

# Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

## CBRM Database

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<b>Case Study Name:</b>	The Role of Tourism Employment in Poverty Reduction and Community Perceptions of Conservation and Tourism in Southern Africa		
<b>Author:</b>	Synman, S.		
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<b>Region:</b>	Africa - South of Sahara		
<b>Country:</b>	South Africa		
<b>Ecosystem Type:</b>	Other (Subtropical)		
<b>Social Characteristics:</b>	Other (Former Apartheid State)		
<b>Scale of Study:</b>	National		
<b>Resource Type:</b>	Tourism/Ecotourism		
<b>Type of Initiative:</b>	Research-Driven Project		
<b>Community-Based Work:</b>	Other (Socioeconomic Assessment)		
<b>Keywords:</b>	High-end Ecotourism, Rural Communities, Poverty Reduction, Conservation Attitudes, Southern Africa, Tourism Employment		

**Summary:**

High-end ecotourism operations in African protected areas often claim to share the benefits of ecotourism with surrounding rural communities through employment as well as “trickle down” effects of revenues that result from such operations. The receipt of benefits from ecotourism is also claimed to promote an appreciation of biological diversity and conservation in surrounding communities. In practice, these claimed benefits can be challenging to measure and no multi-country study has attempted to assess the efficacy of these claims across a variety of circumstances. This study assessed various impacts of ecotourism employment at study sites in Botswana, Malawi and Namibia. Analysis of household income, social welfare impacts and the number of people indirectly affected by ecotourism employment indicates that rural communities are moving towards an engagement with the market economy as a result of ecotourism operations. Monthly income from ecotourism employment was shown to enable households to invest in assets, education and “luxury” goods, which improved financial security and social welfare in remote, rural areas. A thorough analysis of the various factors impacting attitudes towards conservation and tourism showed that ecotourism employment positively affects attitudes, though level of education showed the largest impact.