

Challenge and Prospect of Ethiopian Tourism Policy

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Abstract

In Ethiopia nature, culture and history merge to form a timeless appeal. The country's impressive tourism potential is truly a land of contrast and extremes, a land of remote and wild place, and of spectacular alpine terrain-including the Semien mountain national park with its high 4620 meters peak at Ras Dashen one of UNESCO registered heritage site; and at the other end of spectrum, the Denakil depression 121 meters below sea level is among the lowest places on earth. However from these abundant resources the country has not benefited yet. Therefore questions about how tourism policies contribute to national development? What is wrong with the existing system? Why should the present policy be discarded? How did it become successful? These and similar other questions will have to be addressed first before proposing what measures should be taken to ameliorate the situation. For this reason, a brief account of the country's tourism needs to be provided.

18

19 **Index terms**— tourism policy, attractions, challenge, prospect.

1 Introduction

20 tourism continues to become more competitive, governments having to adopt a more entrepreneurial role in attracting not only tourists but also investors to their region. For instance in Ethiopia with growing tourism the government expanded infrastructures like road, new air port destinations, vehicles and hotels (private and governmental) etc. The questions raised surrounding tourism as a regional development tool deal with whether or not there can be real regional economic dispersion of the benefits of tourism. Tourism development projects, which do not build strong linkages to the surrounding community, will have little impact on the citizens who live nearby. Questions need to be asked about the most appropriate forms of tourism development growth poles so that the trickle-down effect can be maximized. While tourism may help to modernize a region, it may also cause the region to become dependent on external organizations.

21 It is argued that community-based, grassroots tourism is a more sustainable form of development than conventional mass tourism as it allows communities to break away from the hegemonic grasp of tour operators and the oligopoly of local élites. It is argued that there needs to be a decentralization of tourism down to the community level. When I take this one to Ethiopian context, it is necessary for enhancement of tourism as well as generating additional funding, which circulates in the local community/population, self-esteem is enhanced for the community as control over the development process is maintained locally. Developing community-based tourism can be especially difficult in developing countries in term of such issues as access to information, lack of awareness and lack of access to finances and policy frame work. The peripheral nature of many communities interested in community-based tourism development raises questions as to how they will attract visitors.

22 Much of the research on tourism employment is based in a western-centric, developed country perspective where tourism positions are often considered as seasonal and low paying. There for developing countries like Ethiopia has not earn sufficient income from tourism sector. In a developing country context, however, employment opportunities are more limited but have higher relative rates of payment than in other economic sectors. Even if positions are seasonal they are highly sought after. When possible policy set properly, tourism employment can create opportunities for the local population to increase their income and improve their standard of living. It

5 LITERATURE REVIEW A) HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN ETHIOPIA

45 can also provide new opportunities for youth and women. A model based on service-centred tourism employment
46 was presented as much of the work in tourism employment research has borrowed models from manufacturing
47 and related models of production. Here, the gap between the concepts of socioeconomic development and socio
48 cultural impacts of tourism development was explored. Many of the predominant theories of development have
49 emerged from western schools of thought without much consideration being given to more traditional methods of
50 development. Classifications of the major indices for social and economic development including income, trade,
51 resource and quality of life are based within a western or modernisation framework. Within this framework, both
52 economic development and the modernisation of living standards are expected to go hand in hand. However,
53 indigenous lifestyles and the customs of some host communities, for example, are valuable commodities and
54 movement to modernise these societies is criticised by the tourism industry. As a solution developing countries
55 like Ethiopia should have to prepare tourism policy in considering this and other threats. By examining the
56 complex nature of the relationship between the positive and negative impacts of tourism the writers argued that
57 the applicability of measuring socioeconomic development based in a western framework to understand tourism
58 development needs to be questioned(like Africa).

59 To determine the policy impact on the host's society, it analyses differently in different place. After tracing
60 the evolution of sustainable development it was then argued that sustainable tourism development has failed as
61 a result of environmental managerialism inherent in sustainable development principles. Attempts at imposing
62 a universal blueprint for tourism development, or the using of a set of 'meta-principles' which are founded on
63 mainstream planning and designation processes, are inappropriate within the complex developmental contexts
64 and the needs of tourism destinations particularly in developing countries. A more relevant interpretation of
65 tourism and sustainability in terms of what it is and how it can be achieved is necessary. It was argued that
66 concepts be utilized in non-western settings? Again, is there a successor to sustainable tourism development?

67 While tourism has potential to contribute to the economic and social development of a destination, there
68 are characteristics of the industry, which limit its potential as a development tool. The emerging global power
69 structures of the tourism industry can take control out of the hands of the destination leaving only the local
70 élites and multinational corporations to benefit. It was also argued that tourists themselves are more generally
71 interested in themselves and their needs as opposed to altering their form of consumption to maximize the benefits
72 of tourism for the destination. Though the Ethiopian government drafted the tourism development policy in order
73 to maximize benefit and accelerate Ethiopian tourism industry from its low stage.

74 2 II.

75 3 Objectives

76 As Ethiopia is blessed with abundant natural tourist attractions, the primary objective of the study was to clearly
77 asses the challenge and prospect of Ethiopian tourism policy.

78 4 III.

79 5 Literature Review a) Historical Development of Tourism in 80 Ethiopia

81 According to the ministry of tourism and culture, tourism as one of the economic sector came into being in
82 Ethiopia very recently. It was around 1960, that the potential of tourism drew the attention of the imperial
83 government authorities. The first tourism office was established in 1962. However, a set back in international
84 tourism demand had been seen during the military regime From 1974 for two decades the industry was suffering
85 from various adverse effects such as prolonged civil war, recurrent drought and restrictions on entry and free
86 movement of tourists ??World Bank, 2006). Though the sector is still at its infant stage, it has been keep
87 growing since 2001. The total receipt from the industry in 2008 was around 204.9 million USD. As of 2008,
88 international tourists arrivals was reached to 383,399. However, the sector's share to GDP is remains very small
89 (0.77% in 2008).

90 Successive Ethiopian governments have promoted tourism during their tenures. The monarchy that mediated
91 politics, economics, culture, environment and technology for most of the 20 th century initiated the promotion,
92 marketing and development of tourism as an integral part of the overall dynamics of national development.
93 Ethiopia's existence as an independent country for thousands of years and the diversity of its ecology and culture
94 were images that captivated foreigners for a long time. The promotional logo of 'Thirteen months of Sunshine'
95 was interjected by an imaginary of a proud and cultured people professing the two major universal religions of the
96 world-Christianity and Islam and an ethnic religion of Felasha Jewry. The magnificent material iconographies
97 of Ethiopian culture were relayed to the visitor through the timeless architectural wonders of Axum's stele,
98 Lalibela's rockhewn churches, Gondar's Castles, Harar's medieval walled city and archeological sites that traced
99 the origin of homo-sapiens to the Rift valley where the skeletal remains of Dinkinesh (Lucy) and Selam were
100 discovered.

101 Marketing and promoting have been, however, the weakest areas of tourism development. The negative
102 imageries that framed the country following the famines and political strife of the 1970 -1990 period defined

103 tourist perceptions of the country to a considerable extent. Some tour promoters have even gone further by
104 proposing that the tourist gaze in Ethiopia was a moralistic experience. Such perspective was suggested by
105 "Lonely Planet" in the following introduction of the tourist experience in Ethiopia as "testing, inspiring and
106 heartbreaking-a journey you will never forget. You do not explore Ethiopia for a relaxing getaway, you venture
107 here to be moved and moved you should be" (<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/Ethiopia>) (Tadesse Kidane-Mariam,
108 2015).

109 Ethiopia's possession of varied attractions regarded as an opportunity for the tourism sector policy. However
110 at present the Ministry identified the following major challenges also confronting the sector: ? Heritages of the
111 country has not been adequately protected, developed and used as a tourist attraction. ? There is a serious
112 shortage in number and type of tourist facilities. Moreover, the quality of service is poor and unsatisfactory to
113 tourists. ? Performing arts, entertainment services and other local creative products, which could have helped
114 to

115 **6 Year ()**

116 lengthen the stay of visitors, are not offered in sufficient variety. ? There is a shortage of trained manpower that is
117 crucial to the development of the sector. ? Weak mutual support and coordination among tourism stakeholders.
118 ? Ethiopia's image on the international scene is widely associated with draught, famine and war. ? The horn of
119 Africa is regarded as a region of instability and terrorism.

120 b) The roles of state level institutions and policy measures Currently there are eleven regional cultural and
121 tourism bureaus in Ethiopia, which are accountable for the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT). Apart from
122 the Ministry, these regional bureaus have also their own five year strategic plan. However, their independent
123 initiatives lacks coordination with other stakeholders including the Ministry.

124 Regarding policy issues since 2005, the government's initiation to promote tourism has been increasing.
125 Starting from public statements issued by the Prime Minister supporting tourism there are indications that
126 the government is opening a committed dialogue on tourism "My government believes that an increased focus
127 on tourism can play more significant role in the war on poverty, both in Ethiopia and across Africa as a whole"
128 PM Meles (2005) Adapted from World Bank (2006)

129 The first tourism development policy of the country was enacted in August, 2010. Lessening the aforementioned
130 challenges was the origin for this policy initiative.

131 In line with the tourism development policy, MCT introduce a strategic plan for the sector every five year.
132 However, the strategic plan (2010-2015) designed more ambitiously so as to fit the objectives of GTP in the
133 tourism arena.

134 ? Some of the following figures make the plan more ambitious; i. To increase a tourism receipt from the
135 current 250 million USD to 3 billion USD. ii. To create a tourism jobs for 3.5 million citizens. iii. To achieve
136 a tourism promotion activities by 100% iv. To increase tourist's service satisfaction from 51% to 90% v. To
137 improve the capacity of implementing international agreements and conventions from 25% to 90%

138 c) The undone roles of stakeholders in implementation Most of the stakeholders such as the federal government,
139 regional government, private sectors and local communities are not fully playing their roles in implementing
140 the policy. (Temesgen K., 2014) Among these undone tasks, the followings are the major one under different
141 stakeholders; The ambitious Growth and transformation plan II (GTPII) which has been implemented now
142 expected to fill the gaps. To this e Ministry nd of Culture and Tourism of Ethiopia has targeted to earn six
143 billion USD revenue from the tourism sector in its second Growth and Transformation Plan II. The contribution
144 of the tourism sector to the country's GTP so far is about 1.2 percent and that it is now planned to raise its
145 contribution to 5 percent. Indeed the influx of foreign visitors to Ethiopia has shown an average growth of 10
146 percent in the past seven years, the average tourist staying period rose up to 16 days. the tourism sector has
147 created 783,638 jobs for citizens in the last four years of the first GTP. Standardization of 400 star ranked Hotels
148 has begun in the nation to increase the service quality delivered for the foreign visitors adding that International
149 accredited standardization activities so far conducted on 50 hotels in Addis Ababa city.

150 **7 IV. Project Design and Methodology**

151 Relevant and necessary data was needed for this article to reach at final conclusion and to answer the challenge
152 and prospect of Ethiopian tourism policy. Therefore it employed a qualitative approach to collect the necessary
153 and relevant data. The study was also needed to conduct the necessary and reliable information by reviewing
154 the available documents and needed to make a link or connection between different variables contributing to
155 the challenge of tourism sector in Ethiopia.inaddition to this the researcher used field observation to asses the
156 tourism industry in Ethiopia V.

157 **8 Result and Discussion**

158 **9 a) Definition and Reality about Ethiopian tourism**

159 Tourism holistic definition that embraces both the factual and theoretical perspectives of tourism is desirable
160 (Gilbert, 1990). Jafari (1977) goes some way to achieving this by epistemologically defining tourism as ;The

10 B) THE NEED FOR TOURISM POLICY

161 study of man away from his usual habitat, of the industry which responds to his needs, and of the impacts that
162 both he and the industry have on the host's socio cultural, economic and physical environments. Nevertheless,
163 tourism is primarily a social activity. If people had neither the ability nor the desire to travel from one place to
164 another, tourism would not exist.

165 Thus, tourism is an activity which involves individuals who travel within their own countries or internationally,
166 and who interact with other people and places, people who are influenced and motivated by the norms and
167 transformations in their own society and who carry with them their own 'cultural baggage' of experience,
168 expectations, perceptions and standards. It is, in short, a social phenomenon which involves the movement
169 of people to various destinations and their (temporary) stay there or across the world.

170 As a land of multiple tourist attractions and a visitor friendly people which is conscious of its historical heritage,
171 Ethiopia is truly a country of great tourism potential. It was this recognition of a great potential that encouraged
172 Ethiopia in the 1960's to start a tourism industry. After an initial period of rapid growth, the industry underwent
173 a fast decline and virtual stagnation for many years due to the revolution that brought the military to power in
174 1974, the consequent turmoil, and recurrent drought and famines.

175 During the last years, however, tourism has once again emerged as a growth industry taking advantage of the
176 current peace and stability in the country and the liberalized economic policy of the new government. Ethiopia
177 can now look forward to increasing its share of the world's tourism market which is registering a faster world-wide
178 growth than most other industries.

179 Not all of Ethiopia's attractions are very widely known, but some are quite famous. Indeed, nine (9) national
180 attractions (including, konso) have been recognized by UNESCO as world heritage: Axum's obelisks, Gondar's
181 castles, the island monasteries on Lake Tana, Hadar (where Lucy was discovered), Tia's carved standing stones,
182 the walls of Harar, the Semien National Park, and konso tradition and culture. Therefore the need for tourism
183 policy now and then is un questionable.

184 Ethiopia's nearly ideal location on the African continent and its relative proximity to the Middle East and
185 Europe can add to the comparative advantage which its numerous and varied attractions bestow on it. Though
186 situated not far from the equator, much of the Ethiopian land has a climate tempered by high altitude. Ethiopia's
187 tourism slogan "Thirteen Months of Sunshine" partly arises from the idyllic year-round, spring-like climate of
188 most regions of the country. The first Ethiopian development plan was historically prepared in 1966. Then after
189 the tourism industry was became as one sources of economic development until 1966. Through different years
190 the sector show improvement in 12% within a year in average .During the Dreg regime tourism faced challenges
191 like, war, drought and famine, ideological difference with western countries which are source of tourist and lack
192 of concrete tourism policy which gives opportunity and guarantee for tourist sites was some of the challenges.

193 The Ethiopian Ministry of Culture and Tourism is responsible for developing and promoting the country's
194 tourist products both locally and internationally by putting on ground the policy and strategy . It works
195 closely together with different international and national stakeholders, the latter including Ethiopian Airlines,
196 the Ethiopian Tour Operators Association (ETOA), and the Tourist Standard Hoteliers According to ministry of
197 culture and tourism, Ethiopia has a big size of population with diversified cultures that makes it an ideal tourist
198 destination. So the country should also focus on inward looking programmes in terms of developing, promoting
199 and expanding local tourism. The Ministry in its duties and powers is playing a decisive role for a concerted and
200 multipurpose effort to be undertaken by the people and stakeholders in the development of tourism and culture.
201 Since the tourism industry is now globally lucrative, and one of the largest baseness in the world economy,
202 preparation of various regulations, directives in order to study, preserve, control, register and conduct inventory
203 of tangible and intangible cultural heritages apart from quality control and classification of standards in tourism
204 area are some of the major areas that the Ministry focused in the 5-year strategic plans so that Ethiopia could
205 be able to benefit the most out of the sector.

206 10 b) The need for tourism policy

207 Since Ethiopia endowed with enormous manmade and natural tourist attraction area, having uniform tourism
208 policy is unquestionable. Seventeen years of neglect "After the overthrow of the imperial government in the
209 1960s and the coming to power of the socialist government in 1970, our country had a military government whose
210 relations with tourist generating countries in Europe and America were bad", she explained. "For seventeen years,
211 tourism was sorely neglected in our country by considering its sociopolitical, economic and cultural advantage,
212 the current government launched tourism development policy in 2009. Ethiopia whose share of tourist flow to
213 the East African Region of seventeen countries was at less than one percent in 2009 launched its first tourism
214 development policy to reverse the situation.

215 The arrival of a new government in 1991 brought the first change, with greater emphasis on a free-market
216 economy, improving infrastructure and the construction of new roads, highways and airports. "Our present
217 government considers tourism to be an industry with great potential for our country", says Dalacho, ministry
218 of culture and tourism. "That's why the ministry of culture and tourism was formed to replace the tourism
219 commission." As head of this ministry, recently finished drafting a new tourism policy for the government. Its
220 main focal points include the following:

221 Develop existing and new destinations with Ethiopia; Diversify the sector ; Improve infrastructure and tourism

222 facilities; Create an enabling environment for private investors; Develop new and broader educational programmes
223 for the sector so as to create a larger and more qualified labor force.

224 The government also aims to establish 'Tourism development Fund' with the key aim of mobilizing resources
225 and capabilities of actors in the implementation of the policy. The establishment and application of the fund
226 will be determined by a study and supported by law, according to the Policy launched at the Sheraton Addis in
227 August 30, 2019. The new tourism policy of Ethiopia among other, aims to integrate/connect the development
228 of the country's tourism with agricultural, industrial, foreign policies and strategies of the country.

229 **11 c) Ethiopian tourism policy and strategy i. Vision**

230 To develop tourism in a responsible and sustainable way, enabling it to play a leading role in the economic
231 development process of the country by executing its activities on a community based principle.

232 **12 ii. Principles**

233 Respecting diversity: Diversity of historical, cultural and natural wealth are the beauty and distinctive Features
234 of Ethiopia; therefore, each of these has to be known, respected, and developed equally as tourism attractions.

235 **13 Ensuring participation and community benefits:**

236 Communities have to play a major in developing of the tourism industry, with each member participating and
237 benefitting in the development process.

238 **14 Create a transparent and accountable work process:**

239 The process of tourism development requires the participation of many actors or stakeholders.

240 Therefore, a good governance procedure shall be prepared in order that all stakeholders abide by professional
241 tourism ethics.

242 **15 Create a sense of cooperation and coordination:**

243 Initiating continuous and good networking by creating strong cooperation communication and close relation
244 between Regional, National and international bodies working in the tourism sector.

245 **16 Enhancing implementation capacity of the sector:**

246 To ensure the comparative advantage of the country in tourism development, by strengthening the implementation
247 capacity of all parties in the sector to provide high quality tourism services iii. Objectives ? To consolidate the
248 country's comparative advantage and enable the industry to compete in international tourist markets. ? To
249 develop a tourism industry that can play a major role in generating and retaining international exchange ? To
250 create increased employment opportunities for communities around the sites of attractions and distribute tourism
251 income to improve living standards of the people. ? To build a tourism industry that can improve the image of
252 the country and advance the growth of the sector in a sustainable manner. ? Promoting the country's tourist
253 attractions and encourage expansion of local tourism ? Making the sector competitive in the world and Africa
254 in its best destination for tourists and source of income for host country in direct and indirect economic benefit
255 will be ensured. ? Bringing both culture and tourism to development so that the industry would contribute to
256 the poverty reduction strategic plan and the Millennium Development Goals.

257 **17 d) Main issues of the Ethiopian tourism policy and strategies**

258 ? To lead the country's tourism industry in a broadbased developmental direction Though the strategy will give
259 emphasis for:

260 ? Creating strong relationships with other development strategies and policies to integrate directions .Here
261 especially interlinking and connecting the tourism policy with agricultural and rural policy and strategy which
262 helps to expand tourism attractions like eco-tourism in rural and agricultural areas. This coordination or chain
263 of the rural to urban tourism used the sector direct beneficiary from on growing rural tourism development and
264 give/provide input and artistic product for the urban tourism development as value chain. Indeed the policy
265 strategy focus on :

266 -Ensuring participation -Increasing visitor volume -Strengthening linkages in a cross-sectoral approach to
267 poverty reduction -Sequential development to avoid conflicts associated with mass tourism elsewhere

268 ? To Develop new attractions and improving existing ones considering type, quality and quantity; possible
269 strategy is:

270 -Developing high quality destinations and productions such as handicrafts -Increasing flows of tourists in areas
271 of the counties that are not in the current circuits -Linking tour circuits to create a strong tourism package -
272 Tourism Management Council formed by officials from federal and regional tourism offices -Government Tourism
273 Common Forums formed from the relevant federal and regional executive bodies with NGOs, institutions and
274 private sector stakeholders with interests in tourism?

19 F) ETHIOPIA'S HISTORICAL & NATURAL TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

275 ? To increase the current low capacity of the tourism industry -Increase the capacity of major industry players
276 with the introduction of professional standards for service providers -Establishment of tourism training and
277 education centres to address shortcomings in human resources development -Improve the capacity state tourism
278 institutions and systems in research, information dissemination and data collection and the creation and periodic
279 publication of tourism satellite accounts.

280 The main thrust of this policy looks encouraging. Particularly important is the recognition that, in addition to
281 providing a source of international exchange, the tourist sector can have a significant development impact through
282 linkages with local communities. Also Government has clearly recognized the need to improve the competitiveness
283 of the tourist sector and that improving the quality of tourism services is key to enabling Ethiopian tourism to
284 compete in international markets and attract more tourists. Welcome also is the fact that Government clearly
285 recognize their role in providing an enabling environment: through training of the workforce; provision of more
286 accurate information; coordinating stakeholders including working with tour operators. In short, my view suggests
287 that the thrust of this draft policy and implemented policy correctly addresses the key issues facing the tourist
288 sector. As such, the tourism policy should be completed, ratified and implemented again correctly to strength
289 more.

290 18 e) The advantages of tourism in delivering pro-poor growth

291 The negative impacts associated with tourism, such as reduced access to resources and negative social and cultural
292 impacts sometimes threaten to overshadow the benefits that a vibrant tourism industry can generate. However
293 if the policy implemented properly it will have the following benefits: ? Tourism is generally labour-intensive
294 -although less than agriculture -and therefore can impact on a large number of lives through the labour market;
295 ? Tourism has considerable potential linkage, especially with agriculture and fisheries, which can minimize the
296 'leakage' effect. Due to the high income elasticity of demand for international tourism, it can offer a relatively
297 rapidly growing market; ? Tourism provides opportunities for off-farm diversification, particularly in areas that
298 do not attract other types of development options; ? Tourism can provide poor countries with significant export
299 opportunities where few other options are viable; ? It may create initial demand for a good or service that
300 can itself develop into a growth sector; ? Tourism products can generate demand for assets such as natural
301 resources and culture, to which the poor often have access; ? Tourism delivers consumers to the product rather
302 than the other way around; and ? Infrastructure associated with tourism development can provide essential
303 services for local communities. Indeed, throughout the world, the most compelling reason for pursuing tourism
304 as a development strategy is its alleged positive contribution to the local or national economy. Internationally
305 and locally, tourism represents an important source of foreign exchange earnings; indeed, it has been suggested
306 that the potential contribution to the national balance of payments is the principal reason why governments
307 support tourism development. For many developing countries, tourism has become one of the principal sources of
308 foreign exchange earnings whilst even in developed countries the earnings from international tourism may make
309 a significant contribution to the balance of payments in general, and the travel account in particular. It is also
310 one of the reasons why tourism is frequently turned to as a new or replacement activity in areas where traditional
311 industries have fallen into decline.

312 The economic benefits (and costs) of tourism are discussed at length in the literature, as are the environmental
313 and socio-cultural consequences of tourism. When we see Ethiopia various tourism sectors such as hotel, tour
314 sites, natural and manmade caves, monuments ,historical religious places etc are become tourist destination areas.
315 This is because of the promotion made by ministry of culture and tourism after the policy preparation and other
316 organs, and by the improvement of facilities in tourist attraction areas. Gradually Many of these are considered
317 in the context of development. The main point here, however, is that the widely cited benefits and costs of
318 tourism, whether economic, environmental or socio cultural, are just that. They are the measurable or visible
319 consequences of developing tourism in any particular destination and, in a somewhat simplistic sense, tourism is
320 considered to be 'successful' as long as the benefits accruing from its development are not outweighed by the costs
321 or negative consequences. For many developing countries, with a limited industrial sector, few natural resources
322 and a dependence on international aid, tourism may represent the only realistic means of earning much needed
323 foreign exchange, creating employment and attracting overseas investment.

324 Tourism in most sub-Saharan African countries is hardly an industry since the tourism infrastructure is weak,
325 tourism organization is poor, and net revenue is meager. But now gradually Ethiopian is forwarding its base
326 currently on tourism sector. Almost all tourist arrivals consist of African nationals' resident abroad returning
327 to visit friends and relatives, business visitors, and those visiting expatriate residents. The primary vacation or
328 leisure tourism sector is undeveloped (Teye, 1991, p. 288)

329 19 f) Ethiopia's Historical & Natural Tourist Attractions

330 Currently, travel and tourism account for more than \$3 trillion in spending annually and 7.6 percent of the world's
331 total employment. The United Nations World Tourism Organization further forecasts that international travel
332 will double by 2020. Since a couple of decade, ecotourism has become a newer paradigm to tourism because in
333 addition to offering economic and business opportunities for local communities, it strongly advocates reducing
334 the environmental impact of travel, conserving natural resources, preserving cultural heritage, empowering

335 and meeting the welfare of local people, and creating value for the travelers. It adds value to environments, 336 communities, entrepreneurs and tourists within ethical objectives

337 The natural beauty of Ethiopia amazes the firsttime visitor. Ethiopia is a land of rugged mountains (some 25 338 are over 4000 meters high) broad savannah, lakes and rivers. The unique Rift valley is a remarkable region of 339 volcanic Lakes, with their famous collections of birdlife, great escarpments and stunning vistas. Tisisat, the blue 340 Nile falls, must rank as one of the greatest natural spectacles in Africa today. With 14 major wild life reserves, 341 Ethiopia provides a microcosm of the entire subsaharan ecosystem. Bird life abounds, and indigenous animals 342 from the rare walia ibex to the shy wild ass, roam free just as nature intended. Ethiopia, after the rains, is a 343 land decked with flowers and with many more native plants than most countries in Africa.

344 The natural side of Ethiopia is an invaluable asset for its tourism industry, and inextricable from its cultural 345 and historic features. Sustainable tourism, while preserving Ethiopia's natural environment, also serves to 346 preserve the nation's rich cultural and environmental heritage. Ethiopia is endowed with a wide range of tourist 347 attractions. Ecotourism potentials include paleoanthropological sites-the famous finding of a hominid, Lucy; 348 historic architectures such as the stelae and temples in Axum and Yeha; the monolithic rock-hewn church of 349 Lalibela; the Castle of Fasilades in Gondar; the island monasteries of Lake Tana; the Camelot of Harar; the 350 holiest mosques of Ahmed Negash in Tigray, the Sof Omar in lowland Bale; the scenic beauty of the mountains of 351 the Semyen, Wag and Lasta, and Bali; the Rift Valley lake; the Omo valley; and the fauna and flora that flourish 352 in the natural terrains of the country. In addition, the myriad peoples of Ethiopia are very proud to deliver 353 to tourists the original version of their subcultures including social organizations, artifacts, music, languages, 354 religions, etc.

355 Ethiopian topography is endowed with gorgeous scenes of lofty peaks and enumerable species of wild life 356 and birds. The country has a remarkably rich heritage and spectacular environment worth visiting by tourists 357 interested in gaining knowledge of its history, culture, diversity of landscape, unique indigenous plants, birds, 358 and mammals, and a great variety of interesting locations. Sight Seeing, Fishing, Bird watching, Safari Tours, 359 Camping, climbing, Trekking, Hiking & Walking, Water Sports, Caving etc could be mentioned as some of the 360 interesting opportunities to invest on Ethiopian Ecotourism.

361 **20 g) Type of Tourism offered by Ethiopia**

362 Ethiopia's wealth of varied attractions gives it a great potential for cultural and educational tourism, photo 363 safaris, hunting safaris, bird watching, water sports including river rafting, desert trekking, mountain camping 364 and other forms of eco-tourism. Health tourism, on account of the cool climate of most regions of the country 365 and the numerous hot springs in many volcanic areas, is an additional type of tourism with great potential.

366 Conference tourism, long aided by the presence of a number of international organizations in Addis Ababa 367 including the headquarters of the Organization for African Unity and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), 368 is poised to gain greater significance as a consequence of the newly built ultramodern facilities at the ECA and 369 the Sheraton Addis.

370 **21 h) Challenges of Ethiopian tourism**

371 Observably in most developed countries, the smokeless industry has the lion's share in the overall economic 372 growth and development of a country. The tourism sector has now become a major source of income for various 373 stakeholders engaged in the sector. In this regard, despite Ethiopia's endowment with various natural and 374 manmade heritages, it had not benefited much from the sector for years due to various factors. Currently, 375 Ethiopia's tourism sector is booming in bike with its fast economic growth. It is also basking under stable peace 376 and security as compared with other African countries. And that is why Ethiopia enjoyed the limelight as this 377 year's 'Top Destination In The World For Tourists' by the European Council on Tourism and Trade (ECTT) 378 because of excellent preservation of humanity landmarks. However, in the eyes of actors in the service sector and 379 lessons got during the course of the last five years, this sector has its own prospects and challenges.

380 Under the coverage of community benefits, the sector suffer from unreasonable interference in most tourist 381 destination areas by the local hotels, tour guides and the like. As compared to other African countries, travelling 382 to tourist destinations proves a very costly adventure discouraging tourists from coming to Ethiopia. In some 383 places, local residents want to sponge on tourists. Hence, the government, especially the Ministry of Culture 384 and Tourism, should seriously take the responsibility of creating awareness among the community. Moreover, the 385 number of graduates is increasing both from public and private institutions, there is still a shortage of skilled 386 and capable human power. Thus, the Ministry needs to offer ultra-modern training to professionals and practical 387 policy.

388 **22 VI.**

389 **23 Summary**

390 A Tourism Development Policy has been implemented a years ago with a view to helpful in harnessing the 391 untapped tourism potentials in the country. The tourism policy, harmonized in to other policies and strategies of 392 Ethiopia's economy, has helped to improve the performance of travel and tourism sector. National air carrier for

393 major network expansion, Conference tourism due to the presence of many international organizations such as
394 AU and UNECA, a Rise in domestic and foreign private investment in hotels and a rise in development of travel
395 and tourism due to growing international demand and the country's effort aimed at providing better ecotourism
396 has also contributed positively to the expansion of ecotourism in the country. Partners' support also had its
397 immense contribution.

398 Currently the Government is redesigning rigorously the tourism industry with a view to make it environmentally
399 conscious, and go beyond the unfortunate goal of conventional tourism which was focusing on mere financial
400 benefits but little or no regard for environmental degradation of tourist sites.

401 A new tourism and culture development policy is under discussion by all stakeholders and will shortly
402 implemented. The newly amended policy understands that global tourism grows at the average annual rate
403 of 4.3%, the tourist industry in Ethiopia still accounts for less than 2 percent of Gross Domestic Product when
404 compared to 6%, 14% and 5% of GDP for Egypt, Kenya and of South Africa respectively. Cognizant of this,
405 the government is looking for wider ways to double tourism earnings during 2010-2015 and see about one million
406 foreign arrivals by 2020. In order to realize this goal, it intends to intensify its campaigns abroad of introducing the
407 country as a top business and leisure destination. It also plans to introduce the country's ecotourism opportunities
408 to new tourism markets such as India, China, Russia and Brazil. Its objective is to create social and economic
409 benefits through ecotourism and to foster the conservation of natural resources of the areas. Participatory local
410 initiatives, in collaboration with partners, will also be encouraged in a more organized way with a view to develop
411 and introduce a consolidated approach for Eco-tourism that can be replicated in other areas and that enhances
412 the sustainable utilization of the natural resources. The government is aware of current trends that, to attract
413 tourists, the ecotourism industry must be designed to incorporate and implement responsible, ethical, forward-
414 looking, and farreaching environmental oversight. It is working to balance the economic, social and environmental
415 management pillars of sustainable development.

416 Tourism has increasingly become a favoured development tool in many developing countries for poverty
417 alleviation. For instance in eastern Africa tourism has scored tremendous improvement with the presence of
418 stability in the area like in Kenya, Ethiopia Uganda etc. but still problems exist in Somalia. With the relative ease
419 of entry into the tourism market and its purported ability to generate foreign exchange and create employment,
420 it is no wonder that it is being pursued. However, like any development option or avenue of economic endeavor,
421 it comes with a cost. This, then, is at the heart of the tourism development dilemma. Tourism represents an
422 attractive, and perhaps the only, means of stimulating economic and social development for some developing
423 nations.

424 However, frequently that development either fails to materialize, benefits only the local élite or multinational
425 corporations, or is achieved with a very high social, environmental or economic cost. In the developing world,
426 tourism is usually implemented through a top-down planning approach, and decision making is 'predominately
427 based on the interventions of government agencies and large tourism firms, resulting in the dominance of external,
428 often foreign capital and the marginalisation of local people' (Liu and Wall 2006). Developing countries opting
429 into the tourism industry will encounter both the positive and negative consequences of this globally competitive
430 industry, and the challenge lies in accepting or managing the negative consequences in the hopes of obtaining
431 the potential long-term benefits of tourism. The complexities of using tourism as a development tool and the
432 dilemma that many countries face in coping with the uncertainty that tourism brings have been.

433 Generally the tourism development process intersects with the economic, political, environmental and social
434 conditions in the destination and is also framed by the global political economy. Despite the fact that tourist
435 arrivals in Ethiopia is at an increasing mode because of policy measures, the sector in general is underperforming
436 compares to neighboring destinations. Various domestic and international challenges are attributed to the low
437 performance of the sector. Though the tourism development policy was designed well, the proper implementation
438 of it is easier said than done. Lack of resources, weak coordination of institutions and failure of various
stakeholders in playing their role are among the major causes for poor implementation. ^{1 2 3}



Figure 1: A



Figure 2: ?

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