

**Paving the Way:**  
**Dynamic Strategies for Tourism in the**  
**Udzungwa Mountains**



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## INTRODUCTION

### *The state of tourism in Tanzania*

In 2013, tourism accounted for 13% of Tanzania's gross domestic product (GDP) (5% directly and 8% indirectly) and brought in more than one million visitors (World Bank 2014). Tourism also accounted for 11.2% of the labor market—directly and indirectly (World Travel and Tourism Council 2014). By 2024, tourism is projected to directly account for 12.6% of Tanzania's GDP (World Travel and Tourism Council 2014). However, tourism is heavily concentrated in the Northern Circuit of protected areas. The southern protected areas account for only 10% of visitation, generating less than 1.5% of total park revenue (World Bank, 2015b).

The large southern protected areas and reserves include Mikumi National Park, Selous Game Reserve, Ruaha National Park, and Udzungwa Mountains National Park (UMNP). These southern parks are home to large numbers of wildlife, endemic and endangered species, and unique biomes. Yet, with visitation rates that are far lower than parks in the northern circuit, the pressure to exploit natural resources in the southern circuit has increased.

With low visitation to the southern parks serving as a direct cause of environmental degradation, strategies to develop increased visitation to Tanzania's southern circuit of protected areas is urgently needed. This strategic tourism development plan for UMNP links economic value to the environmental resources of the protected areas as single unit, identifying numerous opportunities for increasing tourism in this park. This plan focuses on UMNP as a key stepping stone for visitation to the southern circuit. To improve visitation this strategic tourism plan calls for UMNP and Tanzanian National Parks Authority (TANAPA) to focus on three factors outlined by (Matinyi, et al. 2015): *access, visitation, and identity*. This plan analyzes these factors across immediate, short-term, and long-term timeframes. The objectives of this strategy build upon one another to dynamically attract responsible tourism and ensure revenue generation at UMNP.

## BACKGROUND

It is in Tanzania's largest national park, Ruaha, that 10% of world's remaining lion population exists; where wild dogs and the endemic Kipunj monkey live along the Ruaha River (World Bank 2015a). The Selous, a World Heritage Site and largest protected area in Africa, is home to the endangered black rhino (World Bank, 2015a). Between them, Udzungwa Mountains National Park is home to 400 bird species in a richly unique montane climate (Matinyi, et al. 2015). Ruaha, Udzungwa, Selous and Mikumi primarily make up the Southern Circuit, offering a contrasting alternative to the Northern Circuit. Yet the southern protected areas of Tanzania face numerous challenges. Low visitation is coupled with intensive firewood harvesting, wildlife poaching, and agricultural encroachment (Matinyi, et al., 2015). As a case in point, the Selous' elephant population fell 66% between 2009-2013 (Environmental Investigation Agency, 2014). Ruaha saw a similarly devastating loss of elephants from 31,625 in 2009 to 4,200 in 2015, while UMNP is under continual pressure from deforestation and population growth (ITV Report, 2015; Rovero, 2008).

In order to generate park revenue and support conservation activities, efforts are underway to market the southern parks as a circuit. Dissimilar to the northern circuit, the southern parks must

distinguish themselves in ways that capitalize on their unique characteristics. The Selous nature reserve is the largest protected area in Africa, and Ruaha is the largest national park in Tanzania. These two protected areas do in fact offer alternatives to the north. They are even more wild, and free of crowds unlike their popular northern counterparts, offering a truly quintessential African safari.

The estimated 120,000 visitors to the southern protected areas are of differing value segments, demanding various forms of tourism. Eco-tourism, compiled in definition by Fennell (2001) and Diamantis (1999) in Higham and Luck (2007:119), found that “ecotourism takes place in natural, relatively undisturbed areas, tries to minimize the negative impacts on the local communities and the natural environment, and that it contributes to the conservation of those areas”. As Honey (2008) details, the benefits of ecotourism to Serengeti and the northern parks have provided economic benefits, community outreach and better conservation—supported by local communities. Trekking and ecotourism provide both short and long-term solutions to economic and environmental issues, incorporating the local communities as benefactors (Honey 2008). Nature-based tourism revenue in the Udzungwa Mountains contributes directly and indirectly to the local and national economy through local goods, employment, and taxes (Blake, 2008; Kirkby, et al., 2011). Such ideas are consistent with, and build upon, the United States Agency for International Development’s (USAID) tourism strategy plan for southern Tanzania (Matinyi, et al. 2015)

This strategic development plan for the southern circuit aligns with the concepts and goals of the USAID’s Strategy for Tourism Development in Southern Tanzania, developed at the request of former President Jakaya Kikwete. This plan also draws from the Udzungwa National Park General Management Plan (2014). The focus on UMNP highlights its crucial value as a stepping-stone for visitation across the southern circuit of protected areas. It should be understood that the majority of visitation will include other parks; consideration is given as to how the southern protected areas can complement each other. In order to address the issues of low visitation, identity, and access, the solutions proposed here are broken down into immediate, short, and long-term goals. This provides guidance for immediate actions to be taken while existing infrastructure plans for the southern circuit are given the necessary gestation period.

## SITE DESCRIPTION

### *Udzungwa Mountains National Park*

Situated directly between the Selous Game Reserve and Ruaha National Park, UMNP offers a counterpoint in its unique montane landscape, rainforest habitat, and contrasting visitor experience. The Udzungwa Mountains, a part of the Eastern Arc Mountains, are a unique biosphere home to endemic species of flora and fauna, making them a crucial biological hotspot on the global stage (Myers et al. 2000). They are also “amongst the most threatened regions of global biodiversity significance and one where the extinction risk to the fauna and flora is intense, and increasing” (Balmford et al. 2001a,b; Brooks et al. 2002; Burgess et al. 2004 a,b; Burgess et al. 2007: 210). On UMNP’s eastern border is the fertile Kilombero valley, dominated by agriculture. The populations of the approximately 15 villages throughout the valley were rising by 3.4% annually as of 2002, the date of the last formal census in Tanzania (Harrison,

2006). Of the Eastern Arc Mountain's 10,000 km<sup>2</sup>, 1,990 km<sup>2</sup> are protected as the UMNP and managed by TANAPA.

UMNP's north border is the Ruaha River, to the east the Kilombero valley, the southeastern side includes the Ramsar site of the Kilombero flood plain and Udzungwa Scarp part of the Kilombero Nature Reserve (KNR) while the western side is dominated by KNR—that which is not, is bordered by the Msosa River in the north western corner. Access to the park is through 'gates', the north gate at Msosa, close to the towns of Mtandika, Mahenge, Itunda; the southern 'gate' at the park headquarters near Mang'ula B. There are also infrequently used and poorly marked entrances to the park such as the trailhead for Sanje Falls.

Though the strategy outlined here focuses on UMNP, it also incorporates the KNR into its plans for tourism development plan. Administered by the Forest and Beekeeping Division, the KNR encompasses an additional 1400 km<sup>2</sup> collectively made up of formerly individual reserves. Despite its level of protection being comparable to that of national parks, wood harvesting, poaching, and general encroachment are issues that have yet to be adequately controlled (Rovero 2008; Zilihona et al. 1997; Moyer and Mulungu 2004; Rovero et al. 2005; Ndangalasi et al. 2007). Responsible forms of tourism provide alternative livelihoods that can alleviate these conservation conflicts.

Key characteristics of UMNP related to improving tourist visitation include its relative proximity to urban centers as well as its globally significant biological diversity and unique ecosystems. Furthermore, it is proximal to the southern region's most visited protected area – Mikumi National Park. UMNP offers an alternative to the traditional safari experience in open savannahs and woodlands, characteristics its neighbors in the southern circuit provide. Yet a lack of awareness, limited accommodations, and poor access to and within the park, account for the low visitation. Made up largely of day-trips, visitation fails to effectively capture tourism-related revenue. Nevertheless, UMNP visitation for 2012/13 was 7,000, representing an increase of 136% since 2007. In order to further this upward trend in visitation, UMNP will need to diversify its offerings and strategically target a wider market segment.

## A STRATEGIC TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR UZUNGWA MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

**MISSION:** *To enhance the identity of Udzungwa Mountains National Park by providing implementable strategies for marketing and infrastructure, therefore providing a positive visitor experience and increased visitation.*

**VISION:** *Udzungwa Mountains National Park will continue as lush montane forests of endemic species, headwaters of critical rivers, and source of livelihood, through increased visitation of dynamic tourism.*

TANAPA generates revenue and supports conservation through tourism (World Bank, 2015a). To address persistently low visitation numbers, the southern protected areas must focus on niche tourism markets, develop additional infrastructure, and improve marketing strategies. It will be important that the southern protected areas distinguish themselves from those in northern Tanzania. For UMNP in particular, it is not possible to compete with safari-based tourism amidst globally significant wildlife migrations. This strategic plan builds upon the existing literature and attempts to define practical, implementable solutions. **The plan identifies niche tourism markets for UMNP. To attract these niche markets the plan provides marketing techniques designed to develop a unique brand for UMNP. Finally, this plan outlines a strategy for capitalizing on improved access to UMNP being supported by the World Bank (World Bank, 2015a) and USAID (Matinyi, et al. 2015) initiatives (Table 1).**

*Table 1: Overview of strategies and goals*

<b>Key Strategies</b>	<b>Immediate Goals (0-9 months)</b>	<b>Short-Term Goals (5 years)</b>	<b>Long-Term Goals (5+ years)</b>
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain trails</li> <li>• Updated Signs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road</li> <li>• High-Speed Train</li> <li>• Updated Trails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TAZARA</li> <li>• Lodge</li> <li>• Air Travel</li> </ul>
Clientele	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing clientele</li> <li>• Domestic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional Trekking</li> <li>• Nature-Lovers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic</li> <li>• Upscale trekking</li> <li>• Niche tourism markets</li> </ul>
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media</li> <li>• Word of Mouth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expatriate Outreach</li> <li>• Crowdsourcing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scaling up</li> </ul>

In following this plan for the UMNP, TANAPA will meet a stated goal of improved visitation and enhance revenue flow to support local conservation and related community outreach efforts. Proper implementation of this plan will therefore incorporate local businesses and community members, leveraging their personal and cultural assets as inputs to aid in tourism development. Consistent with USAID planning for the region (Matinyi, et al. 2015), this plan targets three important tourism market segments for UMNP and the surrounding protected areas (Table 2).

*Table 2: Target Market Segments*

<b>Nature Lover</b>	High Value (\$500 per day). Seeking genuine and unique from mass safari tourism. Can serve as anchor demographic
<b>Adventurer</b>	Middle-Low Value (\$50-500 per day). Low demands, distinctive experience where other tourist are not.
<b>Emerging Explorer</b>	Low Value (>\$100 per day). Newly emerging tourist, often local national. Low demands as long as affordable.

This strategic tourism plan calls for UMNP to immediately begin implementing changes in infrastructure, clientele, and marketing. Doing so will bolster the identity of the park and increase the visitation and positive visitor experience. The idea behind promoting UMNP within the southern circuit is to provide consistency with USAID’s and the World Bank’s REGROW tourism strategy for southern Tanzania (Matinyi, et al. 2015; World Bank, 2015a). Table 2: Clientele characteristics: based on USAID’s tourism market breakdown in Tanzania (Matinyi, et al. 2015).

## IMMEDIATE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (0-12 months)

*Immediate strategies for the park seek to utilize social media marketing platforms to maintain current clientele, while expanding awareness and solidifying identity. The immediate infrastructure goals are to examine existing accommodations and their relation to possible clientele. Further infrastructure plans utilize crowdsourced reviews of UMNP, acknowledging their importance and making adjustments to garner positive word-of-mouth marketing.*

### **Marketing**

#### *Word of mouth*

Word-of-mouth is a powerful tool for raising awareness. Crowdsourced websites such as Google Reviews and TripAdvisor.com are popular ways for potential tourists to gain insight on differing locations. In examining Google Reviews and TripAdvisor.com, it is clear that simple improvements to the park and its management will greatly increase positive reviews. Visitors enjoyed the forest, animals, and especially Sanje Falls. They were unsatisfied with the condition of the trails, and complications with checking-in (Fig: 1) and (Fig: 2). Sanje Falls is the most popular attraction UMNP, accessed at the Sanje Falls trailhead. Unfortunately, visitors must pay the entrance fee 9 km down the road at the park HQ. This is an issue that is addressed in the General Management Plan (2014: 20), but has not been resolved.

TANAPA will address this issue by operating a simple gate office at the Sanje Falls trailhead, with the ability to process credit cards. Hotels such as Hondo Hondo and Udzungwa Falls Lodge, will buy park passes in bulk and distribute them as needed— ensuring visitors take the time to fill out TANAPA information cards with passport numbers, date of birth, and nationality. Streamlining access to the most popular attraction in the park will increase crowdsourced reviews and positive word-of-mouth marketing.



Figure 1: TripAdvisor Review-2017



Joy H  
Minneapolis,  
Minnesota  
34 18



Reviewed 8 April 2017

### Too much waiting time, we chose too long a path

I heard heard about and seen photos of the beautiful Falls, so I really wanted to swim in them. But many in our group had already done that hike, before, so we opted for the very long one (17 km).

The first frustration was at the park entrance: it took us 2 hours - really, 2 real hours! to get checked into the park, because they had trouble computing how much each person owed because we were a group. Try this: don't be a group, just check in one at a time.

Once we got going, we had to hoof it, because we had a long way to go before dark.

We did get to stop in a small waterfall for a bit, which was refreshing.

We were told to expect to see wildlife, especially monkeys, and our guards carried rifles for that eventuality. But the only thing we saw was some birds, far away.

So, basically, it was a long, steep (we went up 1 km in elevation) walk in the forest all day. By the time we were done (before dark, thankfully!), everyone had decided that they were NOT going to hike anywhere the next day.

The guides were friendly. But we did not learn anything about the forest or area, either.

Figure 2: Google Review 2017

## Udzungwa Mountains National Park

Kidayi, Tanzania

3.6 ★★★★★ 28 reviews

Sort by: Most helpful ▼

**Martin Welter**  
5 months ago -

★★★★★ Went to the Sanje Falls on our own. Had the coordinates for the path by GPS. Access to the path is hard to find. There is a small parking lot and a few semi-grown ones selling hiking sticks and coconut milk. However, there is no sign of anything at all. There are no signs of paying a parking fee. First, you have to climb a small house settlement on a slope. Only upstairs is a signpost. The path itself is easy to walk, although quite strenuous. On the way up there are small signs of various tree and plant species. On the top you can expect a fantastic view and you can enjoy a bath in one of the numerous water pots.

On the way back, we were then approached by a guide that the use of the way costs entrance fee. At the bottom we were greeted by a ranger with a fully loaded weapon and forced to drive in two separate cars to Parkoffice 9 km away. There we had to pay the US \$ 90 official costs and penalty in additional \$ 45 penalty.

The Sanje Falls itself is certainly a worthwhile destination but to pay a total of 45 \$ per person admission and afterwards with weapon force to "procrastinate" is an absolute NO-GO! Especially since you need for this way no guide. This is not the case in any country that wants to open up for tourists.

3

### Social Media

In order to attract clients in the short-term TANAPA will increase its online marketing campaign and resources. Using social media, the park will promote itself and the area as a whole. Research into traveler decision making has found social media to be a decisive factor; a competitive operator must therefore market through social media (Leung, et al. 2013). TANAPA will maintain an active Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and make drastic updates to its homepage. Photographs of the wildlife, waterfalls, or groups passing through, placed on Instagram with a short description and link to the website, is a simple way for UMNP to market itself. Encouraging visitors to post the pictures taken in the park on Instagram or Facebook will include visitors in the marketing experience—and provide imagery.

UMNP Head Quarters has a Tourism Department that will carry out its social media marketing campaign. Should assistance be needed in the managing of social media, the young and able population of Tanzania will be able to assist in managing a robust social media campaign. With low costs, simple strategies, and wide reach, this campaign will provide an identity for UMNP as a unique destination. A social media platform like Instagram, provides a simple way for UMNP to reach a mass audience. Figure 3 shows an example of college students at Sanje Falls. By utilizing hashtags, which aggregate popular search terms, UMNP is able to penetrate foreign markets.

Figure 3: Instagram Marketing 2017



## **Clientele**

### *Maintaining*

Clientele for the immediate future is of lesser concern for the park, but it is important that UMNP make the immediate and necessary infrastructure improvements to maintain this clientele.

Data collected from Tanzania Tourism Statistics Bulletin (2013) shows interesting statistics for Mikumi and UMNP: In 2012/13 7,131 people visited UMNP. Of those, 3,147 were non-residents, and 3,984 were residents. It is important to look at Mikumi NP's 2012/13 visitation distribution as it attracts a larger number of visitors — 45,888 — and UMNP is often visited as an addition to Mikumi. 15,750 were non-residents and 30,138 were residents. It is therefore important that in beginning social media campaigns, UMNP and TANAPA consider their strong current and potential resident clientele. While domestic tourism in Tanzania makes up a small percentage, constrained primarily by low household income (Mariki et al., 2011), expatriates and the existing middle and upper class of Tanzania should be accounted for.

## **Infrastructure**

### *Accommodations*

Along the eastern border of UMNP are hotels and lodges: Udzungwa Falls Lodge, Hondo Hondo Forest Tented Camp, Twiga Hotel, and Mountain View Hotel. They cater to high to low value tourists respectively. Udzungwa Falls offers traditional amenities, is 3km from the Sanje Falls trail, and can accommodate up to 75 people. It also employs 60 people, has a conference hall, and is owned by a Tanzanian. The lodge is an important component in tourist development as it provides an upscale, traditional visitor experience attracting both international and domestic tourists.

Hondo Hondo Forest Tented Camp is located in Mang'ula A on the edge of UMNP. It has six large canvas tents, rustic bandas, and camping area. Hondo Hondo primarily attracts international tourists seeking an authentic yet upscale experience. It is located in proximity to the park HQ and provides logistics for an array of overnight or day hiking trips and cultural experiences. With a variety of accommodations, a camping sight costing \$10 pp/night Hondo Hondo is in a position to attract low-value trekkers and backpackers. Hondo Hondo will continue to attract higher value nature-lovers with wildlife and birding in the park; however, in order to maintain and raise occupancy, TANAPA will improve existing trails, bridges, handrails, and signage. Improving infrastructure within the park will disperse impact, improve access, minimize wet season maintenance, and minimize risk. It is important to note that adventurous travelers will initially utilize game trails and may seek minimal trail infrastructure; however, longevity and sustained revenue for the park hinges on the provision of basic amenities and infrastructure.

## SHORT-TERM TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES (1-5 years)

*Short-term strategies for the park are to harness the influence of the expatriate community in Tanzania. In building off of crowdsourced reviews and easily implementable infrastructure changes to improve visitor experience, the expatriate community will continue to provide a strong source of visitation and word-of-mouth marketing. Clientele is diversified in the short-term to attract markets that spearhead high-value tourism in the long-term, and provide alternative agents for conservation.*

### **Marketing**

In 2013, the Tanzanian Tourism Board, (TTB) through its Cultural Tourism Programme, registered eight new Cultural Tourism Enterprises in Tanzania. According to the Visitor Exit Survey (2013), cultural tourism was the 4<sup>th</sup> most popular reason for visitation. Mang'ula and Msolwa currently engage in cultural tourism with Hondo Hondo and Udzungwa Falls Lodge. However, with increasingly globalized travel, visitors impose selective representations of local culture which harden into official versions over time (Salazar, 2006). In order to mitigate selective representation of local culture, a homestay cultural component will be addressed in the long-term.

#### *Expatriates*

In 2012, the TTB attempted to raise awareness for tourism through foreign representatives, such as ambassadors and high commissioners stationed in Tanzania (Tanzania Tourism Survey, 2015). However, the efforts of the TTB have focused on the north, with the logo and tagline of TTB specifically advertising the northern attractions. It is therefore important that the governmental agencies such as TTB and TANAPA work together to promote the southern circuit. TTB has four offices within Tanzania and a presence in Tanzania's embassies around the world. With an interactive website providing helpful information, and mobile app, TTB is the face of Tanzania's tourism marketing ([www.tanzaniatourism.com/en/](http://www.tanzaniatourism.com/en/)). Therefore, domestically and abroad, TTB will strategically promote the southern circuit and UMNP. The expatriate community is able to easily disseminate information amongst themselves, and further awareness of UMNP through word-of-mouth promotion—consistent with USAID's suggestion for marketing (Matinyi, et al. 2015). The expatriate community within Tanzania is a fruitful source of clientele, often tight-knit, familiar with customs, and under lesser time constraints. The American Embassy in Dar es Salaam has a Community Liaison Office (CLO), responsible for providing recommendations and advice for local travelers. By instead collaborating directly with the CLO, and similar offices, for the marketing of the southern parks, TANAPA and the TTB will tap into dynamic markets with immediate returns. TTB will also coordinate efforts directly with the Tourism Department at UMNP.

#### *Birders*

Within the nature-lover distinction are birders. Birding is multi-billion dollar industry, made up of educated, affluent, and environmentally conscious visitors (Connell, 2009; Biggs, 2013). Walker (2016) outlines a birding event to take place in UMNP as a way to stimulate economic growth and aid in conservation. In calculating multiplier effects of a 5-day birding event in UMNP, Walker found that in a high-expenditure scenario, revenue would be \$1,162,500,

channeling \$540,000 into local income. Her plan capitalizes on existing accommodations and could be implemented in the short-term.

## **Clientele**

### *Market Segments*

Adventurers will be an important short-term market segment for UMNP. USAID finds the adventure-tourist market to be primarily made up of residents—often but not exclusively expatriates—and mid-budget international travelers looking multiple activities in remote locations (Matinyi, et al. 2015). One activity that will flourish in UMNP is trekking. It is important to distinguish between different characteristics of trekking. Upscale trekking differs from traditional trekking but for the purposes of this plan it is assumed that *all* trekking requires clients to have rudimentary outdoor skills and fitness, carry the majority of their gear, and plan to spend two or more nights in the national park. In the short term the park is not fully equipped to accommodate upscale trekkers, but will continue the necessary development to acquire this high-value/low-impact market.

Traditional trekking caters to a younger audience, who demand fewer amenities, both prior to and during their trip. They may spend extended periods of time in the park, traversing the different ecosystems in the park and nature reserve. While traditional trekkers are lower in value, they will utilize the camping at Hondo Hondo and Twiga hotel—thus providing additional revenue for the surrounding area.

Longer treks would allow for retention of revenue generation. A problem that Udzungwa faces is that many visitors access the park for short periods of time. Extended stays that began in Msosa, at the Mbatwa ranger station, on the northern boundary of UMNP, traversing the park and KNR, ending in Mang'ula B, would provide funds to both communities. For the visitors, beginning in the west they would experience the dry, flat region of the north, with possibilities of more traditional wildlife viewing. The western section of the park also offers the Mwanaluvele Caves, Mbatwa Ruins, and Lualla Ngung'umbi Swamp. Doody and Perkin (2003) offer an extensive assessment of trails in the park, and a comprehensive plan for their extension and campsite management. Lewis (2016), proposes a 55-km trail through the southern corner of the park, with possible extensions into the KNR. In combining Doody and Perkin (2003) and Lewis (2016), a traditional trek could spend extensive periods of time in a beautifully wild landscape. The KNR has very few visitors allowing for higher levels of encroachment. By increasing positive human presence, the likelihood of poaching diminishes (Honey, 2008).

Personal experience allows for the adoption of an existing traditional trekking framework; the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) operates extensive trekking trips in Tanzania, incorporating cultural learning and service projects into the experience.

### *Figure 4: Overview of NOLS Tanzania Semester*

*This course involves two and a half months of exploring the wonders of Tanzania while camping throughout, developing leadership and outdoor skills, pushing yourself physically and emotionally, and having fun. Your course will take you from the heights of Kilimanjaro to the Ngorongoro Crater and Olduvai Gorge, the home of early humanity.*

*You'll find yourself enjoying the sunrise from 16,000 feet and mingling with Maasai, Bushmen, Chaga and Meru people in rural villages. Opportunities to immerse yourself in local culture, develop language skills and serve the local communities around you abound. This course is divided into different sections and the sequence of the sections varies by course. You will spend most of your time in rural and backcountry areas (NOLS, 2017).*

STA Travel works with NOLS in Tanzania, to provide logistics for its students. (<http://tours.statravel.co.uk>). STA Travel advertises tours, treks, and safaris for a younger and adventure-seeking demographic. STA Travel contracts local guiding companies, and manages clientele logistics. Marketing traditional trekking in UMNP through STA Travel will be an integral part of attracting clients.

## **Infrastructure**

### *Road*

The road from Kilombero to Ifakara is not paved, and driving conditions are very poor with the bimodal rain pattern. While the World Bank has funded the paving of the road from Kilombero to Ifakara, it remains in development and a construction date is unclear. This is a hindrance to high-value tourism and general volume. In anticipating the development changes the road will bring, TANAPA and tourism ventures will prepare for an influx in tourism numbers and demands. The road will bring economic change to the communities within the valley, and may be a bane to conservation efforts. In regards to the biological health of the park, and economic equality and social resilience of the local population, sustainable tourism efforts will supersede traditional—potentially environmentally and socially destructive—forms of tourism.

### *Train*

While passenger travel through the Selous on the TAZARA rail line has fallen by the wayside, news reports detail a new high-speed train line built in conjunction with Portuguese and Turkish firms, a deal worth \$1.215 billion. The line will connect Dar es Salaam to Morogoro for passengers and freight (Ng'wanakilala, 2017). From Morogoro, the towns of Mikumi, Selous, and Udzungwa are easily accessible.

### *Trails*

Maintaining the trails is an immediate goal, but their expansion as detailed by Doody and Perkin (2003) and Lewis (2016) may be complete in the short-term. A completed trail network would provide entrance through the eastern and northwestern gates of UMNP, and access to the KNR in the west. Providing well-maintained trails will diversify the clientele of trekking outfitters. The Lumemo trail is outlined in (Fig: 5) by Doody and Perkin (2003). Figure 5 is an example of the trail database that should be created and promoted to attract and guide trekking in the park.

Figure: 5- Lumemo Trail guide (Doody and Perkin, 2003).

3.4 Lumemo trail

<b>Trail Name:</b>	Lumemo River Trail
<b>Start/End Point:</b>	Lumemo Ranger Post UTM 37 243101 E 9114605 N (Last point that vehicles can reach) End UTM 37 265848 E 9137059 N
<b>Distance:</b>	55 kms (excluding Mwanihana ascent) 60-65 kms (kms including Mwanihana ascent)
<b>Time:</b>	5.5 days (excluding Mwanihana ascent) 6.5 days (including Mwanihana ascent) Based on walking six hours / day, stopping 1 hr for lunch and other stops for views, wildlife and rests. Slower hikers would be advised to allow for another day.
<b>Difficulty:</b>	Moderate to difficult in places.
<b>Elevation:</b>	This route climbs from 340m asl to 940m asl and returns to 340m. For the first 3.5 days the gradient is very mild following the Lumemo River north. On day 3 the trail leaves the Lumemo valley and some steep slopes are climbed as the trail heads eastwards to Njia Panda campsite, from which point the main Mwanihana trail then descends to the exit point on the road. Ascending Mwanihana peak (2080m) adds a further 1000 m climb starting from Njia Panda campsite.
<b>Habitat Types:</b>	Miombo woodland Grassland Bracken Montane, Submontane and Riverine Forest <i>Afromomum</i> 'groves'
<b>Attractions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remote wilderness</li> <li>• Lumemo River area, where wildlife such as Cape clawless otter, Pel's fishing owl, giant kingfisher, elephant, buffalo, bushbuck, waterbuck and duiker occur</li> <li>• Mwanihana peak</li> <li>• Sub-montane forest with the many monkeys that occur there</li> <li>• The pools and water falls of the Sonjo river</li> </ul>

## LONG-TERM TOURISM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (5+ years)

*Long-term strategies are to capitalize on successful marketing strategies and grow in scale. Short-term clientele like adventurers spearhead attraction of high-value clientele, while significant infrastructure development reinforce positive visitor experience. Finally, niche markets of tourism that strongly promote economic, social, and environmental values are sought out and prioritized.*

### **Marketing**

TANAPA will continue visitor surveys to maintain detailed information on the demographics of visitors, and monitor changes to visitor demographics as goals are implemented.

### **Clientele**

Upscale trekking will exist in the long-term. Upscale trekking will require a maintained and extensive trail network. Clients will be high-value, 35+ in age, and demand greater comforts. If the clients are to spend extended periods of time in the park, they will require amenities provided by a lodge.

A current lodge operator such as Foxes Safaris will be invited to construct a high-end eco-lodge within the park. Foxes Safari Camp already operates seven high-end camps throughout southern Tanzania, and is well-positioned to assume this role. Foxes operates a lodge in Ruaha National Park offering traditional safaris; clients of Foxes would then journey to the western edge of UMNP and begin their trek in a familiar ecosystem. This lodge will attract upscale trekkers who will utilize the lodge as a half-way point for long treks, and as a base for multiple day trips. This lodge will also cater to the growing wellness travel market segment by offering yoga and holistic medicine based on local medicinal plants—an industry currently worth \$439 billion, accounting for \$1.3 trillion in global economic impact (Global Wellness Institute, 2015). Furthermore, the lodge will follow Hondo Hondo and provide camping access for traditional trekkers. This lodge will promote conservation and community outreach for itself, its employees, and its visitors. An outfitter such as Abercrombie & Kent offers high-end tours, and will work with Foxes to coordinate upscale trekking in the park. It will be important for Abercrombie & Kent to work with TANAPA and their guides to coordinate their efforts.

### *Niche Markets*

In addressing long-term interests of adventure seeking tourists, a homestay component will be established. Family homestays give tourists the opportunity to experience new culture and life in an intimate and authentic setting. Homestays can provide vital income for rural communities, especially those who are otherwise disconnected from tourism ventures (Honey 2008). As homestays still require marketing and logistics (Davis, 2006), STA Travel and local guiding companies will be involved, but UMNP has a community outreach department and is equipped to lay a foundation for meaningful cultural tourism to occur. A homestay could be a standalone opportunity or incorporated into trekking trips. Once trekking and high-end eco-tourism ventures had established themselves, a permanent outfitter would open up offering gear rental, canopy tours, and in-depth ecological tours. An outfitter would have the possibility of operating a low-value hostel for backpackers, a restaurant as a gathering point for locals and foreigners, a farm,



and finally a microbrewery—channeling local brewing knowledge. A farm would operate as a volunteer and local operation, incorporating sustainable and innovative technologies. The farm would support an internal, regional economy by providing goods to the lodge and trekking companies. Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF-ing) is a popular organization for agritourism, and autonomously attracts tourism—WOOF Tanzania has several established partnerships (<http://wwooftanzania.org>).

### *Domestic Market*

Once a dynamic and consistent flow of tourism is established the southern circuit can begin exploring lateral ventures, while maintaining a strong level of environmental stewardship and ecotourism. As affluence increases, so does leisure time. According to the African Development Bank, Africa has the fastest growing middle class in the world. USAID categorizes these tourists as emerging explorers, and with continued economic growth, emerging explorers will make up an important market segment (Matinyi, et al. 2015). The market of emerging explorers is focused in Dar es Salaam, and Udzungwa provides a reasonably priced destination. Group travel is a popular option and serves the park well in bringing concentrated numbers. Accommodations will be a consideration as much of the existing offerings are high end. Lodges should adjust rates, or seasonally accommodate a population who might otherwise be left out.

## **Infrastructure**

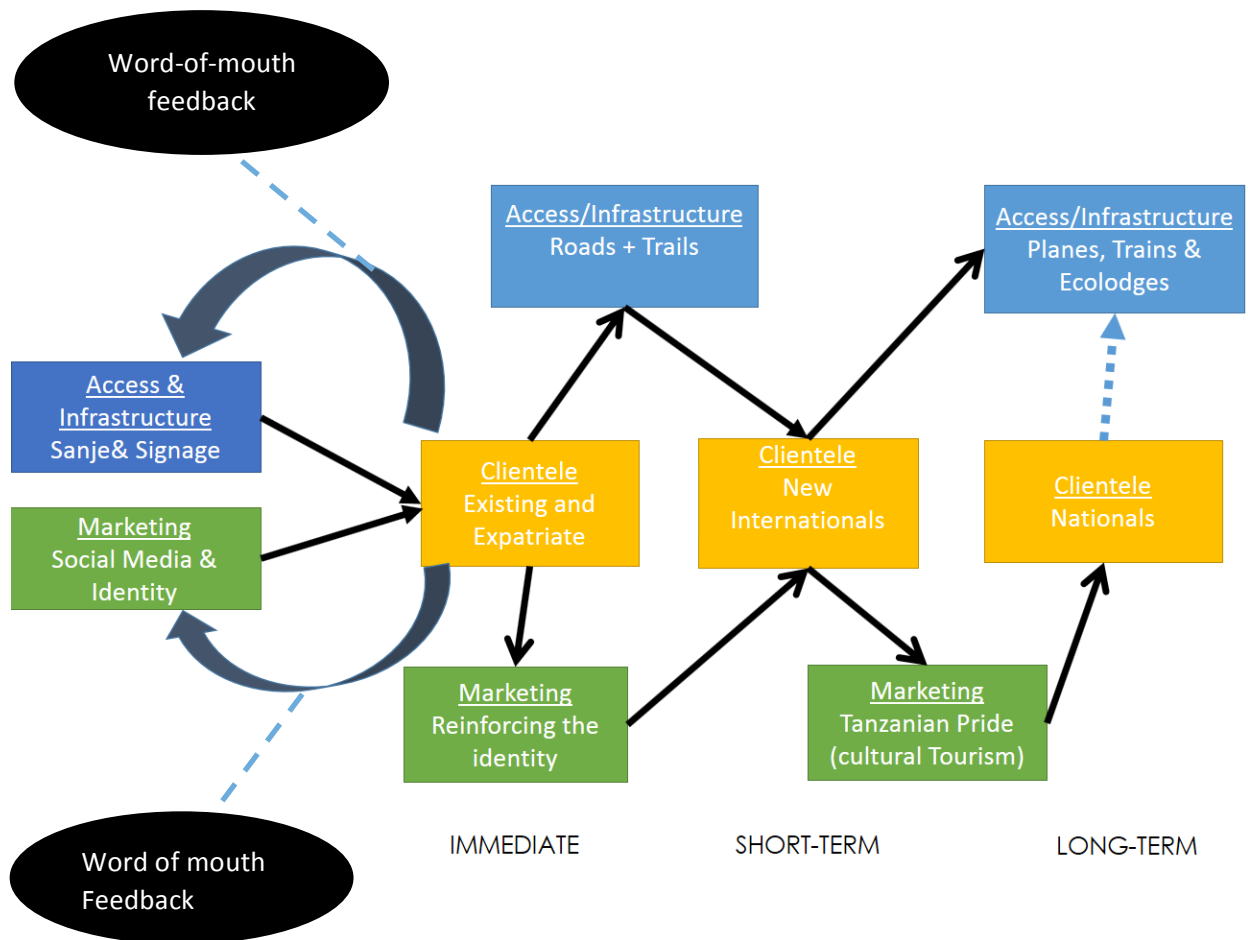
### *Train*

Since 1975 the Tanzanian Zambian Railway Authority (TAZARA) line has linked Dar es Salaam to Kapiri Mposhi. The railway has since suffered from disrepair, poor management, and from competition due to usage of the TANZAM highway. However, the railway provides an intriguing alternative to the dangerous and congested roads that lead away from Dar es Salaam. The TAZARA line has three stops in the Selous and stops at Msolwa B and Mwaya. In the 1990's the route between Kidatu and Mbeya was increasingly popular with passengers and personal wares; so TAZARA established a shuttle train or *kipsi* of great value to the local population (Monson 2009). Furthermore, the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT) has called for the rehabilitation of the TAZARA line as a productive way to transport goods (Milder, et al. 2012). Rail transport of bulk goods is 3-5 times more fuel efficient than road in developed countries (Federal Railroad Administration 2009). SAGCOT believes the ratio to be even higher in the southern corridor, furthering the argument for improved rail (2012). The former reliance on, and plans for investment in rail, make train transportation a unique option for tourists traveling to the southern circuit. Udzungwa Falls Lodge is in the town of Msolwa, and Hondo Hondo provides transportation to the Mwaya train station for a nominal fee.

## IMPLICATIONS

In implementing this strategic tourism plan, UMNP stands to immediately change aspects of its identity through marketing. In addressing the concerns found in crowdsourced reviews, and making small infrastructure changes, the park will reap the rewards of positive reviews—a form of marketing. These changes are marked by increased visitation and revenue, allowing for further adjustments. With increased access from the road, and an established marketing campaign, the park will attract diverse subsets of tourism. Expatriates offer a unique market segment as many of them may have visited the Northern Circuit; expatriates form a tight-knit community that uses word-of-mouth to disseminate information, tapping into this segment is feasible through CLO's and will have large returns. Other tourism-market subsets are lower in value and demands—therefore attracted to UMNP— but have high-value equivalents. A foundational tourism base of traditional trekking is built upon by higher-value trekking. High-value trekking shares characteristics with birders, a valuable niche market. This strategic development plan's goals are temporally linked to complement one another in a logical flow, with results that pave the way for further investment.

Figure 6: Temporal flow chart of strategic tourism plan



## CONCLUSIONS

This strategic tourism plan has addressed the issue of low visitation in the southern circuit, and its implications for conservation. The plan argued that low visitation is caused by a lack of identity, weak marketing, and poor access to UMNPA and the Southern Circuit. This strategic plan outlined three areas of concentration for improving visitation: identifying the clientele, improving infrastructure, and marketing accordingly. Segmented for implementation over time, this plan allows for improvements to complement one another and adapt accordingly. With tourism-driven and community-integrated economic systems grounded in natural areas, comes an opportunity for sustainable environmental protection. Udzungwa Mountains National Park has the potential to place itself as a unique and dynamic tourist stepping stone in the Southern Circuit of protected areas. Its location between Ruaha and Selous/Mikumi, and its unparalleled ecosystem make it a natural precursor for wider visitation amongst the protected areas of Southern Tanzania. Tourism accounts for 13% of Tanzania's GDP, yet 85% of TANAPA's revenue comes from Serengeti and Mount Kilimanjaro (World Bank, 2015a). The concentration of revenue and visitation within the Northern Circuit may lead to the degradation of their attractions and therefore reduce visitation. In distributing visitation across the total simulacrum of Tanzania's protected areas, user stress is alleviated and revenue generation is more evenly distributed. Doing so will diversify Tanzania's tourism offerings, allowing it to attract a wider range of tourists and remain one of the world's premier tourism destinations.

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