



THE INFINITE HORIZON

Safari Consultants Tanzania

SAFARI NEWS

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Lake Natron with the Maasai God's Mountain - Oldonyo Lengai in the background



Kenya's capital Nairobi. Some of the residents have other things on their mind



Early evening at a Lightweight Camp

The international media has come out with reports that are very worrying for any potential traveller to East Africa; however things are not as bad as they are being painted, we are keeping a close eye on the situation. It is still safe to travel into Nairobi, and Tanzania is totally unaffected. The political structure and relationship between the various tribes is quite different in Tanzania than in Kenya.

I remember appearing on CNN in 2003, being interviewed about something I knew nothing about, because the journalist couldn't find anyone else to interview (I hope that's not my 15 minutes of fame used up!). A similar thing is happening with the reporting from Nairobi this month.

The problems are localised and not likely to spread - certainly not to Tanzania or the National Parks, so there is no need for them to affect tourism. Small-scale demonstrations are being held mostly in the poorer suburbs of Nairobi and in towns further to the East of the country like Kisumu. While tragic for the people involved - these will not affect visitors to the country. What will affect Kenya's people more is the downturn in tourism resulting from sensationalist reporting!

CONSERVATION

It seems like the conservation lobby has won a significant victory over the politicians in Tanzania in the last couple of months. Lake Natron, in the North of Tanzania, is very important to migrating flamingos that flock there in tens of thousands to take advantage of the algae rich waters.

The same algae rich water has attracted the attention of investors since it is also rich in mineral deposits.

Like many of East Africa's rift valley lakes, Lake Natron has no outlet so the waters can only evaporate over the eons to produce a highly concentrated Soda Lake.

However the investors' plan to extract minerals from the lake would have destroyed the balance and the flamingos (amongst others) would have been left without this very important stopping point.

Hard work and cooperation by many conservation groups has led to the government blocking the development of an extraction plant on the shores of Lake Natron.

PLANNING AHEAD

Our new Lightweight Luxury Camp has met with success.

It is highly mobile, close to nature, yet elegant and comfortable. It is allowing us to offer more innovative safaris and more memorable experiences (quoted this month as the third best experience in a client's life).

It can be used anywhere, but will be based in southern Tanzania for next December [*this seems like a long time away- but we start planning already for these more remote safaris*]. We will be using it in areas where there aren't really any other facilities.

This would be a chance to do something really different.

Some of the safaris will be exploratory in nature and some will be in National Parks, but there will also be the chance to relax on beaches between-times.