 12 member camps pay US\$ 87,000 per month in fixed lease payments amounting to over US\$ 1.044 million per year.
- More specifically, individual Maasai landowners secure US\$ 38.5 per hectare - a fee that matches the average price for agricultural land leases. These payments are unencumbered by any management or directors fees and entirely unaffected by fluctuations in tourism numbers.
- In the future MNC plans to lease and protect more land and work with neighbouring conservancies, in order to protect the Masai Mara ecosystem for the benefit of all.



[www.maranorthconservancy.com](http://www.maranorthconservancy.com)

# ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

**MNC is one of the largest community and private sector owned conservancies in the world, helping to alleviate poverty and ensuring environmental sustainability.**

Communities living in natural wildlife areas must be provided with the economic incentives to set aside their land for wildlife conservation.

In the 1980s & 1990s, growing land fragmentation began to lead to the environmental degradation of the Masai Mara ecosystem and exacerbated community impoverishment. Without a partnership between Maasai landowners and the private tourism sector it was difficult to ensure sustainable, well coordinated and effective wildlife protection along with recognizable benefits for all stakeholders.

In 2008 the founding members of MNC decided to approach the local Maasai leaders to jointly find a sustainable long-term solution for the conservation of the area. After many consultations, held under the shade of acacia trees, 750 Maasai landowners decided to lease their land to the Mara North Conservancy, which was officially established on the 1st of January 2009. This new partnership established a truly innovative approach, whereby the MNC member camps guaranteed to pay fixed monthly lease payments to the Maasai landowners, regardless of tourism ebbs and flows, for the privilege of carrying out their game drives within this exclusive wildlife area.





## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

- At present MNC is establishing livestock and grazing management programs, with plans to improve market access for local herders.
- MNC is currently developing educational facilities and programs that include environmental awareness, ecosystem health, as well as the training of teachers and will be providing tables, textbooks, and free IT courses for the youth. The program is called Bright Green and is founded by the Obel Family Foundation.
- The Bright Green project also includes the development of a community-based waste management system.
- In the future, MNC will continue to increase fundraising activities, as well as corporate investments, in order to develop additional community projects that support the empowerment of the local community – particularly the youth and women. Should you wish to contribute to any of these projects, please contact us on [info@maranorth.com](mailto:info@maranorth.com). MNC and the communities would highly appreciate any support!



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# COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

**MNC realizes that the economic development and prosperity of landowners and local communities is inextricably linked to the conservancy's ultimate success.**

MNC's member camps have set up numerous projects, which highly benefit the local communities. They have established educational as well as health facilities with a focus on maternal and child disease, HIV/Aids, TB, malaria and waterborne diseases. Several member camps are also supporting women's empowerment enterprises, including the development of new income-generating activities, such as handicraft projects.

MNC partners employ over 600 Kenyans, of which most come from the local community. With an average of 8 family members directly depending on the income of each employee, the livelihood of roughly 4800 people is supported by the MNC. Moreover, numerous business opportunities are provided to local entrepreneurs.

MNC is currently in the process of setting up a Trust Fund and the necessary infrastructure to initiate new community programs. These are developed after wide consultations with community members and implemented in equal partnership with the Maasai Land Owner Committee, which represents the entire community.

Community Projects are also designed to be environmentally friendly and sustainable, and to ensure that the communities living in and around the conservancy benefit directly and immediately from MNC's presence.

MNC has raised funds from a number of organizations and foundations, including Anne Kent Taylor, The African Conservation Centre and The Obel Family Foundation. These funds are being used to support the MNC and several community projects. We wish to express our greatest appreciations for the generous support which has been granted to us!





## ONGOING ACTIVITIES

- The MNC head warden and the rangers are exploring multiple means of addressing potential human-wildlife conflicts, including raising community awareness to discourage retaliations when predation does occur, mediating when it does - and seeking lasting, shared solutions for peaceful co-existence.
- MNC's management team also manages livestock grazing to accommodate the diverse needs of wildlife, local communities and tourism partners. To do so MNC maintains specific zones, and periods, for livestock grazing.
- MNC has developed a compensation scheme in the event of predator-livestock conflicts and has established predator proof enclosures to safe keep livestock at night.
- MNC supports natural habitat restoration through professional ecosystem management approaches and techniques, e.g. reforestation.
- MNC is also currently exploring new 'carbon credit' opportunities with the aim of improving ecosystem health and providing additional benefits to all partners – particularly communities.



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# ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

**MNC's foremost objectives are to improve ecosystem management and ensure its long-term health.**

This includes rehabilitating long-degraded areas, restoring natural habitat areas, protecting wildlife from poaching and snaring, managing grazing areas for livestock, responding to human-wildlife conflicts and develop a quality network of roads and tracks.

MNC has engaged a professional land management company, which is managing several conservancies in the area, and employs 30 rangers to supervise the pristine landscape of the MNC and ensure the protection of its wildlife. All rangers undergo thorough paramilitary training in order to address the issues stated above, and provide security for MNC's wildlife, communities and tourism partners.

In order to minimize their impact on the environment and wildlife, all member camps also strive to utilize environmentally friendly technologies such as solar panels, eco-burners, 'green' waste and wastewater management systems, organic composting for fertilizers or bio-gas, as well as the use of eco-detergents and sustainably grown firewood.



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# VISITING MARA NORTH CONSERVANCY

**MNC is used exclusively by the 12 member camps. Guests visiting this magnificent ecosystem are thus ensured of a unique and truly privileged safari experience with controlled low vehicle densities, sound ecotourism practices and an assurance that local communities are receiving guaranteed revenues.**

Guests are able to enjoy game drives during the day as well as at night throughout MNC. Game drives are conducted in custom built 4x4s, while mini buses are strictly prohibited, thereby guaranteeing low-vehicle densities – and a more intimate and exclusive wildlife experience.

Guided bush walks can be arranged for those who wish to experience the full scale of the Mara savannah up-close and personal. Bush breakfasts, lunches and dinners in beautiful and carefully selected areas within the conservancy can also be arranged.

Guests visiting MNC are requested to pay a conservancy fee. (included in the camp packages), which contributes to lease payments to the Maasai landowners, the conservancy's professional wildlife and land management and various community projects.

To minimize disturbances to wildlife and to reduce impact on the environment whilst traversing the conservancy, the MNC tourism members, guides, and rangers have developed a 'Game Drive Etiquette', which all partners and visitors are requested to follow.



# GAME DRIVE ETIQUETTE

**Mara North Conservancy is proud to maintain high game viewing standards. Our rules are in place both to conserve the area and to ensure that guests have the best safari experience possible.**

- All vehicles should keep to graded roads and permanent tracks to limit plant damage and soil erosion. The speed limit is 40 kph.
- To see wild animals behave naturally you should stay at least 25 meters away.
- To reduce disturbances to wildlife no more than 5 vehicles are allowed at an animal sighting. In the event of more than 5 vehicles being present, the viewing time per vehicle is reduced to 10 minutes and newly arriving vehicles must wait their turn at a minimum distance of 100m.
- Please respect wildlife! Do not harass animals by forcing them into movement, blocking their path, or following them too closely. Always keep an extra safe distance from dens, burrows and nests as well as animals with young.
- Please lower your voices and remain calm whilst observing wildlife; loud voices, clapping, or cheering disturbs wildlife and is prohibited. Please also switch off the vehicle engines, radios and mobile phones at all wildlife sightings.
- When close to wildlife, for safety reasons, as well as to limit wildlife disturbances, please always remain inside your vehicle.
- You are welcome to experience the pristine MNC landscape more closely on a picnic lunch or a Sundowner at scenic spots in the conservancy. However, only leave your vehicle in an open area, stay with your guide and remain within a 30 m radius of your vehicle.
- Please ensure all waste is brought back to the camp. Do not feed animals or leave leftover food behind.
- Night game drives are organized in designated areas and red filters should be used on spotlights. Vehicles should return to camp no later than 10 p.m.
- Mara North Conservancy rangers protect the wildlife and the environment. Please respect their work and cooperate with them when requested.
- Lastly, please enjoy the beautiful Mara North Conservancy, soak up the atmosphere and enjoy the amazing wildlife!



## MARA NORTH CONSERVANCY MEMBER CAMPS



### Elephant Pepper Camp

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### Exploreams Mararianta

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### Kicheche Mara Camp

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### Mara Plains Camp

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### Nomadic Encounters

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+254 (0) 723 580330



### Offbeat Mara Camp

[www.offbeatsafaris.com](http://www.offbeatsafaris.com)  
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### Royal Mara Safari Lodge

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