



WILDLIFE TOURISM  
COLLEGE OF MAASAI MARA  
next generation global conservation education

# SAVANNAH DISPATCH

1<sup>ST</sup> Edition | May 2026





*Dear Partner,*

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The Wildlife Tourism College of Maasai Mara continues to grow from strength to strength. From its launch in April 2024, the College has made tremendous progress towards achieving its key objectives that include training in conservation leadership, skills development and climate action. Through targeted programs, we have been able to graduate 36 students in various fields, launched new courses, delivered several short courses in tourism and hospitality and hosted local and international groups. In addition, the College has been able to receive key local and international guests, attesting to its objective of becoming the hub for conservation and community empowerment initiatives in the landscape. The College has received support from various partners to implement its objectives. We are privileged and honoured to collaborate with partners to complement our initiatives. Looking ahead in the year, we will be graduating our second lot of 40 students as well as launching our Strategic Plan for 2026-2030 that will guide us in our policy and strategic direction over the coming years. I invite you to find time to read the Savannah Dispatch and get insights into our achievements and plans for the year ahead.

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**Ashe! Thank you! Asante.**

*Moriaso Nabaala*

**Principal**



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# OUR STORY ➤

Across the Maasai Mara ecosystem, conservation and community livelihoods remain deeply interconnected. The region's globally recognized wildlife, rich cultural heritage, and thriving tourism economy all depend on healthy ecosystems, responsible tourism practices, and active community participation in conservation efforts. Yet as environmental pressures continue to rise through climate change, habitat fragmentation, biodiversity loss, and population growth, the future of conservation increasingly depends on empowering local communities and equipping young people with practical skills and opportunities. It is within this context that Wildlife Tourism College (WTC) continues to play a transformative role in the Maasai Mara landscape. Located within the Pardamat Conservation Area, WTC was established to address the growing need for conservation-minded professionals capable of supporting sustainable tourism, wildlife conservation, and community development. The institution evolved from the former Koiyaki Guiding School, a pioneering initiative founded in 2005 to equip local youth with professional safari guiding skills and create pathways into the tourism industry. Over time, the programme's success and growing demand highlighted the need for a broader institution capable of offering multidisciplinary training aligned with the evolving needs of the conservation and tourism sectors. Today, Wildlife Tourism College has grown into a dynamic centre for conservation education, tourism training, hospitality development, research, and experiential learning. The College offers high-quality certificate and diploma programmes designed to equip learners with practical competencies, leadership skills, environmental awareness, and industry experience required within the tourism and conservation sectors. What makes WTC unique is its strong emphasis on experiential and community-centred learning. Situated within one of Africa's most important wildlife ecosystems, the College offers students a living-learning environment where classroom instruction is integrated with direct exposure to wildlife conservation, tourism operations, community engagement, and ecosystem management. Students do not simply study conservation in theory they actively engage with conservation realities within the Maasai Mara landscape. Through field activities, mentorship programmes, practical placements, and interaction with conservation practitioners, learners gain firsthand understanding of wildlife management, biodiversity conservation,

sustainable tourism, and the relationship between ecosystems and local livelihoods. This practical approach strengthens students' appreciation of conservation while equipping them with industry-relevant competencies and real-world problem-solving skills. The College continues to empower young people, particularly from local Maasai communities, by creating access to education, employability skills, and professional development opportunities that directly contribute to sustainable livelihoods. In a region where tourism remains a key economic driver, WTC bridges the gap between education and employment by preparing graduates for careers in safari guiding, hospitality, tourism operations, conservation management, and community-based tourism enterprises. Since its establishment, the institution has trained hundreds of professional safari guides and hospitality practitioners, many of whom are now employed across conservancies, lodges, camps, tourism companies, and conservation organizations throughout Kenya. WTC continues to strengthen local participation in the tourism industry while ensuring that communities living alongside wildlife are directly involved in conservation-linked economic opportunities. WTC's impact extends beyond academics. The institution has become a platform for youth empowerment, leadership development, and environmental stewardship. Through partnerships with conservation organizations, tourism operators, development agencies, and educational institutions, students continue to benefit from mentorship, sponsorship support, internships, exchange programmes, and exposure to global conservation perspectives. Strategic collaborations with organizations such as the Saruni Basecamp Foundation, Maasai. In addition to academic training, the College serves as a growing platform for conservation dialogue, research collaboration, and climate awareness. Its strategic location within the Maasai Mara allows researchers, conservation practitioners, students, and visitors to engage directly with one of the world's most important ecosystems while exploring solutions to emerging environmental challenges affecting both people and wildlife. The institution's broader vision is rooted in the belief that conservation can only succeed when communities benefit directly from protecting ecosystems. By equipping young people with practical skills, professional opportunities, and environmental awareness, WTC is helping build a generation of conservation ambassadors capable of driving sustainable development within their communities and beyond.



Today, Wildlife Tourism College stands as a bridge between:

- Education and employment
- Conservation and community development
- Tourism and sustainability
- Local knowledge and global learning
- Youth empowerment and environmental stewardship

As the institution continues to grow, its mission remains clear: to develop a new generation of conservation and tourism professionals equipped with the skills, values, and practical experience necessary to protect ecosystems, strengthen communities, and contribute meaningfully to sustainable development locally and globally.

## OUR ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES



Wildlife Tourism College offers programs designed to equip learners with practical skills, professional competencies, and industry knowledge required in the tourism, hospitality, and conservation sectors. The programmes emphasize hands-on learning, practical assessment, and workplace readiness, ensuring that learners acquire demonstrable skills aligned with industry standards and labour market needs.

# Diploma in Tourism Management

The Diploma in Tourism Management is designed to develop skilled professionals capable of managing and supporting tourism operations within both local and international tourism environments. The programme equips learners with competencies in tourism planning, destination management, customer care, tour operations, sustainable tourism, marketing, and entrepreneurship. Students gain practical

understanding of travel operations, tourism product development, visitor management, communication skills, and tourism policy while also developing leadership and problem-solving abilities necessary within the tourism industry. The programme further exposes learners to conservation-based tourism approaches, enabling them to appreciate the relationship between tourism, environmental sustainability, and community livelihoods. Through practical training, educational tours, and industry attachment opportunities, students acquire hands-on experience that prepares them for careers in tour companies, conservancies, lodges, destination management organisations, and other tourism enterprises.



## Craft Certificate in Tour Guiding and Travel Operations



The Certificate in Tour Guiding and Travel Operations is aimed at preparing professional safari guides and travel experts with strong practical and interpretive skills required within the tourism and conservation industry. The programme provides comprehensive training in wildlife interpretation, guiding techniques, ecology, customer handling, communication skills, cultural heritage, geography,

conservation principles, safari logistics, and travel coordination. Students are trained to understand wildlife behaviour, identify flora and fauna, interpret ecosystems, and deliver engaging visitor experiences while promoting responsible tourism practices. Emphasis is also placed on safety procedures, ethical guiding practices, environmental awareness, and professionalism. Being situated within the Maasai Mara ecosystem gives learners direct exposure to wildlife habitats and conservation operations, allowing them to gain valuable field experience through game drives, practical guiding exercises, and interaction with tourism professionals.



# Craft Certificate in Catering and Accommodation

The Certificate in Catering and Accommodation is designed to equip learners with practical hospitality skills and service excellence competencies required within hotels, lodges, camps, restaurants, and other hospitality establishments. Learners develop skills in food preparation, menu planning, table setting, hospitality communication, accommodation management, and customer service while also understanding workplace professionalism and teamwork. Training emphasizes practical



application through kitchen sessions, restaurant service simulations, housekeeping demonstrations, and industry attachment opportunities that expose students to real hospitality environments.

## Certificate in Hotel and Catering Supervision



The Certificate in Catering and Hotel Supervision is aimed at developing supervisory and operational management competencies within the hospitality industry. The programme prepares learners to oversee hospitality operations while ensuring service quality, efficiency, and customer satisfaction.

Students are trained in:

- Hospitality supervision and leadership
- Food and beverage operations
- Cost control and budgeting
- Housekeeping supervision
- Front office coordination
- Workplace communication and conflict resolution

The course emphasizes operational planning, decision-making, problem-solving, teamwork, and professionalism within hospitality settings. Learners also gain practical exposure to hospitality management systems and supervisory responsibilities through field training and industry attachment.



# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

## From Trainee to Professional Guide — Stilian Yiale

Stilian Yiale's journey is a powerful reflection of how practical education, mentorship, and determination can transform the lives of young people within the Maasai Mara ecosystem. His story highlights the growing impact of Wildlife Tourism College (WTC) in preparing students for meaningful careers within tourism, hospitality, and conservation. After enrolling at Wildlife Tourism College, Stilian pursued a course in Catering and Hotel Supervision, where he developed practical hospitality skills, professional discipline, communication abilities, and customer service competencies. Beyond classroom learning, the programme exposed him to real-world hospitality and tourism environments, helping him build confidence and prepare for industry opportunities.

Driven by passion and commitment, Stilian later joined Saruni Basecamp as a guiding trainee, beginning a new chapter in his professional journey. During his six-month training period, he immersed himself fully in the learning experience, spending time observing experienced guides, understanding guest expectations, studying wildlife behaviour, and strengthening his knowledge of the Maasai Mara ecosystem. The mentorship and practical exposure he received allowed him to gain valuable hands-on experience in:

- Safari guiding and guest handling
- Wildlife interpretation and conservation education
- Communication and storytelling skills.
- Tourism operations and field professionalism



- Conservation practices within the Mara ecosystem

Through continuous learning, patience, and determination, Stilian gradually built the confidence and competence required within the highly competitive tourism industry. His experience at Saruni Basecamp not only strengthened his technical guiding abilities but also deepened his appreciation for conservation and responsible tourism. Today, Stilian has successfully grown from a trainee into an independent professional guide confidently leading guests and delivering memorable safari experiences. His career has since expanded beyond the Maasai Mara, and he is currently working in Samburu at one of the sister camps under Saruni Basecamp, where he continues to broaden his knowledge and gain exposure to a different ecosystem, wildlife species, and tourism environment. Reflecting on his journey, Stilian expresses deep appreciation for the role Wildlife Tourism College played in shaping his future:

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“My experience at Saruni Basecamp has been a truly transformative journey in my career. I joined as a guiding trainee, where I spent six months learning, observing, and building my confidence in the field.

During this period, I gained hands-on experience in guiding, guest interaction, wildlife interpretation, and conservation practices within the Mara ecosystem. After completing my training, I have now grown into an independent guide, confidently leading guests and delivering quality experiences on my own. Currently, I am working in Samburu at one of the sister camps under Saruni Basecamp, where I continue to expand my knowledge and skills in a new and unique ecosystem.

I sincerely thank Wildlife Tourism College for shaping my skills and preparing me for this journey. Through my course in Catering and Hotel Supervision, I gained a strong foundation in hospitality, discipline, and professionalism, which has greatly contributed to my growth in the tourism industry.

To all students currently studying, I encourage you to believe in yourself, remain disciplined, and never give up on your dreams.”

Stilian’s story reflects the transformative role WTC continues to play in creating pathways for youth employment, professional growth, conservation leadership, and sustainable livelihoods. His journey demonstrates how education, mentorship, and opportunity can empower young people to build successful careers while contributing meaningfully to tourism and conservation within Kenya and beyond

# OUR MODEL

Partnership



People



Sustainability

Institutional  
Collaboration  
and Experiential  
Learning

Community  
Impact and  
Youth  
Empowerment

Solar  
Powered  
Learning

## Institutional Collaboration and Experiential Learning



WTC continues to strengthen its experiential learning approach through strategic partnerships, field-based training, and conservation-focused collaborations that enhance both student learning and institutional growth. These collaborations play a critical role in



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supporting the College's vision of developing skilled, conservation-minded professionals equipped to contribute to sustainable tourism, hospitality, wildlife conservation, and community development. Through strong industry and conservation linkages, the College has created a learning environment that combines classroom instruction with practical exposure and real-world experience. Students are continuously exposed to tourism operations, hospitality practice, conservation activities, and community engagement programmes that help bridge the gap between education and industry expectations.

A major focus of these collaborations has been strengthening mentorship, practical learning, career development, and conservation exposure for students. Through field experiences and direct interaction with tourism and conservation professionals, learners gain valuable insights into responsible tourism practices, wildlife conservation, environmental stewardship, and professional service delivery.

Situated within the Pardamat Conservation Area, WTC provides a unique living-learning environment where students actively participate in wildlife conservation, tourism operations, hospitality training, and community-led conservation initiatives within the Maasai Mara ecosystem. This setting allows learners to connect theory with practice while developing practical competencies, leadership skills, and environmental awareness.

The institutional collaborations continue to support:

- Student sponsorship and access to education
- Mentorship and professional career guidance
- Internship and industrial attachment opportunities
- Practical field exposure and experiential learning
- International exchange and volunteer programmes
- Training resources and institutional support
- Networking and professional development opportunities
- Enhanced employment pathways for graduates

These collaborations have significantly strengthened the College's ability to deliver practical and industry-responsive education while expanding opportunities for students from local communities. The support has also contributed to institutional growth, improved learning experiences, and increased exposure to global conservation and tourism perspectives.

Beyond academics, the partnerships continue to strengthen community-centred conservation, youth empowerment, and sustainable development initiatives within the Maasai Mara landscape. Through collaboration, WTC continues to position itself as a growing centre for conservation education, experiential learning, and sustainable tourism training dedicated to shaping future conservation and tourism leaders.



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# Community Impact and Youth Empowerment

WTC continues to serve as a community-centred institution within the Maasai Mara ecosystem, creating employment and training opportunities while also strengthening local economic circulation through procurement from nearby suppliers. This approach supports small business growth and ensures that the benefits of tourism and training activities directly reach surrounding communities.

Through partnerships with other key stakeholders, the College supports:

- Career guidance and gender sensitization programmes
- Skills development in hospitality and conservation tourism
- Strengthening of local supply chains and small businesses



## High Level Visits

- ✓ *NORAD*
- ✓ *Global Centre on Adaptation*
- ✓ *French Embassy in Kenya*
- ✓ *Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife*

Through these partnerships, WTC continues to benefit significantly from sponsorship support, mentorship, internship placements, practical industry exposure, and enhanced employment pathways for students. The sponsorship contributions have been instrumental in supporting student learning opportunities, exchange programmes, training resources, and institutional development initiatives.



# Solar Powered Learning

Sustainability remains a core pillar of both the operational and academic framework at Wildlife Tourism College.

The College continues to utilize solar energy as a key power source, reducing reliance on conventional energy while supporting a reliable and environmentally responsible supply for daily operations and training activities.

The continued use of solar energy has contributed to:

- Reduced operational costs
- Improved energy stability
- Reduced carbon footprint
- Environmentally responsible operations

Beyond infrastructure, sustainability remains integrated across all academic programmes, ensuring students are equipped with the knowledge, practical skills, and values needed to promote environmental responsibility within tourism, hospitality, and conservation sectors. Through these efforts, WTC continues to strengthen its position as a model institution for sustainable training and environmentally responsible development within the Maasai Mara





# VOLUNTEER PROGRAMMES, INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE AND FIELD LEARNING

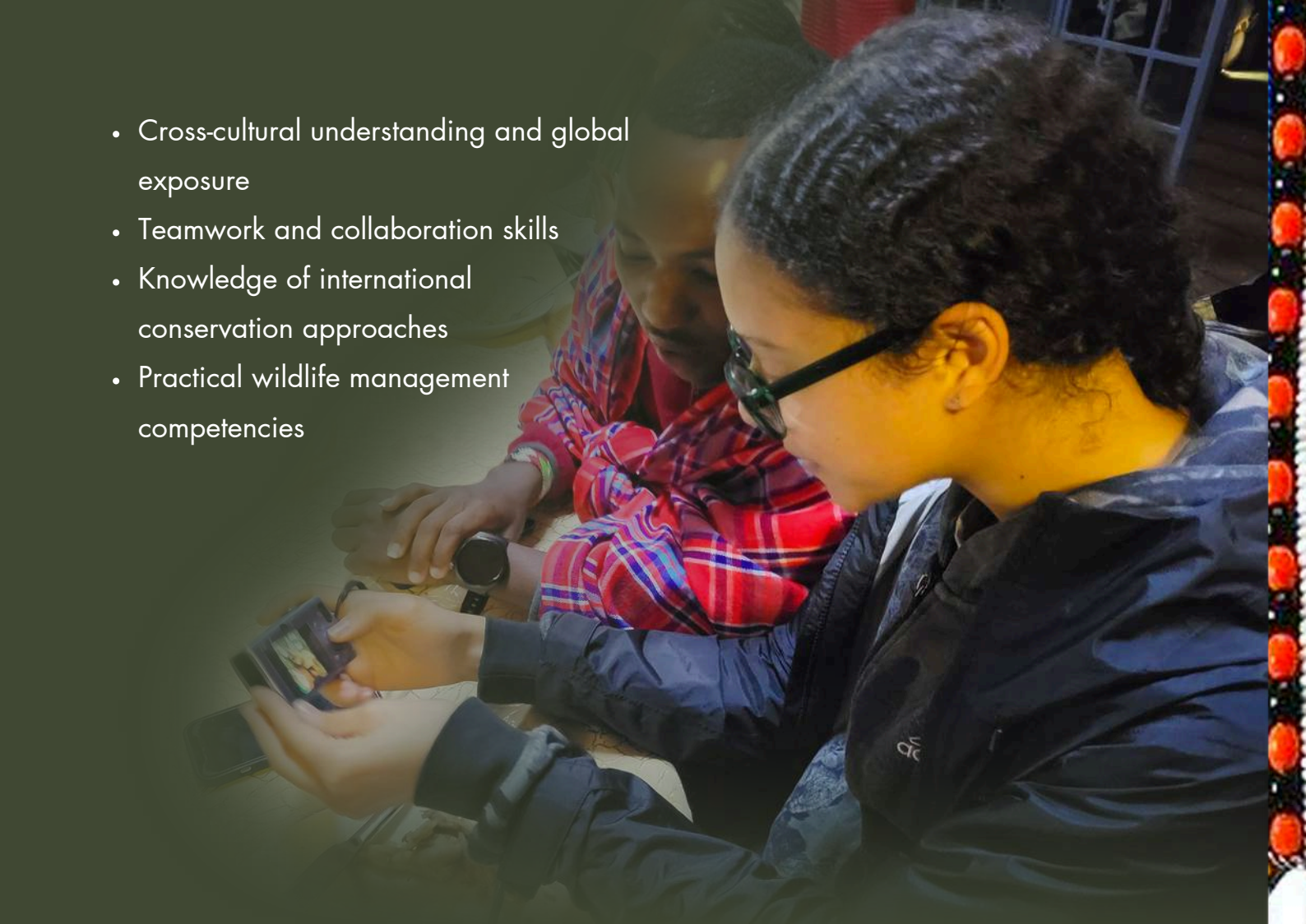
Through collaboration with EDU Africa, Wildlife Tourism College continues to host international volunteer and student exchange programmes that create valuable learning opportunities for both local and international participants. One notable engagement has been the hosting of students from the University of North Carolina, who participated in conservation learning experiences and field-based activities within the Maasai Mara ecosystem. These exchanges have created a dynamic multicultural learning environment where students interact, share experiences, and learn from different conservation and tourism perspectives.

The programmes involve collaborative activities such as:

- Wildlife monitoring and conservation fieldwork
- Environmental education and awareness programmes
- Community engagement activities
- Sustainable tourism discussions and field exposure
- Biodiversity conservation learning experiences
- Cultural exchange and leadership development

For WTC students, these engagements have had a significant impact beyond the classroom. Through direct interaction with international students, learners improve:

- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Confidence in professional engagement

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- A photograph of two students, a young man and a young woman, looking at a smartphone together. The young man is wearing a red and blue plaid shirt, and the young woman is wearing a dark blue jacket and glasses. They are both looking intently at the screen of the phone. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a classroom or workshop setting.
- Cross-cultural understanding and global exposure
  - Teamwork and collaboration skills
  - Knowledge of international conservation approaches
  - Practical wildlife management competencies

The exchanges also help students appreciate the global importance of conservation while positioning them to operate confidently within international tourism and hospitality environments. By learning alongside international students and conservation volunteers, WTC learners gain broader perspectives, stronger professional networks, and increased motivation to pursue careers in conservation and sustainable tourism. This practical and globally connected learning model continues to strengthen the College's vision of producing graduates who are both locally grounded and internationally competitive. WTC's global partnerships have strengthened its international visibility while enriching student learning through exposure to global best practices in conservation and tourism, including collaborations such as EDU Africa. High-level engagements with Ms Silvia Museiya (Principal Secretary – Wildlife), Prof. Patrick V. Verkooijen, and the French Ambassador to Kenya, H.E. Arnaud Suquet, have further elevated the College's profile and deepened dialogue on climate resilience, sustainability, and youth empowerment.



# INDUSTRY PARTNERS : THE MAASAI MARA–ARCTIC CONSERVATION EXCHANGE

One of the College's most remarkable global engagement initiatives has been the Maasai Mara–Arctic Conservation Exchange in Spitsbergen, Norway — a unique cross-continental learning experience that connected conservation leaders, students, and stakeholders from the Maasai Mara ecosystem with researchers and conservation experts in the Arctic region. The exchange was hosted through the support of the Saruni Basecamp Foundation–Kenya and brought together a distinguished delegation that included Narok County leadership, conservation stakeholders, the College Principal, and selected WTC students. The team travelled to Spitsbergen in the High Arctic to study the visible impacts of climate change, conservation research, and sustainable tourism practices within one of the world's most fragile ecosystems. For WTC students and staff, this experience represented far more than international travel. It became a powerful educational platform demonstrating the interconnectedness of ecosystems across the globe. Participants witnessed firsthand how melting glaciers, changing weather patterns, and environmental degradation in the Arctic directly relate to broader global climate systems that also affect ecosystems such as the Maasai Mara. The programme strengthened the understanding that conservation challenges are not isolated but shared globally.



The exchange also created opportunities for:

- Cross-cultural learning and international networking
- Exposure to global conservation research practices
- Understanding climate resilience and adaptation strategies
- Comparative learning between Arctic and African ecosystems
- Leadership development in conservation and sustainable tourism
- Knowledge exchange on community-centred conservation models

One of the most impactful aspects of the programme was the opportunity for WTC students to interact with international researchers, conservation practitioners, and tourism experts working in polar conservation. This exposure broadened students' perspectives and inspired deeper interest in environmental stewardship, research, and climate action. The initiative reinforced WTC's vision of producing globally aware conservation professionals capable of addressing modern environmental challenges through innovation, collaboration, and sustainable tourism practices. The Maasai Mara Arctic Exchange also highlighted the importance of indigenous and community-led conservation systems. Students were able to reflect on the similarities between Maasai community conservation efforts in Kenya and collaborative environmental management approaches used in Arctic regions. These lessons strengthened appreciation for local knowledge systems and the role communities play in protecting ecosystems.

Beyond student learning, the exchange elevated the international visibility of the College and positioned WTC as a growing centre for conservation education, research collaboration, and experiential tourism learning in Africa. The programme demonstrated how educational institutions can create meaningful global partnerships that directly contribute to climate awareness, conservation leadership, and youth empowerment. Today, the lessons and experiences gained from the Arctic exchange continue to shape student discussions, conservation thinking, and practical learning activities at WTC. The initiative remains a strong symbol of how local conservation education in the Maasai Mara can connect to global environmental conversations and contribute to building a new generation of conservation leaders equipped to protect ecosystems both locally and globally. Experiences continue to broaden perspectives, strengthen competencies, and enhance WTC's role in advancing conservation and sustainable tourism.



# GRADUATION AND STRATEGIC PLAN LAUNCH



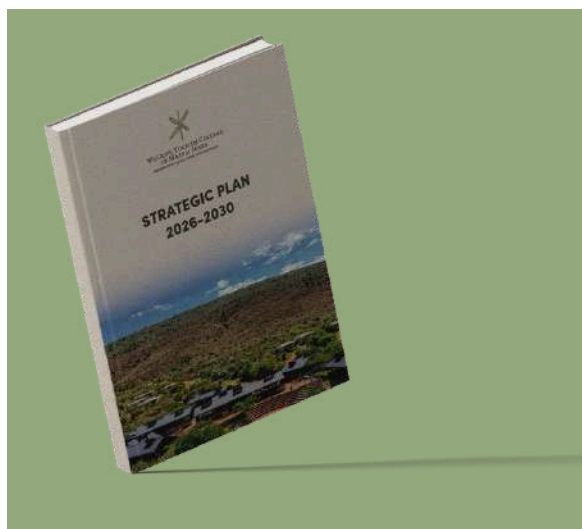
29<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Wildlife Tourism College will host its second graduation ceremony alongside the official launch of its Five-Year Strategic Plan. The event will bring together conservation leaders, government representatives, development partners, and tourism stakeholders to celebrate academic achievement and outline the College's future direction in conservation education and sustainable tourism development.

## 2<sup>ND</sup> Graduation Ceremony



## Launch of Strategic Plan



Guided by a TVETA-accredited curriculum and the Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) approach, we continue to equip our learners with practical skills, hands-on experience, and strong professional competencies.

# OUTLOOK FOR THE YEAR 2026

WTC aims to expand its academic programmes, strengthen strategic partnerships, and deepen its institutional impact within the Maasai Mara and beyond. A key future priority is the introduction of a Natural Resource Management Programme, designed in collaboration with conservation experts to address emerging environmental challenges such as climate change, ecosystem management, and sustainable resource use.

Partnerships will remain central to this growth, supporting:

1. Students scholarships
2. Student placement
3. Resource mobilization
4. Knowledge exchange

Through innovation and collaboration, WTC continues to position itself as a leading institution in conservation education and sustainable tourism training

## JOIN US!

Wildlife Tourism College warmly invites partners, donors, and stakeholders to join us in advancing conservation, tourism, and community development through education. Your support directly empowers youth, strengthens training access, and enhances community livelihoods within the Maasai Mara ecosystem. Together, we can scale impact, expand opportunities, and build a more sustainable future. We welcome collaboration in sponsorships, training support, infrastructure development, and student empowerment initiatives.



Wildlife Tourism College, Maasai Mara



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## Thank you for your partnership!

Our partnership and your support directly benefitted the campus, the students, community and will go a long way in influencing the education, wildlife and tourism sectors in the Maasai Mara, and Kenya.

## Our Partners



Feedback can be e-mailed through [info@wtcmara.org](mailto:info@wtcmara.org)