

# PEARLS OF UGANDA POST

UCOTA



Beyond wildlife... a community experience!

July - December 2011

## Letter from the Executive Director

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the inaugural issue of the bi-annual *Pearls of Uganda Post*. Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA) produced this newsletter with support from USAID-Sustainable Tourism in the Albertine Rift (STAR), in partnership with Uganda Tourism Board (UTB), Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and Association of Uganda Tour Operators (AUTO).

In this publication, sustainable tourism articles are solicited from all stakeholders for publishing in order to embrace economic development through tourism in our nation. The *Post* also allows for space for advertisements therefore integrating all sectors. The *Pearls of Uganda Post* encompasses all Pearls and their private sector supporters; it also highlights resource opportunities for all levels and provides general information on the tourism industry.

The *Post* is distributed free in hard copies to over 2,000 institutions, which include private sector entities both directly and

in-directly linked to the tourism industry, conservation agencies, government agencies, local and international tour operators, media houses, training institutions, embassies, supermarkets, community tourism enterprises and more. It can also be found on the UCOTA website ([www.ucota.or.ug](http://www.ucota.or.ug)), the Pearls of Uganda website ([www.pearlsofuganda.org](http://www.pearlsofuganda.org)) and the USAID-STAR website ([www.star-uganda.org](http://www.star-uganda.org)).

Sustainable tourism is tourism attempting to make a low negative impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate employment for local people. The aim of sustainable tourism is to ensure that development brings a positive experience for local people, tourism companies and the tourists themselves.

Sustainable tourism is an important goal for both the tourism sector and the nation as a whole. In the past few years, sustainable tourism has become increasingly prevalent worldwide, riding on the back of the increasing need to

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travel, rapid technology advances and the ever-growing demand to give back to tourism attractions custodians and the communities. Vehicles for sustainable tourism are many including, the traditional wildlife and nature tourism, voluntourism, agritourism, mediotourism, ecotourism, geotourism, community experiences, to mention but a few. There is almost no limit but man's creativity.

All these attractions require customers and genuine operators for sustainable tourism to be achieved. How does one explain a prominent tour company that does not support community benefit? How else does one explain a professional tour guide who under pays the community and again demands for a tip? All tourism stakeholders, those mentioned above, guides, hotels, training institutions seem to be struggling to lay strategies for the proper implementation of sustainable tourism. The answer is searching for and sharing best practices.

**Helen Lubowa**

*Executive Director, Uganda Community Tourism Association*



PEARLS OF UGANDA

# Uganda Named the Top Tourist Destination for 2012

Lonely Planet named Uganda the top country destination in the world for 2012 in late October, in anticipation of the upcoming holiday travel season.

Countries were ranked in order, “voted for by a panel of in-house travel experts, based on topicality, excitement, value and that special X-factor.” Countries following Uganda on the list are: Myanmar (Burma), Ukraine, Jordan, Denmark, Bhutan, Cuba, New Caledonia, Taiwan and Switzerland. The announcement was graced with a picture of mountain gorillas in the wild and stated that, “Reviewers say that Uganda’s charm lies in its impressive variety of wildlife species and stunning scenery.”

In addition to boasting Africa’s largest variety of bird species, Uganda is also renowned for its primate species including the endangered mountain gorilla, which has become one of Uganda’s finest tourist attractions. Over

half of the world’s remaining population of mountain gorillas lives here – at Bwindi Impenetrable and Mgahinga Gorilla National Parks, visitors can experience this remarkable wildlife encounter.

Of course, as Lonely Planet notes, Uganda is also the source of the River Nile, where “savannah meets the vast lakes of East Africa, and where snow-capped mountains bear down on sprawling jungles... It’s great for outdoors, fantastic for wildlife [and] the people are very friendly. It makes for a good introduction to the continent. Obviously everybody going there, as with anywhere, should consider safety, but it is somewhere that has a lot to offer.”

Asked why the publication chose Uganda as its top destination for next year, Lonely Planet Editor Tom Hall said, “It’s quite simple with Uganda – we think that it’s somewhere that has so much that you can go to see in Africa in a small package.”

**UGANDA NAMED #1  
BEST IN TRAVEL 2012**  
BY:

**lonely planet**

*See rare tree-climbing lions found in only one other place in Africa*

**Explore  
Uganda's National Parks**  
[www.UgandaWildlife.org](http://www.UgandaWildlife.org)  
[www.visituganda.com](http://www.visituganda.com)  
[www.birding-uganda.com](http://www.birding-uganda.com)

**UWA**

*Home to the highest number of primate species on earth*



## VSPT- Kyambura Women's Group Coffee Cooperative Project

The Volcanoes Safaris Partnership Trust is a non-profit public benefit organization that undertakes community and conservation activities in Uganda and Rwanda. It seeks to support projects that improve rural livelihoods, wildlife conservation and enhance rural development through responsible eco-tourism. In 2010, the Trust established the Kyambura Eco-tourism Partnership Project. Managed by Nicole Simmons, a former researcher of the Kyambura Gorge chimpanzee community and now the project coordinator for the Trust, the project has developed a series of initiatives based on available resources in the area, sustainability and the immediate needs of the Kyambura community.

The Kyambura Women's Coffee Cooperative has proved to be one of the most successful initiatives under the Partnership Project. A community based project designed to enrich the livelihoods of neighboring families, the initiative has revived traditional coffee processing long since abandoned in the area, and offers women vocational training and an alternative source of income. Coffee is one of the predominant cash crops in Kyambura; however, with the collapse of the local coffee processing plant in 1991 (the original building is now the Volcanoes Kyambura Gorge Lodge) local growers had to move their unprocessed coffee to other areas for a fraction of their previous profit. The cooperative allows women to farm, harvest and process coffee

near their homes and gives them the tools to produce a higher quality product for the market.

Fifteen local women and their families are actively involved in the cooperative. They tend to over 1000 Arabica and Robusta coffee plants dispersed throughout 100 acres of rejuvenated Trust land, and process the coffee by hand at the communal processing plant at the Trust's Community and Conservation Center. The processing station provides a unique cultural experience in the area for visiting tourists that is both participatory and educational. Tourists are encouraged to visit the site, meet the women and help wash, peel, roast and grind coffee.

Women in the cooperative commit to growing the coffee organically, without the use of pesticides or chemical fertilizers. The coffee is purchased by the Trust at a price which is on average 40% more than market value, packaged in recycled water bottles and sold to Volcanoes Safaris Lodges, thus facilitating the upkeep and maintenance of the processing station. Labeled as Volcanoes Safaris Partnership Trust Omwani Coffee, it is a rich, well-balanced blend of Uganda's indigenous Robusta beans, blended with high quality Arabica beans. All proceeds from the coffee sales are put back into the coffee cooperative and processing station, as well as other initiatives developed by the Kyambura Eco-Tourism Partnership Project.

**Alexandra Edwards**

*Operations Manager, Volcanoes Safaris Uganda*





# Let us Embrace our Pearl

I am very excited about developments for this country this year, and very proud to be Ugandan. I will always be grateful to God for allowing me to be born in this beautiful country. Uganda's future in terms of tourism in the coming years is very bright, if the public and private sector can come together and harness the potential in practical ways.

In my opinion, the most unfortunate thing about Uganda is the education system that requires students to learn everything including European history, American geography, mathematics and general African history, while only skimming the surface about Uganda. From my perspective, learning about all aspects of Uganda in depth should be the most important part of our education.



Recently, Lonely Planet, the world's authoritative 'travel bible,' concluded its list of the top ten destinations for 2012 with Uganda ranking number 1. In the middle of this year, *National Geographic Adventure* released a list of the top 15 best hikes places on earth with only one in Africa: the Rwenzori Mountains.

As we prepare to celebrate 50 years of independence next year, we should all note that the year 2011 brought good things for Uganda, even when it is very clear that most Ugandans are simply not aware of the importance of the natural beauty that surrounds us.

Tourism is now the fastest growing industry on earth; therefore, Uganda must take a number of steps to make a noticeable impression, like every country is trying to do. First of all, Uganda must carry out a destination perception benchmarking study. Secondly, Uganda must develop the distribution network in the source markets (Europe or America). The third step is the creation of online marketing to make Uganda's tourism easily discoverable. We should then focus on partnership marketing to identify corporate partners and raise the profile of Uganda as a leader and rising force in Africa. The fifth and final step is engaging in public and media relations where Uganda is positioned as a fascinating destination for wildlife, adventure and community tourism.

If Uganda follows the above recommendations, of course done through experienced and specialized firms say in the US like our neighbors Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda are doing, we can overtake our neighbors within 7 years and Uganda can top Africa by 2062.

## Amos Wekesa

Chairman, Uganda Tourism Association &  
Managing Director, Great Lakes Safaris

# UCOTA CTE Awards 2011

On September 16, 2011, UCOTA awarded community tourism enterprise members who had shown improvement in both business and sustainability practices, which included service standards, response to feedback, marketing, relationships with private sector and other stakeholders, timely submission of forms and efficient record keeping, community involvement and information sharing, waste management systems, sustainable natural resource use, community sensitization on conservation, community development projects supported, providing a market for community produced goods as well as labour, and involvement of women and youths.

The awards were given at the Annual Sustainable Tourism Media Awards event organized to recognize excellence among journalists who cover sustainable tourism and conservation issues. The winner for the category Best CTE Overall was Kibale Association for Rural Development (KAFRED). Ruboni Community Camp won in the other category for Most Improved CTE, while Boomu Women's Group was recognized as runner up in this category.

These awards will be given annually; we encourage UCOTA members to work towards improving areas of service delivery, supporting community and conservation development, developing partnerships with other conservation and development initiatives and any other best practices to gain distinction in the future!





## Great Lakes Safaris & Uganda Lodges Welcomes you to the Pearl of Africa!!

Have you ever looked for that very special holiday?  
Have you ever wondered which country has to offer everything were you ever dreamed of?  
Have you ever been to Africa? Or better...  
Have you ever been to Uganda?

Discover Uganda and let us help you to make your stay a memorable one!

We are here to show you the beauty of this country and together with you we create a holiday for you that is unforgettable.

From Mountain Gorillas to Chimpanzees, from Lions to Elephants, from equator to Waterfall, from Mountains to the River Nile and from Rafting to Horseback Riding.

Whatever you wish for, our staff is here to assist you with any queries.



susie House, Ggaba Road-Kampala tel. +256 414 267153 +256 772 426368  
Fax: +256 414 267153  
email: info@ugandalodges.com info@safari-uganda.com  
www.safari-uganda.com www.ugandalodges.com

# UCOTA Successfully Organizes 2011 Annual General Meeting

UCOTA organized its Annual General Meeting at Shine Hotel, in Kansanga, Kampala this past summer. Members present took part in planning for UCOTA, networking and exchanging knowledge with key tourism players, and elected a new board of directors.

The new board was elected under the chairmanship of Mr. Patrick Tumwijukye from Bunyonyi Women Development Group to replace the past board under the chairmanship of Mr. Tinka John of Kibale Association for Rural and Environmental Development (KAFRED). Incumbent board members of UCOTA include:

## **Chairperson:**

Mr. Patrick Tumwijukye, *Lake Bunyonyi Women Development Group*

## **Vice Chairperson:**

Ms. Kajumba Stella, *Bigodi Women's Group*

## **General Secretary**

Ms. Helen Lubowa, *Executive Director, UCOTA*

## **Treasurer**

Mr. Azoli Bahati, *Abanya Rwenzori mountaineering association (AMA)*

## **Board members**

Ms. Naome Gidudu, *Bugemunya Women's Group*

Mr. Robert Gimunya, *Mount Wagagai Hotel*

Mr. Aprunale Bitamazire, *Rwenzori Turaco View Campsite*

## **Ex – officials**

Mr. Tinka John, *KAFRED*

Mr. Sheba Hanyurwa, *Mgahinga Community Development Organisation (MCDO)*



## Funding Opportunities

1. 2012 United States Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP)- The American Embassy is now accepting proposals for the 2012 Ambassador's Fund. Successful proposals identify one-time or recurring projects that assist the people of Uganda in preserving their cultural heritage. Grants typically range from US\$10,000-\$50,000. All completed proposals must be received by the U.S. Embassy in Kampala, Uganda no later than **December 10, 2011** for consideration under the 2012 Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation competition.

2. Private Sector Foundation Uganda is calling for entries from community groups operating at a village, sub-county, district and national level who might qualify for the Private Sector Development Awards 2011. Deadline for submission is December 16, 2011, 5:00 pm.

3. Skål's Sustainable Development in Tourism Awards celebrates tourism entities that contribute to the conservation of nature, cultural heritage, community involvement and benefits,

education, and are innovative and viable. Deadline for entries is 31 May 2012. For more information visit [www.skål.org](http://www.skål.org)

4. National Geographic and the Genographic Legacy Fund is awarding grants for community-driven projects directly preserving or revitalizing indigenous or traditional culture. Deadline for submission is June 15, 2012 at midnight EST.

5. African Diaspora World Tourism Awards (ADT) - Significant contributions in the fields of culture and heritage tourism. Deadline in fall of 2012. For more information, follow this link- [www.africandiasporatourism.com](http://www.africandiasporatourism.com).

For more awards and grants, please visit [www.terravivagrants.org/Home/monthly-update](http://www.terravivagrants.org/Home/monthly-update)

**Contact UCOTA for more information about these grants and awards at [info@pearlsofuganda.org](mailto:info@pearlsofuganda.org) and [ucota@africaonline.co.ug](mailto:ucota@africaonline.co.ug)**

## Tourism Needs to Adopt Social Media Tools

In the move to boost Uganda's tourism sector, the industry must embrace social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Flickr to diversify its global tourism campaigns.

Speaking at the UCOTA annual general meeting, Mr. Amos Wekesa stressed that Uganda has so far exploited less than 20% of its tourism potential compared to the rest of East Africa. Despite its being the "Pearl of Africa" and gifted by nature, Uganda's market for tourism is at stake. To outdo its competitors, Uganda needs to adopt a "strong digital (advertising) strategy," he said.

As more of the world continues to

embrace the Internet in new and diverse ways, this is an obvious medium we need to fully utilize in order to convey the depth and breadth of Uganda's tourism experiences. Moving and still images, as well as words explaining what a trip to Uganda might entail, and giving others the opportunity to tell their stories can effectively reach a large population. The tourism industry needs to harness the word-of-mouth inherent in social networking sites in its online media advertising.

Everyone looks at Facebook and Twitter to be trends, interestingly. Let's use this opportunity to tell the world about Uganda as a way of supporting tourism.

Instead of that awful post, why not a beautiful picture of mother chimpanzee and her babies? It would have marketed the over 1,420 chimp population in Uganda already. For instance, if only ten gorillas had Facebook accounts – one cannot imagine the number of friends Mother Gorilla in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park would attract and the number of tourists who would yearn to visit her! Look at the success of the "Friend a Gorilla" campaign – it has thousands of followers. Marketing options on social networking sites are endless when you give it a try.

**Hilda N.Kabenge**  
*Volunteer, UCOTA*





# Public Private Tourism Partnerships Bring Turkish Travel Channel to Uganda

On November 10th, 2011, a 3-person film crew arrived to Uganda from Turkey to shoot a 4-episode series on tourism in Uganda. The award winning KanalTurk travel show, which was recognized as the top documentary television show in Turkey this year, produced this series, which will have an estimated 15 million viewers each showing. The film crew traveled around the Albertine Rift and to Jinja, to capture the highlights of Uganda's tourism attractions in efforts to market the country to Turkey.

The same television show created a similar production for Tanzania, which resulted in a huge influx of tourism bookings from Turkey, a Turkish investment group sending a 45-person delegation to Tanzania to increase partnerships as well as video footage that the country utilized this year at WTM.

Bringing the Turkish film crew to Uganda was a result of an initial partnership

between USAID-Sustainable Tourism in the Albertine Rift (STAR) and Turkish Airlines, who proposed the idea. USAID-STAR then reached out to its Pearls of Uganda Supporters (private tourism businesses) to solicit tour operator services, food and lodging. The greatest private sector supporter for this trip was Matoke Tours, who provided a safari vehicle, their best driver/guide and has been very helpful in arranging the whole trip including mobilizing many lodging providers to show the TV crew "the real Uganda."

With the generous offers from Pearls of Uganda Supporters, ([www.pearlsofuganda.org](http://www.pearlsofuganda.org)) the television crew was able to put together a 15-day trip that included visits to Jinja, Murchison Falls, Queen Elizabeth, Kibale, Bwindi and Lake Mburo. Complimentary lodging for the film crew was provided by Serena Hotels, Wild Waters, Geolodges, Kyaninga Lodge, Bush Camps, Nkuringo Safari Lodge, Mihingo Lodge, Lagoon Resort, Speke Resort and more.

Uganda Wildlife Authority offered free park entry, chimp and gorilla tracking. UWA will benefit by receiving all the footage free from the trip as well as lots of marketing for Uganda's

national parks.

The tremendous contributions for the trip from UWA and private partners are estimated to be valued well beyond \$40,000 all of it in-kind, including international air travel and the 15-day tour. Valuations are still pending for the hours and hours of prime-time Turkish television to promote Uganda, but the resulting positive impacts for Uganda tourism and other industries will certainly be priceless.

The television crew filmed typical tourism experiences such as wildlife safaris, but also visited many community and cultural tourism experiences including agro-tourism and Katwe Salt Lake to promote Pearls of Uganda. UWA staff in Queen Elizabeth National Park were interviewed for coverage of conservation issues and initiatives. This coverage will help to promote the powers of sustainable tourism in conserving biodiversity. This type of collaboration is a wonderful sign that the Uganda tourism sector coming together to promote Uganda around the world, even in less traditional markets like Turkey.

**Ashley Silver**  
*Tourism Specialist,*  
*USAID-STAR*



Matoke Tours wants to ensure that generations of people can continue to enjoy the natural beauty of the 'Pearl of Africa', we feel that it is our responsibility to do as much as we can to preserve this fascinating country. "Sustainable Tourism" isn't just a term to us; we see it as the main ingredient for running a successful operation in Uganda: The place we have made our home!

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

# Operationalising the 2008 Uganda Tourism Act

The Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage (MTWH), in partnership with the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, are in the final stages of completing some long-awaited tourism regulations. The process is aimed at operationalising the Uganda Tourism Act, 2008. The regulations are expected to be in place by March 2012.

These regulations/guidelines provide for measures to regulate Uganda's tourism industry and to protect the interests of its customers. Some provisions include:

1. Tour licensing regulations: describes who is a tour operator and travel agent, who is licensed, why they are licensed, how to apply for a license, duration of the license, bond requirements, types of bonds and penalties of trading without a license.
2. Tour package regulations: describes advertising regulations, essential terms of contract, forms of contract, transfers of bookings, price revisions, health requirements of tour packages etc.
3. Tour guide guidelines: describes register of persons qualified as tourist guides, licensing of tourist guides for special designated locations, validity of license,

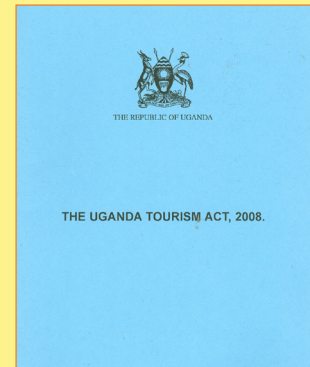
identity document for a registered or licensed tourist guide, responsibilities and duties of a tourist guide, facilities to tourist guides, maximum number of persons to be guided, duration of organized excursion, cancellation of engagement, and fines and penalties for tourist guides.

4. Hotel standards guidelines: describes registration and licensing of tourist accommodations, categories of accommodation which include hotel, lodge, guest house, farm house or motel, hostel, cottage or villa, bed and breakfast and self serviced apartment, caravan and camping park and safari or tented camp, display of certificate of registration, suspension or cancellation of license

5. Classifications regulations: describes the classification process of accommodation facilities and restaurants and standards and guidelines for the classification of accommodation facilities and restaurants, star rating features, minimum standards, security and firefighting equipment.

6. Hotel accommodation regulations: describes items necessary to be registered as a hotel

7. Tourist accommodation and meal establishments: describes



categorization of tourist accommodation, accommodation agreement, substitute accommodation, and extension of accommodation period.

The Uganda Tourism Board (UTB) is mandated by the Act to enforce these new regulations. Given its size, UTB will play an overseeing role while relevant government institutions will be trained to enforce these regulations country-wide. Tourism stakeholders are working with the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage and Uganda Tourism Board to ensure that these tourism regulations are favourable. UCOTA is planning to sensitize its members about these regulations as they are operationalized in March 2012.

## \$1 For the Future Campaign!

Mweya Safari Lodge of Marasa Africa launched this travel philanthropy program to support schools and conservation education on October 10, 2011 with the support of USAID's Sustainable Tourism in the Albertine Rift Program (USAID-STAR), and the Uganda Community Tourism Association's (UCOTA) Pearls of Uganda Program.

November marks the first month of Mweya's efforts in which it raised over 1.6 million shillings. Mweya's new travel philanthropy program raises money with the help of their guests to help communities surrounding Queen Elizabeth National Park in Uganda. The program, "\$1 For the Future," will help with the renovation and construction of one school in its pilot year and will conclude with conservation murals and a visit from the Wildlife Clubs of Uganda to

teach students about the importance of conservation and sustainable tourism.

The "\$1 For the Future" campaign demonstrates how Marasa Africa is fostering sustainable tourism and improving tourism practices in East Africa to support conservation and communities. These efforts highlight how tourism can directly support conservation and community development, improving livelihoods and decreasing human wildlife conflict.

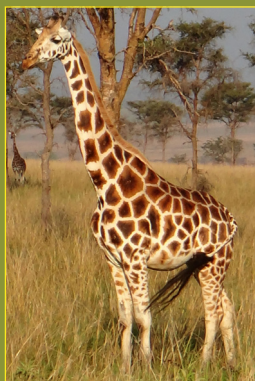
**Ashley Silver**  
Tourism Specialist,  
USAID-STAR





## Animal Fact: Giraffe

- The ever-photogenic giraffe is the world's tallest mammal, with males standing up to 6m tall and weighing as much as 400 kg.
- Giraffes reside predominantly in savannahs and where there are ample acacia trees – one of their favourite foods.
- Giraffes are ruminants and can eat over 60 kg of food a day.
- Giraffes generally live in groups called herds or towers with as many as 40 individuals.
- Adult bulls spend much time alone, and fight with each other over females by "necking," a ritual that also establishes dominance.
- Although giraffes appear as if they are moving in slow motion, they can reach speeds of up to 60 km per hour when in full gallop.
- Despite their size, giraffes do have predators. Some lion prides specialize in hunting giraffes, and crocodiles might snap at a giraffe bending down to get water.
- A giraffes' gestation period is for about 450 days, after which a calf weighing about 100 kg is dropped in traditional calving grounds.
- Uganda has Rothschild's giraffes, also known as Baringo or Ugandan giraffes, which can be found at Murchison Falls and Kidepo Valley National Parks.
- Rothschild's giraffes are distinguishable from other giraffes by the lack of markings below their knees, and the five horns on their heads – two on the tops of their heads, and smaller ones on the forehead and behind each ear.
- Rothschild's giraffes are particularly endangered with only several hundred members left in protected areas due to habitat loss and poaching for meat, hides and tails.



## New Bird Record for Uganda

A new bird species, the grey pratincole has been recorded this November 10th 2011 at 15:05 hours on the Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth National Park. It is a West-Central African bird which means that it is a vagrant here. A single bird was recorded in East Africa in October 1991 in Rusizi National Park, Burundi. At the moment, there are about 3 to 5 of these birds on the Kazinga Channel.



**Johnnie Kamugisha**

*General Secretary, UBGC / USAGA*

## Community Fact: Bakongo Culture

The Bakongo are a Bantu-speaking people who live on the mountain slopes of the magnificent Rwenzori (Mountains of the Moon), where they have been for many generations. They are highly essential in the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains because they believe that their ancestral gods live up on the mountains. According to an official description of Bakongo from the Bakongo Life History Research Society, the Bakongo culture is adapted to the steep slopes and climate of the Rwenzoris, which they share with the Baamba. Mostly found in neighboring Bundibugyo district, the Baamba peoples are the closest in lineage and culture to the Bakongo.



The Bakongo cultivate cassava for food and coffee as a cash crop. They also graze goats as their equivalent of the cattle in Ankole. Cassava is sometimes mixed with millet to be called *kalo* in other neighboring tribes, but the Bakongo take it without millet due to millet scarcity. Historically, the Bakongo and Baamba maintain forms of government based on councils of elders.

*Chobe Safari Lodge*  
*The Gem on the Nile*

*The newest addition to our Family of Lodges...*











Travel is said to broaden horizons. However, finding unspoilt locations which are still exclusive is becoming harder and harder.

In Eastern Africa, Uganda is one of the few remaining places where a truly individual experience is guaranteed. The Pearl of Africa boasts numerous unique attractions, in addition to all the game viewing and ornithology that have become synonymous with the term safari. Let your personal safari adventure begin in Murchison Falls National Park, at Chobe Safari Lodge - the latest addition to our family of premium luxury lodges. After this, listen to the thunderous music of Murchison Falls at Paraa Safari Lodge. Continue your adventure by traveling to Queen Elizabeth National Park, where on a peninsula at Mweya Safari Lodge, you can watch lakes Edward and George receding into the horizon...

For more information contact:  
Marasa Central Reservations Plot 96-98 5th Street Industrial Area  
P.O. Box 22827, Kampala Uganda Tel: +256 (0) 31 2260260/1 or +256 (0) 41 4255992  
Fax: +256 (0) 31 2260262 E-mail: mweyaparaa@africaonline.co.ug

## UCOTA membership requirements

1. Be community tourism based
2. Benefit the surrounding community and be environmentally friendly.
3. Have high tourism market potential
4. Be registered at least at the sub-county level.

## UCOTA Pearls Membership

### The Pearls

#### Rwenzori Mountains National Park

Ruboni Community Camp  
Abanyarwenzori Mountaineering Assoc.  
Rwenzori Turaco View Community Camp  
Kibale Association for Rural and Environmental Development (KAFRED)  
Bigodi Women's Group  
Rwenzori Conservation Trust  
Bulemba-Ihandiro Cultural Trail

#### Queen Elizabeth National Park

Katwe Tourism Information Centre  
House of Love-Africa  
Foundation for Youth Development  
Kikorongo Women Group  
Queen's Pavillion

#### Bwindi Impenetrable National Park

Nyundo Community Eco Trails  
Nkuringo Community Conservation Development Foundation (NCCDF)  
Buhoma Community Rest Camp  
Nkuringo Cultural Centre

#### Mgahinga Gorilla National Park

Batwa Community Development Organisation  
Amajyambere Iwacu Community Camp

#### Murchison Falls National Park

Green Dwelling Ecotourism Project (and proposed Snake Park)  
Boomu Women's Group

### Potential Pearls

Naggalabi Cultural Tourism Assoc. (NACUTA)  
Baagalayaze Heritage Site  
Crow's Nest  
Rob's Rolling Rock  
Katereke Prisons Ditch  
Nzughuto Environmental Conservation Assoc. (NECA)  
UPENDO Community  
Nyamwamba Community Conservation Assoc. Kilembe

Basongora Women United Assoc.  
Nyamgasani  
Kazinga Community Tourism Group  
-Ishasha sector  
Ruhija Community Development Assoc.  
Ruhija Gorilla Friends Resort Camp  
Echuya Eco Tourism Assoc.  
Kogere Village Guest Farm  
Kazingo Community Eco Tourism Assoc.  
Mubako Community  
Iwacu Tuzamuke Foundation for Rural Development  
Batwa Trail  
Alimugonza Communal Forest Land Assoc. (ACOFILA)  
Chotembu Ex-Poachers Group  
Kaniyo Pabidi EcoTourism Guides Assoc. (KAPEGA)  
Lagaji Community Lodge (Pakwach)  
Mungu Bitimu (Pakwach)  
Albert Nile Community Tourism Assoc. (ACOTA)  
Karugutu Community Conservation Assoc.  
Rwenzori Mountain Farmers Assoc.  
Rwenzori Mountains Development Assoc. (REMODA)  
Kyenanza Bakyara Tweheyo Community Group  
Rurembwe Crafts Women's group  
Gisozi Giterembire Farmers' Assoc.  
Bulindi Eco Cafe  
Kyamaleera Wildlife Education Center

### Contact:

Uganda Community Tourism Association:  
Palm Courts Building, Plot 7A Lugogo Bypass.  
P.O Box 27159 Kampala-Uganda.  
**Telephone:** 256(0)414-501866.  
256(0)772-657700.  
**Email:** ucota@africaonline.co.ug.  
**Website:** www.ucota.or.ug.  
www.pearlsfuganda.org

## UCOTA Upcoming Activities

Date	Activity
January 2012	Quarterly Board Meeting
2012	Annual General Meeting
2012	CTE Awards
May 2012	Responsible Tourism Criteria Unveiled to members and supporters

\*\* Dates to be communicated

## Tourism Sector Calendar

### November 28, 2011 - January 28, 2012

Training of Hotel Assessors for Uganda by Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage

### December 4, 2011

Chimpanzee Children's Christmas Carnivore at Sheraton Kampala Hotel Gardens

### December 8, 2011

Batwa Trail Fundraising Dinner at Sheraton Kampala Hotel

### December 9, 2011

Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries Award Giving Ceremony to Ngamba Island and staff

### December 16-18, 2011

Rotary Inaugural Visit to Murchison Falls National Park by Project Safari, Rotary District 9200

### December 29, 2011

Diaspora Event: Homecoming by Ronnie Mayanja of Uganda North American Association (UNAA) at the Kampala Serena Hotel

### December 27-30, 2011

Launch of Banyakigezi Tourism Cluster at Whitehorse Inn, Kabale by Competitiveness and Investment Climate Strategy (CICS) under the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development

### January 28, 2012

International Tourist Guides Day by USAGA

### February 2012

Chimp Challenge at On Course Training Ground at Sissa

### February 2012

Pearls of Uganda Event

### April 2012

Cultural Guides Training by USAGA

### April 2012

Inter Parliamentary Union International Conference at Kampala Serena Hotel

### May 2012

Advanced Birding Course by USAGA

### UCOTA



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Photos contributed by: Orhan Subay, UCOTA, USAID-STAR, Volcanoe Safaris, Great Lakes Safaris, Johnnie Kamugisha, RayzAfrika and Hayley White.

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