

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF TOURISM: CHOSE HILL AT NYIKA NATIONAL PARK IN MALAWI

BRIGHT M.C. NYIRENDA¹ & JAMES M. CHILEMBWE²

¹Senior Lecturer, Department of Tourism Mzuzu University, Malawi

²Lecturer, Department of Tourism Mzuzu University, Malawi

ABSTRACT

This study investigates whether tourism can be a blight; considering its activities that destroys the environment eventually causing climate change world over. There is always a blame game which has for the past several decades been leveled against the industrialized countries charging them for their green house gas emission into the atmosphere warming the ozone layer, resulting into climate change, can now be mitigated by other research evidence which also seem to show that tourism activities also contribute about 15% to the factors that cause world's climate change especially the climate change that has and still is affecting the African continent. For the past century, climate change was attributed to industrialized countries. The blame has been that CO₂ emitted from industries into the atmosphere caused global warming hence, climate change.

This statement could be true if all things remaining equal. However, research on the impact of tourism on the environment is vivid where tourist activities also seem to contribute to climate change. The study carried out in Nyika National Park (protected area), around Chose Hills in Rumphi District, Malawi, showed empirical evidence that may reverse the blame that was squarely leveled against the industrialized countries. The truth is that tourists bring seeds of destruction to the destination area they visit; destroying, disrupting and despoiling the very environment (attraction) that attracted them. Results further revealed that visitors to Chose Hills contributed to the alteration of the hills appearance through their activities. The visitors drastically and negatively altered the environment that is, from a foliated tree (environment) to almost bare environment which is resulting in less and less rainfall to the area. It was observed that the climate around the area was also getting warmer.

KEYWORDS: Tourism, Environmental Impacts, Monitoring, Nyika National Park, Malawi