

## Kenya as an East African destination

### For German Ecotourists:

The development from a charitable organization to a niche market using the example of Mully Children's Family

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#### **Abstract**

In times of climatic or political grievances that affect not only human life worldwide, but also the environment and the economic situation of a country, a change in the way of thinking about tourism is beginning and the sector of ecotourism is also becoming increasingly important in Germany. The applicability of this form of tourism in the East African destination Kenya in the form of a travel package that is both partly unique and can be designed individually describes the subject matter of this elaboration and is illustrated using the example of the charitable organization Mully Children's Family and the related registered tourism company, MCF Africa Safaris. The underlying research aims to determine how to transform the organisation's own tree planting initiative into a niche tourist market and how this must be geared to gain the interest of the German eco-tourist. Based on the evaluation of the research results, there is high potential, which is dedicated to the implementation of a form of travel consisting of the active support of the named charity and its initiative as well as individually selectable holiday activities in the target market Kenya. As a result, there are basic prerequisites, the consideration of which is essential for the successful integration of the so-called niche market tree planting and the branch-specific nature of ecotourism in the Kenyan travel market.

## 1. Introduction

The desire to get to know previously unprecedented destinations, including their cultural peculiarities, contributes to factors such as the personal need for unforgettable experiences or the desire for a certain feeling of freedom and relaxation, to the increasing willingness to travel and dedicates an enormous importance to the everyday life of everyone. The German population, in particular, is known as a travel-loving nation with regards to the number of trips, the intensity and the amount of expenditure, whose preferred destinations often go far beyond their own national borders (Reinhardt, 2020, pp. 8-14). Some of the preferred destinations of the German travel population are located in the developing and emerging countries worldwide and annually host 11 million German citizens (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, oJ). In order to benefit from the emerging interest in travel, more and more developing countries, including large parts of the Africa, are focusing their economic activity on the tourism sector. However, they also understand the consequences of advancing global warming and effects, not only on nature, but also on the life of the residents to an ever-increasing extent (Human Rights Watch, 2015).

In times when environmental disasters of all kinds determine the daily headlines of the international media, there is a change in the way of thinking of the population and causes the interest in change to become increasingly important and sustainability considerations are taking over everyday life of many. In order to make a personal contribution to the protection of the given resources, it is usually limited to the immediate vicinity and actions such as the acquisition of proven regional and fair/bio manufactured products or the transportation by public transport, are adapted. These behaviours can be seen as a first step towards long-term improvement, but if possible, not as a solution that secures the global situation and the economic sectors based on it. Contrary to this need to integrate the sustainability aspect and the increasing interest in travel to developing and emerging countries, (Christie, et Al. 2013) (Pop, 2014), there is insufficient research on the willingness of the German ecologically interested population and their views on active support during the holiday trip, which both preserves and improves the natural environment resources, as well as the well-being of the locals and relates to the East African country of Kenya. To ascertain this, raising awareness of the enormous need for responsible tourism and raising awareness of sustainable travel among the local population and international travellers are indispensable in order to establish a tourism-oriented organization that is aimed at improving damaged ecosystems for this niche market. Accordingly, the change in the tourism industry in the form of a complete waiver of travel does not clarify the relevance of this elaboration, but rather the change implementation.

### 1.2. Research Question and Objectives

Is there a market in Germany for Ecotourism and a form of sustainable travel (Balas & Strasdas, 2018), offered by a Kenyan NGO, MCF Africa Safaris?

The objectives of the study are the following:

1. Are there Germans, who see themselves as Eco-friendly, be willing to book Eco-tourism offerings to Kenya with and through a Kenyan NGO?
2. Which platform or travel booking method is most common for the German Eco-traveller?

3. How much money would they be willing to spend on a trip to Kenya which includes Eco-elements?
4. What kinds of lodging are preferred?
5. Is tree-planting as a climate-change activity attractive for German Eco-travellers and which other Eco-activities could be attractive?

## **2. Ecotourism**

Ecotourism, a form of sustainable travel (Balas & Strasdas, 2018), unites numerous perspectives that have changed over the years. A definition of Ecotourism for the purpose of this study is explored below. The UNWTO, the United Nations' World Tourism Organization, defined the concept of ecotourism as part of an analysis of the German ecotourism market in 2001 as a type of travel that has five different elements. It is a tourism close to nature, the main motives for which are based on observing and appreciating nature and the traditions cultivated in the destinations. This definition also includes the continuous clarification of the conceptual content and the minimization of negative influences on the ecological and social environment. This type of interpretation also provides for the organization of trips for small groups, which can be created and carried out both by specialized and local organizers, as well as by companies with a foreign headquarters and an ecotourism specialist area. Likewise, according to the definition of the UNWTO, ecotourism stands for the protection of natural areas, which among other things deals with the creation of jobs and income opportunities for the local population as well as the increased awareness of the conservation of natural resources (World Tourism Organization, 2001, pp. 4-5). The International Ecotourism Society describes ecotourism again as a responsible travel to near-natural areas, which on the one hand preserves the environment and safeguards the well-being of the locals, and on the other hand the educational work on the contents of this form of travel, which both in the local population and at must be provided to those willing to travel themselves (The International Ecotourism Society, oJ). In view of these varying definitions, the present scientific work is based on the interpretation that the practice of ecotourism is a special form of travel that focuses on the responsible use of the environment and local people and pursues the goal of nature conservation and the guarantee of social well-being within the holiday destination.

### **2.1 Characteristic of German Ecotourism**

The elementary question of a suitable target group for the establishment of a niche market dedicated to ecotourism is based on the analysis of two essential factors: the interest in the design of sustainable tourism and the level of willingness to invest during a vacation trip. In a global comparison, Germany with a total of \$ 94 billion is the country with the third highest tourism expenditure (Statista, 2019) and is also considered to be a society with a huge commitment to sustainable activities in the tourism sector (The Economic Intelligence Unit Limited, 2017). In 2014, a study by the German Research Foundation for Vacation and Travel dealt with the need for sustainable vacation travel and provides an insight into the characteristics of the German eco-tourist (FUR Research Foundation for Vacation and Travel, 2014, p. VI). This shows that 61 percent of the German population aged 14 and over would like to increasingly use travel based on ecological and social compatibility for their own vacation plans, but there are

hurdles to this approach, such as the increased financial outlay and/or the lack of sustainable offers at the desired destination, which hampers the tourists' ability to be as sustainable as desired (FUR Research Association Vacation and Travel eV, 2014, p. 8). As described in the underlying study, the German ecotourist can be found in all social demographic groups, whereby he mostly has an increased level of education and an above-average monthly income, is predominantly between the ages of 50 and 69 and often lives in a partnership. Factors such as relaxation and the distance from everyday events, in addition to the existence of an intact climate and the interest in being in touch with nature, represent the holiday motives of German ecotourists (FUR Research Association for Holidays and Travel, 2014, pp. 19-24). In relation to the travel behaviour of the general proportion of people interested in travel in Germany, there were only slight deviations in terms of organization, season, means of transportation, choice of accommodation and holiday destination. The summer months are also the main travel season for this target group and are carried out using means of transportation such as your own car (46%) or plane (40%). A holiday destination in a non-European country (72%) or the Mediterranean region (38%) is preferred in combination with a hotel (43%) or an apartment (24%), as the chosen form of accommodation during a trip (FUR Research Association Vacation and Travel eV, 2014, p. 31). Only the amount of the expenses and the duration of the trip offer an opportunity to differentiate, because the German citizen interested in ecology travelled an average of 14.3 days and invested a total of 1,029.00 € per person (FUR Research Association Vacation and Travel eV, 2014, p. 32). On the basis of the classifications received, it can be determined that there are no serious differences in holiday behaviour between the general German population and ecologically interested travellers, but the factor of sustainability, including all levels, is incorporated into the type of holiday arrangement of the German ecotourist at the destination.

## **2.2 Definition tree-planting**

Environmental and climate protection is of high importance for a large part of the German population. This assertion emerges from a study by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, which is part of the German government, and also clarifies that this importance has increased in recent years. Furthermore, it is shown in the course of this that the people involved in the survey are concerned about the global environmental status and that the protection of natural resources also corresponds to an essential measure for dealing with future issues such as the prosperity of the country (Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and nuclear safety, 2019, p. 9). This is followed by the fact that 67 percent of a target audience from the age of 18 would consider using financially settled offers that serve the purpose of reducing personal CO<sup>2</sup> emissions. 11 percent of the participants have already supported an action of this type, which may include planting trees, for example (Statista, 2019). Given the increasing importance of the comprehensive sustainability aspect and personal responsibility in this regard, the formation of numerous organizations and corporate concepts, such as the global children's initiative plant for the planet (Plant-for-the-Planet Foundation, oJ) or in Germany's Internet search engine Ecosia (Ecosia, oJ), which pursues tree planting as an executive instrument to curb progressive climate change, is justified. This also includes, for example, the range of activities of the Christian, charitable organization Mully Children's Family, which enables thousands of children in need of help through rescue and holistic personal strengthening to take up a sincere place in society again (Mully Children's Family, oJ). The founder's vision was to share his family, financial and personal

assets with destitute and marginalized children, in order to provide not only their daily needs, but also provide educational opportunities and to support in them in their personal development. Dr Charles Mulli and his wife Esther set up the foundation in the Machokos County, Kenya (Kenya Citizen TV, 2014). The basis for his vision realization is eight different projects, which include, in addition to the reintegration of the children, the overarching points of education, health and promotion of talent and the creation of income opportunities (Mully Children's Family, o.J.).

The climatic conditions in Kenya (Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation, o.J.), present the environment and its inhabitants with possibly insurmountable complexities (Böll, 2018). As a way of alleviating these challenges, the MCF organization has integrated an initiative to regenerate and maintain the environment into the core elements of its work, which serves the purpose of creating a long-term and safe living environment for vulnerable children and the community. In addition to projects for the generation, use and promotion of renewable energies and the conservation of water, the MCF-led measures for planting trees within the Ndalani and Yatta locations, which are characterized by a dry and semi-dry climate, are a key component of the ecological mission (Mully Children's family, no year). Dr. Charles Mulli, the founder of the organization, has devoted great importance to the planting of drought-resistant and country-specific species, the growth of which also requires little care, from the very beginning. The commitment shown resulted in a microclimate change based on the cross-area cultivation. This is evident both in the form of a temperature drop compared to the surrounding regions, as well as in the transformation of the once dry and non-fertile land into a geographical area with lush vegetation and the possibility of agricultural use. The transfer of knowledge about the need to adapt measures that promote a positive impact on the ecological situation is also essential and is implemented within the scope of the tasks.

The aim of maintaining a high level of understanding for necessary ecological and climatic changes is the possibility of independent and practical participation in the planting of the natural good. With the initially exclusive support of the children residing at the MCF's locations and the people involved, the development of tree planting has become regular and with the participation of a large number of students, partners and the community in general. With regard to future developments, the aim is to ensure that all further trees planted are native to the regionally given soil culture, temperature and precipitation (or are compatible to climate change that has already taken place) which will build on the reforestation transformation already achieved (MCF Canada, 2012).

### **3. Tree-planting – a Niche Market for German Eco-Tourists**

The complete integration and conversion of the initiative for planting trees carried out by Mully Children's Family serves the market of a tourist niche, which according to the high percentage of people living in Germany and who are interested in the factor of sustainability on vacation. traveller (57%) (Statista, 2020), may have extensive potential. Based on the given purpose of offering high-quality round trips for supporters of Mully Children's Family the organization-related company name MCF Africa Safaris makes it easily recognized on the Kenyan tourism market as an income generating company for the NGO (MCF Africa Safaris, oJ). This together with the design of an eco-travel packages, consisting of active participation in tree planting carried out and organized by MCF as well as individually selectable experiences within the East African Republic of Kenya is the direction the MCF Africa Safaris wishes to go. This proves to be expedient in order to grant an increase in the international attention potential for tree plantings

and to build on the increasing reputation of Kenya as a versatile and attractive travel destination (Republic of Kenya, 2017).

The package is characterized by flexibly selected 1. travel times, 2. individually preferred activities within the holiday destination Kenya, and 3. with a 2-4 day stay at MCF's locations in Yatta and Ndalani. The chosen period of minimum two days is to ensure that the tourist can fully experience the organizational pillars and impact. According to this concept, a visit to the institution proves to be the fundamental element of this trip and combines four essential aspects with one another, which the German ecotourist strives to fulfil. The factor of authenticity in the context of a tourist-related international experience is illustrated, among other things, by its guarantee with regard to the type of accommodation, the catering or the unrestricted integration of travellers into the everyday life of the locals. The travel package aimed at establishing offers the guests with rooms that were originally built for the purpose of accommodating participants in conferences in the areas mentioned (MCF Canada, 2012), a place of accommodation and in connection with getting to know regional-typical Dining, the foundation for an intensive experience of the institution. Based on MCF's mission, the rescued children by experiencing values such as parental love and Christian faith as well as the involvement in activities related to leisure and further education, as well as providing support, the best possible basis for future reunification. Favouring the structure of society (Mully Children's Family, oJ), for example, experiencing Kenyan choirs and singing up close or the warmth of the children is another element that enables people to be authentically perceived in their local structures and cultures. The travel package, which is carried out in small groups of a maximum of five people, is supplemented by a guide who is available during the stay. In the visits to the locations in Yatta and Ndalani, which are integrated during the stay and accompanied by the guide, together with their educational facilities and areas dedicated to agricultural use, provide an insight into the extensive and locally performed services and create space for receiving further information. The resulting ability for the traveller to expand the range of knowledge not only represents a component of the definition of ecotourism, but also ensures the creation of a contribution to the well-being of the locals. This confirms the resulting jobs and the associated opportunity for professional independence. In particular, the commitment to the protection and preservation of the environment and the continuation of actions that can mitigate the effects of global warming are important within the framework of ecotourism and are guaranteed by planting trees, the crucial element of this form of travel. Together with the children and young adults living at the organizational locations, earth depressions are planted with tree seedlings. Interacting with the children not only offers travellers the opportunity to get in touch and the associated exchange, but also serves to gain insight into the enormous importance of this action, its influence on the life of the inhabitants of this region and the changes already achieved (MCF Canada, 2012). The range of tourist services is complemented by the level of personally preferred experiences, which in turn fulfill the aspects of flexibility and individuality. The range of activities here ranges from the experience of a safari, a holiday in coastal destinations or the discovery of cultural offers. MCF Africa Safari's existing network of contacts to nationwide residences as well as operating airlines and companies, whose trade spectrum is dedicated to experience-oriented leisure activities during a trip, guarantees the adaptation to personal needs and the selection of service providers who meet your own criteria. The guide, who acts as a tour guide, will also accompany the tourists during the extended stay within the destination Kenya and based on his skills, guarantee a carefree travel route. By means of a modular system integrated

on the website of the Kenyan company name, the potential German customer is given the opportunity to design the trip according to personal preferences. Exemplary criteria are the number of people, the desired travel period, the type of accommodation or the desired activities that would like to be carried out apart from the essential part of planting trees. As a follow-up step, the selected request points are sent to MCF Africa Safaris in the form of a non-binding inquiry and worked out to meet the needs. It should be noted in the context of the design of the offer that despite the activities chosen and their desired sequence before the start of the trip, there is no rough timing. The factor of flexibility arises and enables a corresponding adjustment of the travel package to personal preferences or given situations. Based on the almost uniformly high significance value to which the target group of German ecologically interested people assigns both individually organized (54%) and pre-planned vacation trips (55%) (FUR Research Association Vacation and Travel eV, 2014, p. 32), the range of tourist services creates a combination of both forms of organization and enables a comprehensive approach to the group of people who prefer responsible travel. Both the conclusion of the travel booking and the execution of the service at the holiday destination Kenya are carried out by the MCF Africa Safaris company name. The willingness of the German ecotourist to undertake a flight of several hours to a distant destination, irrespective of the associated and negative effects on the environment, should be seen as a prerequisite for using the described form of travel. The value of making a personal contribution to the destination-related living conditions resulting from the active participation in the charitable initiative of tree planting is of increased relevance.

#### **4. Methodology**

Both the use of questionnaires and an expert assessment are considered as target-oriented research elements within this scientific elaboration. The choice of the German population as the target group of this opinion survey is based not only on the designation as a growing and travel-friendly nation (Reinhardt, 2019), but also on the increasingly increasing level of interest that is devoted to the extensive topics of sustainability. Furthermore, the selection is due to the need for a compatible adjustment to personal vacation planning (Statista, 2020). Likewise, the use of the destination Kenya as a relevant travel area within the framework of this basic opinion research is based on the sector of tourism, which is gaining importance from the point of view of the local economy and the international and willing society, and the knowledge regarding the need for a considerate handling of the natural treasures typical of the country. There were three questionnaires, and one expert interview, each of which was entitled “Development of a niche market for German ecotourists in the East African destination of Kenya”. The questionnaires were to determine the needs and willingness of the German population for a sustainability-related, tourism-related travel packages. The target groups for the questionnaires mentioned are three actors that are essential and influential for the tourism industry, which include the travel-loving individual and the travel agency responsible for booking the holiday, as well as tourism and sustainability-related organizations. In the context of addressing individuals and travel agencies based in Germany, opinion research, each carried out with ten questions, is characterized by demographic questions, which aim to assess the personal background of the survey participants, as well as their own person or institution-related and essential factors for the implementation of a tourist niche market of this kind. The opinion-forming measure is completed by the integration of international tourism and environmental organizations. Their information, which is

based on five questions, is intended to provide information, among other things, on whether a steadily increasing demand for travel behaviour based on the principles of ecotourism is perceived by the German and English-speaking organizations and intends to analyse the scope of intensity by the selected target group can be found. The questionnaire was put on the online platform SurveyMonkey for a period of at least two months. An electronic letter consisting of an enclosed brief description of the travel package and eight topic-specific questions, which are directed to the organization Mully Children's Family and the executive company MCF Africa Safaris, was the final research element. The goal of this opinion survey is to be seen in the expertise about the further development possibilities of the travel package.

## 5. Research Results

### 5.1 Individuals

The questionnaire was completed by 90 participants. The majority were female (81.11%) and are between 19 and 25 years old (82.22%). Regardless of the individually pursued tourist orientation, more than half of the participants (59.55%) regard traveling to remote and exotic destinations as an uncompromising option and is dependent on the existence of appropriate security standards (41.57 %) and quality levels applicable in Europe (13.48%). According to the opinion poll, the channels of internet-based holiday providers (86.52%), traditional travel agencies (48.31%) or the direct contact of service providers (41.57%) have so far been based on the information provided by the respondents. ) is preferred as the form of booking. A financial commitment of 1,500.00 to 2,000.00 euros reflects for over half (55.68%) of the answerers, followed by the price range of 2,000.00 to 2,500.00 euros (30.68%) maximum willingness for a 14-day trip to an exotic destination. In return, just over five percent (5.68%) of the opinion sellers are willing to invest a sum that exceeds the value of 3,000 euros. The predominantly preferred form of accommodation is based on the usual standards of the people participating in the survey, with accommodations with an award of four stars (53.93%), followed by three stars (42.70%). The hotels of the highest class (16.85%) are of least interest in the course of the categories available for selection. From the perspective of around 55 percent of the opinion sellers, the sustainability factor is an important aspect that decides on the choice of accommodation. Based on the integrated research, which is devoted to the interest in active participation in charitable projects during a vacation trip, as shown in Fig. 1, the manifestations are rather important (38.64%) or even unimportant (35.23% ) as the dominant readiness values for support. As shown in Figure 2, approximately 74 percent of respondents perceive tree planting as a possible form of active participation in charities within the target destination as an activity that they would consider personally. The description of the desired travel package resulted in the desire for activities such as the experience of nature (91.91%), participation in a safari (80.90%) or the implementation of sporting activities in the form of hikes or tours the mountain bike (59.55%).

Fig. 1: Willingness to participate in charitable projects



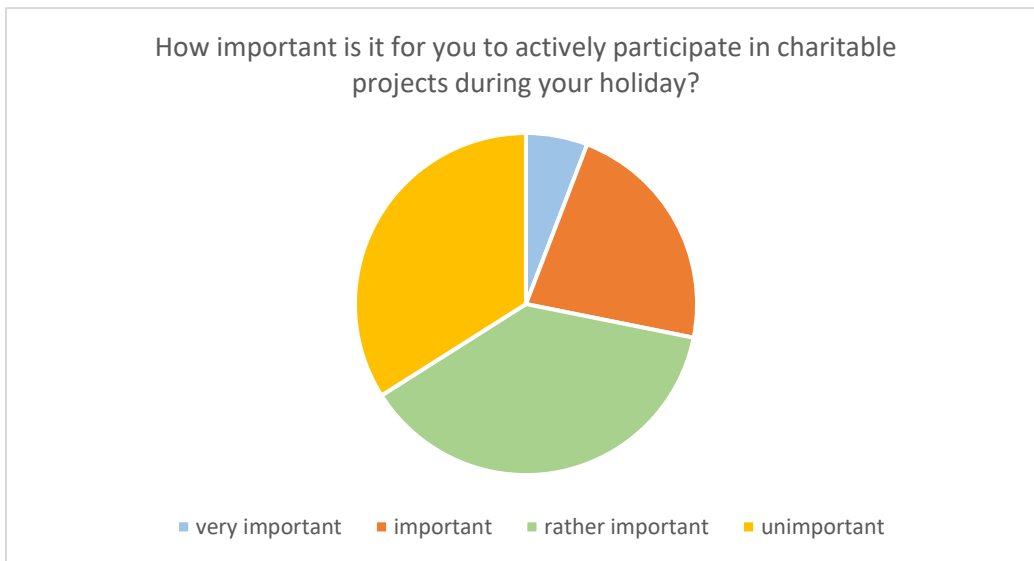
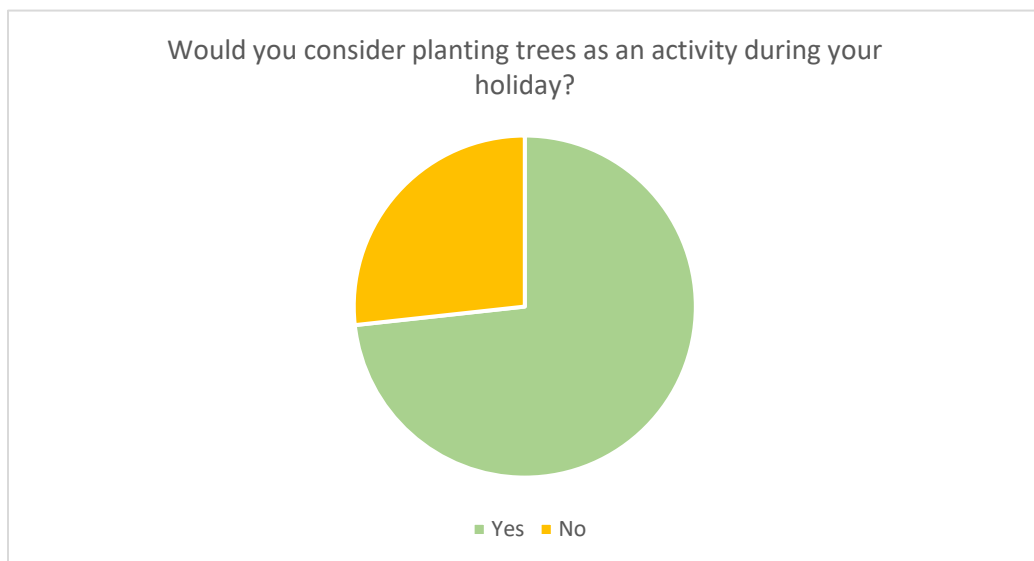


Fig. 2:

Assessment of the willingness to implement tree planting

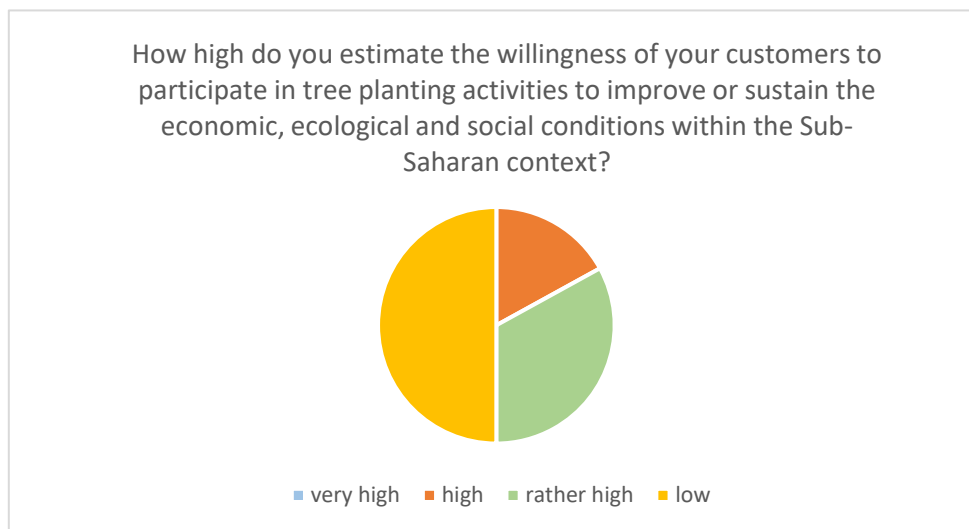


## 5.2 Travel Agencies

To get an understanding of potential of travel agency cooperation 6 were sent “agency questionnaires”. In addition to the overarching theme of ecotourism, 4 of the participants confirmed cooperation with travel agencies whose services are carried out under ecologically sustainable conditions and relate to the target market Kenya. The view of an increased interest in ecotourism was agreed to by about half of the respondents (50%). The others answered as not applicable (33.33%) or applicable (16.67%). Based on a question devoted to the assessment of the customer-specific willingness to participate in the activity of tree planting, the exercise of which pursues the goal of maintaining or improving the sustainability levels within the region of Sub-Saharan Africa, as can be seen from Fig. 3, estimates half of all Participating travel agencies surveyed the interest in participation as low and only about 16 percent

(16.67%) rate it as high. The majority (50%) dedicate a small amount of potential to the offer, followed by how the final exploration based on the personally assigned level of potential that a vacation package reveals this form in order to become an essential part of the international travel market in the future the graded classification of the high (33.33%) and very high potential (16.67%) (Mertl, development of a niche market for German ecotourists in the East African destination Kenya, questionnaire ecotourism in Kenya, 2020).

Fig. 3: Classification of willingness to participate by travel agency end customers

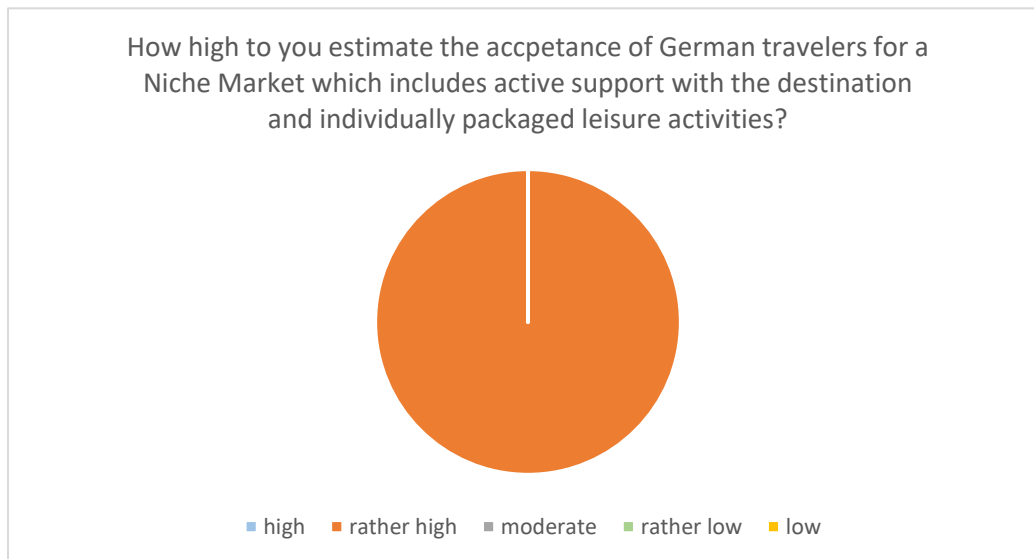


### 5.3 Organizations

8 English speaking organizations participated in the questionnaires. In view of the results of addressing the organizations located in English-speaking countries, around 60 percent (62.50%) of these institutions agree without any reservations that an increasing growing interest in eco-touristic travel behaviour is perceived. In relation to these results, counterparts located in Germany reveal an unqualified agreement on the existence of an interest in the principles of ecotourism, which is encouraging. The majority of the English-speaking answerers (62.50%) are in favour of the understanding of the population for the need for responsible travel to require the provision of important information and only 25 percent of the participating organizations fully agree with the claim. The institutions based in Germany also agree with this assessment and classify its necessity as fully true (50%) and true (50%). As can also be seen from the results of the English-language survey, over 60 percent (62.50%) of those who expressed their opinion spoke out in favour of excluding long-distance travel within the scope of ecotourism. Only 12.50 percent disagree with the assertion and consider traveling to distant destinations to be non-adaptable under the principles of this type of tourism. The acceptance of the German population towards the desired vacation package is rated as rather high by the English-speaking organizations, whereas the German counterparts, as can be seen in Fig. 4,

unanimously have a rather high (100%) acceptance on the part of the tourist niche market. dedicated population (Mertl, development of a niche market for German ecotourists in the East African destination Kenya, questionnaire ecotourism in Kenya, 2020).

Fig. 4: Assessment of the acceptance of the German travel population



#### 5. 4 Interview of Mulli Children's Family and MCF Africa Safaris

Based on the question of the potential of the niche tourist market, the founder of the organization Dr. Charles Mulli, stated that it has a high potential in the travel segment, however, the choice of the right marketing concept is to be regarded as crucial for further offer development. With regard to the exploration of a possibly growing level of interest on the part of the visitors for the tree-planting initiative, the enthusiasm of the guests involved, whose number has increased since then, is particularly emphasized. Dr. Mulli also replies that the stay of German students at the IUBH International University almost four years ago enabled a change in the way the market potential is viewed and confirms the decision to develop tree planting into a comprehensive range. In view of the suitability of the booking process and packages, Dr Mulli confirmed that the packages can be individually put together which would ensure that the German eco-tourist has an unforgettable and individually compiled offer. As can be seen from the answer with reference to the attached brief description of the travel package and the possible range of offers, he believes that the local (German) population knows the booking behaviour typical of the country and also the source market Germany better than the Kenyan population does and therefore should be involved.

Based on this assessment and the existing experience in planning trips, he reveals that the organization MCF and the company name MCF Africa Safaris undoubtedly have the ability to offer unforgettable and individually designed stays. The use of a modular system for determination of the consumer-related travel criteria is considered due to years of use within the organization and also with regard to the implementation of the desired form of vacation. The

creation of a network that informs the visitors involved in the activity of tree planting even after their stay about the development of the tree and the resulting improvement in the environment could, according to the survey results, create a department that will ensure supply with regular, written and graphic reports. In conclusion, Dr. Charles Mulli implemented the travel package into the existing range and also provides information that the basic elements of this offer have already been given and that they are very interested in finalizing it through an MCF Africa Safaris office located in Germany (C. Mulli, founder of the organization Mully Children's Family, email from March 6th, 2020).

## 6. Findings

Tourism and environmental organizations that appear in the form of blogs or comparable institutions on the German and English-speaking market recognize ecotourism as a form of travel that reconciles the interests and needs of a constantly expanding group of needs. The movement evident on the basis of the research results obtained presumably, in connection with the increasing striving for responsible travel behaviour, justifies the creation of booking platforms that follow the principles of ecotourism. In view of the recognizable expansion of this sector and the positive assessment of the German tourism organizations, the realization and intentional placement of the travel package on the German market should be seen as a comprehensive opportunity with regard to future tourism development. As the evaluation also shows, ecotourism does not rule out long-distance travel and, under the condition of being a remote destination, dedicates increased potential to Kenya. Based on this, the assumption can be made that the receipt of essential information that sets out the individual objects and intentions of ecotourism is of enormous importance, especially for individuals interested in sustainability but not yet tested with regard to a vacation trip. The reduction of the often-prevailing false interpretation that ecotourism mainly relates to the aspect of nature and its preservation should be considered as an intended aim.

The German population willing to travel sees the institution of a travel agency as a preferred form of holiday booking even today. This entrepreneurial initiative recognizes the interest in responsible travel, which, despite the personal principles, shows distant destinations can still have ecologically positive elements. Regardless of the continuously growing market for this type of tourism, travel agencies consider the willingness of their end customers to participate in the activity of tree planting within the sub-Saharan Africa region as low. On the basis of this, the claim can be considered that it is preferred by the German-speaking population to use the services of a travel agency to book their tourist stay abroad and a trip that includes the active support of a charitable project at the destination is not yet known. The consumer preference is internet booking for travel via a website especially with a modular system. From the questionnaires with the travel agencies, it should be noted that direct face-to-face contact during the booking process is nevertheless of great importance for individuals.

On the basis of this, it would be recommended that MCF Africa Safaris, would offer their product through a local representation in Germany. This establishment could not only guarantee an increase in interest in participating in a stay abroad of this kind and the fulfilment of the needs of German ecotourists for a direct contact person, but also an expansion of the existing potential of the activity of tree planting. In order to access the result regarding the preferred internet booking, the German-speaking branch should not see itself as a form of the classic travel agency,

but rather as a link between MCF Africa Safaris in Kenya and the desired target market of German ecotourists. The procedure-related adaptation of the booking procedure to a German-language website, which in cooperation with MCF Africa Safaris receives the inquiries received through the modular system to a needs-fulfilling offer, the travel booking is finalized by the conclusion and then handed over to the Kenyan company name for the execution of the holiday offer at the destination, can be considered as an exemplary approach in this regard. A German branch can not only facilitate communication between the ecologically interested traveller and MCF Africa Safaris, but also creates the feeling of increased trustworthiness. Sustainability certifications can help to expand this. The involvement of a German contact person can be seen as crucial to ensure that the domestic target group of ecotourists can be addressed, whereby the assessment of the country-specific booking behaviour and the needs of the German travel population are to be considered as sufficient factors.

Based on the high response from individuals in the age range of 19-25 years and the often-related use of social media, the focus on an internet-related marketing – especially social media – is recommended. In this regard, the use of contributions to tourism or environment-specific web blogs could be used. As a result of the analysis of the questionnaire, the factor of authenticity continues to influence the choice of accommodation and suggests that the ecologically interested individual traveller strives for contact with locals. In view of the research-related sale of choosing an exotic destination based on certain standards as a travel destination, the inclusion and further expansion of the East African Classification System applies, which create a uniform quality in the tourist and East African businesses Application and serves to ensure consumer satisfaction (Tourism Regulatory Authority, 2018), as advisable. In order to meet the need for the sustainability aspect in the choice of accommodation and the related presentations of the target group, the network needs to be expanded to include accommodation providers that meet the principles of ecotourism. The resonance in view of the preferred activity implementation during the further stay in the country has the opportunity to create a demand-oriented orientation for MCF Africa Safaris, on the basis of which the targeted acquisition of suitable and varying service providers can take place. In addition, the constant adaptation and renewal of the network is to be regarded as essential in order to provide a form of offer design that both attracts the attention of a single, ecologically interested person for a trip of this kind, and at the same time matches the personally existing requirements. Subsequently, the factor of individuality proves to be an important criterion when it comes to leisure activities tailored to the customer during the trip to Kenya. In order to preserve the individual aspect, it is only recommended to advertise the travel offer on booking platforms in the form of articles and note contact information as recommended, but not its offer for booking. The decisive factor here is not only the fact that the travel packages have already been prepared and are not customizable, but rather that the intended avoidance of a mass product is to be considered.

The high level of financial willingness to invest in a trip to an exotic destination in relation to the age of the participating prospects shows that an increased amount can be invested in an individual and unique experience. Regardless of the acceptance of German ecotourists for a travel package of this form, which is regarded as high on average by organizations, the support of charitable projects during a vacation is considered unimportant or rather important. In contrast to this view, the individual who is interested in responsible travel behaviour feels a high need for sustainability and shows willingness to plant trees. If these three insights are put in relation to each other, the

hypothesis is revealed that participation in planting trees and the resulting feeling can be part of the change, an awareness of the contribution made personally to the well-being of the local population, the preservation of the environment and the potential impact on yourself. Setting up a network that informs the tree planting participants about the development of the planted trees after the trip through photographs or short letters about the added value that the trees offer the environment and its inhabitants can be an option awareness raising should be considered.

## **7. Limitations**

In the context of this study, methodological features are given which have influenced the research process and its interpretation and are subsequently presented on the basis of the division into the three main stakeholders of individuals, travel agencies as well as environmental and tourism organizations. First of all, it should be emphasized that a research period of two months is not sufficient to enable the three existing levels to be addressed in addition to the sale of the opinion survey using the Internet-related platform SurveyMonkey. The responses of 90 individuals, six travel agencies and eight tourism and environmental organizations achieved within the specified period do not correspond to any representative value. In addition, they may not reflect the view of the entire German population or the proportion of the population that is committed to ecotourism. Within the framework of the above-mentioned levels, the survey was presented in topic-specific groups on social media, within the personal circle of acquaintances or on the basis of internet-based research and then electronically contacted. In addition, it should be noted that the survey was carried out under anonymous circumstances despite the fact that some of the demand groups in question were directly addressed. In addition, factors such as the personal travel experience in the East African Republic of Kenya, the stay and experience of the charitable organization Mully Children's Family as well as participation in the activity of tree planting were included in the underlying assessment. The personal assessment of the organizational founder Dr. Charles Mulli, which was based on the transmission of an email, was also considered in the research. The research measure carried out can be seen as a basic form of probability determination and aims to obtain an assessment of the potential for success of a niche tourist market of this kind.

## **8. Conclusion**

The integration of responsible travel behaviour into the previously cultivated habits during a stay abroad is gaining in importance and is also creating the demand group of ecotourists that is becoming increasingly popular in Germany. The study suggests that there is a market for the product of Eco-Tourism which combines tree-planting and supports charitable non-profit organizations such as Mully Children's Family. There is a growing market of millennials who not only wish to travel and have special experiences, and are willing to spend money on these experiences, especially if they know these experiences are also doing something for the environment and the communities they are visiting. There is a need in the market to have individualized elements that can be chosen. Preferred booking in the German Travel market is online, but the study suggests when traveling to exotic destinations like Kenya, cooperating and booking with a local agency is preferred.

In view of the hypotheses raised at the beginning of this study, it can be recommended that the establishment of a branch of the MCF Africa Safaris in Germany, is to be regarded as essential in order to support the existing field of activity of the charitable organization.

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