



Republic of Uganda

MINISTRY OF TOURISM, WILDLIFE  
AND ANTIQUITIES

**ANALYTICAL REPORT ON  
VISITATION TO UGANDA'S  
NATIONAL PARKS IN CY2020  
AND CY2021**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Uganda has ten (10) National Parks and twelve (12) Game Reserves. These offer a wide range of tourism products including Gorilla tracking, nature guided walks, village walks, butterfly and bird watching, rare fauna and flora species.

### VISITATION TO NATIONAL PARKS IN CALENDAR YEAR 2021

Foreign Non-Resident visitors to Uganda's National Parks doubled in the first three months of CY2021 (January to March 2021) compared to the last three months of CY2020 (October to December 2020). The Foreign Non-residents increased from 3,577 visitors to 7,318 visitors.

Similarly, with the opening of Education institutions, National Park Visits by students tripled in the same period increasing by 834 visitors in the first three months of CY2021.

Likewise, revenue collections recorded by the Uganda Wildlife Authority doubled in the first three months of CY2021 (January to March 2021) compared to the last three months of CY2020 (October to December 2020) in-

creasing from UGX 3 billion at the end of December 2020 to UGX 6 billion at the end of March 2021.

On the Contrary, visits by Ugandan nationals have declined in the period of reference with the overall visitation to National Parks declining by 12 percent in the first quarter of CY2021 compared to the last three months of CY2020.



**Table 1: Visitation to Uganda's National Parks in CY2021**

Categories	Oct-Dec CY2020 compared with Jan-Mar CY2021				
	Q2 (Oct-Dec CY2020	Q3 (Jan-Mar CY2021)	%Age Share Q3 (Jan-Mar CY2021)	Difference	% Change Q3-Q2
<b>Category of Visitors</b>					
Foreign Non Residents	3,576	7,318	29.2%	3,742	104.6%
Foreign Residents	3,392	2,243	9.0%	(1,149)	-33.9%
East African Residents	20,887	13,987	55.8%	(6,900)	-33.0%
Students	456	1,290	5.2%	834	182.9%
Others (Transit, VIPs)	151	209	0.8%	58	38.4%
Total-Category of Visitors	28,462	25,047	100%	(3,415)	-12.0%
<b>National Parks</b>					
Bwindi Impenetrable National Park	1,079	2,536	10.1%	1,457	135.0%




<u>Categories</u>	<u>Oct-Dec CY2020 compared with Jan-Mar CY2021</u>				
	Q2 (Oct-Dec CY2020	Q3 (Jan-Mar CY2021)	%Age Share Q3 (Jan-Mar CY2021)	Difference	% Change Q3-Q2
Kidepo Valley National Park	1,806	1,786	7.1%	(20)	-1.1%
Murchison Falls National Park	9,000	6,779	27.1%	(2,221)	-24.7%
Queen Elizabeth National Park	7,787	5,266	21.0%	(2,521)	-32.4%
Kibale National Park	556	1,069	4.3%	513	92.3%
Mount Elgon National Park	175	206	0.8%	31	17.7%
Rwenzori Mountains National Park	203	243	1.0%	40	19.7%
Semliki National Park	3,866	3,209	12.8%	(657)	-17.0%
Lake Mburo National Park	3,354	2,986	11.9%	(368)	-11.0%

<u>Categories</u>	Oct-Dec CY2020 compared with Jan-Mar CY2021				
	Q2 (Oct-Dec CY2020	Q3 (Jan-Mar CY2021)	%Age Share Q3 (Jan-Mar CY2021)	Difference	% Change Q3-Q2
Mgahinga Gorilla National Park	414	588	2.3%	174	42.0%
Toro Semliki Wildlife Reserve	97	94	0.4%	(3)	-3.1%
Pian Upe Wildlife Reserve	92	193	0.8%	101	109.8%
Katonga-Wildlife Reserve	33	92	0.4%	59	178.8%
<b>Total-National Parks and Wildlife Reserves</b>	<b>28,462</b>	<b>25,047</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(3,415)</b>	<b>-12.0%</b>

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities





Comparing visitation park by park, visits to Bwindi impenetrable National park more than doubled in the first three months of CY2021 (January to March 2021) compared to the last three months of CY2020 (October to December 2020) increasing from 1,079 to 2,536 by end of March 2021. This park is most notable for the Bwindi gorillas, colobus monkeys, chimpanzees and variety of birds.

Similarly, Kibale National Park visits increased by two folds rising from 556 to 1,069 visitors in the first three months of CY2021. Visits to Mgahinga Gorilla National Park also increased by 42 percent in the first three months of CY2021.

As a result of increased visits to Bwindi impenetrable and Mgahinga Gorilla National parks, revenues recorded from gorillas increased sevenfold in the first three months of CY2021 compared to the last three months of 2020 rising from UGX 183m to UGX 1.2 billion.


Mount Elgon National Park and Rwenzori Mountains National Park also recorded increases in visitation in the first three months of CY2021 (increases of 17.7% and 19.7% respectively).

## **1.2 VISITATION TO NATIONAL PARKS IN CALENDAR YEAR 2020**

Uganda's National Parks experienced a sharp drop in visitation from 323,861 in calendar year 2019 to only 101,331 visitors (about one third of CY2019 visitation) in CY 2020. This implies that Uganda's National Parks lost revenues from over 220,000 potential visitors in CY2020. This performance was largely attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic that ravaged the whole world in CY2020 and is the lowest ever recorded number of visitors to National Parks since 2002.

The Foreign Non-Residents who form the largest share of visitors to National Parks declined by 72.2 percent in CY2020 while the East African Residents including Ugandans and Students declined





by 42.2 percent and 95.1 percent respectively. The almost 100% decline in student visitation is largely explained by the closure of all Education institutions as a measure to curb COVID-19.

Visitation to all National Parks decreased sharply with the highest declines in visitation being recorded in Rwenzori Mountain National Park and Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (Declines of 81% and 73% respectively).



**Table 2: Analytical Comparison of Visitation to Uganda's National Parks, 2019-2020**

<u>Categories</u>	Jan-Dec CY2019 compared with Jan-Dec CY2020				
	Jan-Dec CY2019	Jan-Dec CY2020	%Age Share CY2020	Difference	% Change CY2020-CY2019
<b><u>Category of Visitors</u></b>					
Foreign Non Residents	153,911	42,714	42.2%	(111,197)	-72.2%
Foreign Residents	11,492	8,611	8.5%	(2,881)	-25.1%
East African Residents	77,105	44,581	44.0%	(32,524)	-42.2%
Students	77,799	3,829	3.8%	(73,970)	-95.1%
Others (Transit, VIPs)	3,554	1,596	1.6%	(1,958)	-55.1%
<b>Total-Category of Visitors</b>	<b>323,861</b>	<b>101,331</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(222,530)</b>	<b>-68.7%</b>
<b><u>National Parks</u></b>					
Bwindi Impenetrable National Park	36,341	9,829	9.7%	(26,512)	-73.0%
Kidepo Valley National Park	12,648	4,860	4.8%	(7,788)	-61.6%
Murchison Falls National Park	103,665	33,194	32.8%	(70,471)	-68.0%
Queen Elizabeth National Park	77,995	24,362	24.0%	(53,633)	-68.8%
Kibale National Park	19,521	5,558	5.5%	(13,963)	-71.5%



<u>Categories</u>	Jan-Dec CY2019 compared with Jan-Dec CY2020				
	Jan-Dec CY2019	Jan-Dec CY2020	%Age Share CY2020	Difference	% Change CY2020-CY2019
Mount Elgon National Park	3,519	1,006	1.0%	(2,513)	-71.4%
Rwenzori Mountains National Park	6,043	1,151	1.1%	(4,892)	-81.0%
Semliki National Park	22,577	7,322	7.2%	(15,255)	-67.6%
Lake Mburo National Park	33,188	10,727	10.6%	(22,461)	-67.7%
Mgahinga Gorilla National Park	7,593	2,409	2.4%	(5,184)	-68.3%
Toro Semliki Wildlife Reserve	771	512	0.5%	(259)	-33.6%
Pian Upe Wildlife Reserve	-	336	0.3%	336	
Katonga-Wildlife Reserve	-	65	0.1%	65	
<b>Total-National Parks and Wildlife</b>	<b>323,861</b>	<b>101,331</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(222,530)</b>	<b>-68.7%</b>
<b>Reserves</b>					

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities

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