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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

**Subregional Conference of the
African Ministers of Tourism**

**Antananarivo (Madagascar)
27 - 30 January 1993**

**MEETING OF EXPERTS
27 - 28 January 1993**

**THE INTRA AFRICAN COOPERATION ON TOURISM
THE JOINT PROMOTION OF THE AFRICAN TOURIST
PRODUCT**

1. The African tourist product

The various reports on the development of tourism in Africa often show that this development rate is low in comparison with the potentialities of the continent. As a matter of fact, even if the earnings of the intra-regional tourism are assessed at about six billions of US Dollars, such amount hardly represents 3% of the World records in this sector, though the main ingredients of the tourist product are still untouched in Africa. Elsewhere, in some cases, the components of the tourist product are mostly imported.

The African weakness in the tourist trade trend is explained in a way by the fact that there exists in general a bad promotion of Africa itself which in turn entails a bad image of the Continent. The African media, as well as some of their foreign colleagues, display too much of the negative side of the social, cultural and political changes occurring in the Continent to the prejudice of the permanent everyday values in which lie the genius people and the African authenticity. The promotion of the Continent's global image is then left to the professionals of tourism who, unfortunately, do not dispose of the appropriate resources. In such circumstances, the Afro-pessimism is quick annulling the attractiveness of the Black Continent and reducing to none all the efforts made to promote the African tourism. While the developed countries give an increasing importance to tourism as a vital factor of development and integration, some "advisers" go on convincing the African countries that tourism is a marginal activity reserved for rolling in wealth visitors.

Generally speaking, Africa is reputed to be the insecure and politically unstable Continent, the enclosed field for all the Egypt plagues to which are added, year after year, other contagious diseases, questionable hygiene, starvation, malnutrition, massacres of innocent wild animals with assegais or some other poisonous darts forest fires and so on... The point is to know whether all these are particular to Africa or if such campaigns are targeted to mislead the Africans out of the essential, to identify the real causes of their backwardness in certain fields in order to find out solutions.

Indeed, the Continent owns first class touristic resources which answer to the African as well as the non-African tourist demand. The grassroot motivations for touristic journeys are ruled by two fundamental psychical attitudes, i.e, the human desire to get out his everyday environment in order to find out other people and his need to always feel secure in a home where he is familiar with everything. In practice, we are facing the dialectic between the sedentary tourism and the moving one with a full spectrum of variants combining these trends. The "sedentary tourist" named "leopard" prefers his natural environment to which he will add the seaside, the mountain, or at most a trip in a region that he will go out for. On the contrary, the other type of tourist, the "adventurer", travels all the time and spends very few nights at the same place. He makes a record of the visited sites.

If one tries to be integrated into the visited natural and cultural environment, the other type seems to be satisfied with an approximate knowledge of the sites. To compensate this, he will take some photographs and collect tokens on his short passage.

The touristic promotion partly consists in giving the sedentary tourist the wonderlust and to the moving one, the desire to stay longer at the same place. The success of a promotional campaign is to convince the travelcourageller that he can safely enjoy his touristic travel and stay, and induce the collection-maker to stay longer in order to know more about the others.

The tourist, whether he is sedentary or moving, looks for a swap for his usual surroundings and habits and even his social image. The sacrifices he made are only justified when such desire is fulfilled.

Fortunately, Africa is one of the rare places where the tourist can come out of his everyday environment and change its status. The Continent offers large spaces with original species of plants and animals, populations that, in spite of all sorts of frustrations they are prone to have kept their kindness, a deep sense of friendship and hospitality, a certain happiness in life, a great availability and a full range of landscapes, populations and cultures.

In spite of this richness and latent demand, the African tourism promoters have remained on this side of the real capacity of the Continent. The African tourist product is in the first place extravert in its form and elements. The conception of this product has largely depended on the governmental action (national administration of tourism, public state-run companies), on national and foreign private operators (hoteliers, travel agencies, airlines and seldom on some organizations).

Tourism marketings have first assessed the taste and needs of the foreign tourists. The planning consisted then in a product that comes up to such needs.

However, a deeper approach, based on a search for a long term development promoting activity, sustained rather than punctual need-oriented, should have started with identifying and evaluating the real resources of the countries and with the definition of the implementation, and development policies and the determining of the type of product that can come out from the resources. In a second phase, an analysis of the various segments of the clients would have helped define which types of products are to be proposed to whom, having studied the costs and profits including the natural and human impact. Such way would have helped identify the most receptive consumers and define the promotional actions to impose the existing products. As previously explained, the point is to know the existing resources and to evaluate them in accordance with the various categories of target consumers considering the desired development effects which the countries want to produce.

The present promotions aims at sending to a given country some clients whose needs are supposed to have been identified by tour professionals. In fact, such a market cannot be controlled by host countries whose ventures thus become dependent on the foreign trade. Obviously, it is the foreign countries that make and sell, from outside, a certain image of Africa for their clients.

It is to make tourism participate "from inside" to the African development policies implementation as of Africa as defined in the Action Plan of Lagos and the Treaty establishing the African Economical Community that the Conference of African Ministers of Tourism has led and developed its actions. The approach is systematically focused on the African objectives one of which is the self-sustained and self centered development.

The application of such an approach would have made obvious that :

- Very few countries can offer a complete range of products and that the costs were anyway prohibitive without generating any satisfactory results ;
- The mostly sold long-haul destinations are those in which several countries, together, were capable of merging their respective characteristics in an unique product ;
- The resources grouping and complementarity of a region is more favorable to an efficient commercialization campaign and helps solve the problems due to the constraints of a too much scattered tourist centers ;
- For most African countries, the co-operation is a must whether in deciding the product or its exploitation and even their promotion in the various markets ;
- There are homogenous groups, inside Africa, that can create a travel package considering bearing the existence of internal money-generator groups for whom it is urgent to set up all the services necessary to strengthen the commercial, social and intra-african exchange.

As previously mentioned, the resources owned by the Continent meet, in their nature, the need of foreign clients. Moreover, though tourism is an export product can't be expatriated. The consumer has to move to the product country and consume the touristic services on the spot.

The key-problem of the touristic product is to find a solution on the following four variants' equation :

- meet the Clients
- the location
- the place where the clients want or must stay and meet their needs ;
- the duration of sojourns.

There is between these variants a dialectic that creates a full range of products. For instance, the sojourn duration will determine the possible services to be supplied. The longer the sojourn is, the greater the client's requirements will be. On the other side, such situation is favorable to the supply of quality products to consumers who are ready to pay their price. The impact is obviously positive as the offered product are finished with local raw materials. As for the moving tourist, he usually wants middle class services and buys, most of the time, simple and unexpensive local products. Therefore, the equipment and investment involved are cheap.

In the present context, the African tourist product is composed of :

- an hostellery which conception has to be revised in the sense of the building size, their integration in the environment as well as their investment and management. This last point depends on the existence of African promoters who can afford the necessary means. Privatization can improve the product image only if the work is carried out by professionals. Consequently, the existence of efficient and engaged professionals have to be encouraged. Most of the African private operators risk their modest means in gigantic projects for which they hardly afford the 20% minimum of investment required. In addition to such a situation, instead of envisaging smaller projects that are more conform to their means and to the type of tourism adapted to their countries, the African promoters and their foreign partners urge the state to set up incentives that give grants to the so-called "investors" and other "donors" in projects of non-significant impact on the African tourism and on the global development of their countries. The hostellery infrastructure is then composed of :
- Big hotels located in town qualified as luxurious, which in South and Sub-Saharan Africa, over 80% of the capacity is controlled by the Hotel management transnational companies. These hotels are most of the time state owned. As they were built in the name of prestige without prior studies, they make the poorest countries of the World finance the holidays of some citizens of the most rich countries and pay royalties without caring about the national benefits expected by the country where the hotel is built. As these organizations' concern is to assure the presence of their manager or clients' countries of origin, they can participate in an effective way in the African tourism development and promote the prestige of the African products if certain measures are corrected.

Therefore, it is time to start a better integration of big hotels in the African development policies. To a certain extent, this is the sine qua non condition of the implementation of a genuine touristic product profitable to Africans.

- Small hotels whose service quality is far too low to pretend promoting tourism. They usually belong to private investors who based their ventures more on prestige consideration than on their economical impact. They could have been a genuine intra-African basis for tourism if they were well-managed and well-maintained ; their architecture do not fit in their cultural and social environment as they are more designed to be part of the "modern" urban lot than to represent a local touristic product.
- b) The touristic services in most countries and especially in sub-saharian Africa are public ventures. It is important to note, however, that private ventures have started their establishment these years? In most cases, these ventures, operating as travel agencies, can very seldom operate as tour operators creating and selling their own product. Such functions are usually given to foreign vendors established in the countries issuing inter-regional tourists. Most of African travel agencies are receiving agencies which cannot be recognized by IATA and APA because their turnover is too low. Though the present trend is to stop the tour operators' service, some African countries still reinforce their links with intermediates whose action usually increase the cost of the travels in Africa. When they exist, -because in many countries they do not-, the essential of their job is ticketing. They are small in size and do not fill the requirement to be real receiving agencies. More often, guidance is given by "the associate's representative" as if foreigners know more Africa than Africans.

Urgent solutions have to be taken :

- The grouping of small touristic vendors into ventures capable in means and capacity to form, if not a tour-operator, at least an entity capable of negotiating a complete tour and services with foreign partners. These structures are enough to sell and impose the products on different markets and establish a joint venture relations instead of the present "rendered services" situation.

Such agencies can have IATA, ATAF ... 's recognition more easily and would be equipped to supply services of quality owing to an efficient and engaged staff. Countries with such structures do exist and they successfully imposed their product and developed in a significant way their tourism. The others will have to accept either being grouped in sub-regional basis or under the framework of inter-state tours system ;

- The creation by African governments of a legal frame facilitating the setting-up of such ventures and protecting them from foreign interference. In most sub-saharian groups, a mechanism of community ventures or organizations financed by the given sub-region natives has been already settled.
- Action on the transport companies operating in the African countries, to establish a program, not only to promote to and from Africa travels but also intra-African ones which costs are prohibitive and which frequency is insufficient. The air companies argue on the volume of the traffic which cannot be significant if the African travellers cannot afford them. There is a contradiction when the same companies give a rebate from Europe and not for travels inside Africa. As it was already mentioned, some African countries make their clients pay their own negligence in management. The action on air companies have to be sustained by actions encouraging the intra-African travels such as free boundaries and other concern that jeopardize the travel development in Africa. The freedom of air, the facilities of exchange, customs and other administration including the formalities of visa obtention (emigration/immigration) are sine qua non conditions of the intra-African development as defined in this document.

SITUATION OF THE AFRICAN CO-OPERATION IN TOURISM

On close inspection, there are in Africa some institutions favorable to tourism development concerted policies implementation. These last 30 years have seen the creation of inter-governmental organizations which, except in few cases, aim at tourism development, together with commerce and other services, to tourism joint promotion in view of establishing inter-states tours. Obviously, one must confess that very few objectives were achieved, resulting on a real tourism development participation that put Africa on the Nations honours list. May we remind that Africa's participation represents 3.29% of the World touristic visits and 2.18% of the general earnings in tourism.

It is time to set up an intra-African development strategy which enables the Black continent to take advantage of the large touristic potentialities it has in hands.

a) Institutional frame.

Even if the global program relating to tourism is not stipulated in an obvious way, - certainly because this sector is difficult to be clearly defined -, practically, tourism has been mentioned in all the conventions ruling the intra- african co-operation.

It is interesting to see which importance the above conventions give to tourism in their respective dispositions.

SOUTH AFRICA DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION CONFERENCE (SADCC)

The SADCC has an unity for Tourism coordination in Lesotho. It has a technical staff supported by experts financed by the Commonwealth Funds for Technical Cooperation (CFTC) which deals with the commercialization points, the development and integration program implementation priority approved by the members of SADCC;

The touristic program of SADCC is composed of a set of projects dealing with the following aspects of the touristic development and commercialization :

- creation of an international distribution network
- focusing on the basic promotional material ;
- tourism commercialization including new markets and topic markets ;
- Self needs of the intra-regional tourism
- Development of the touristic product
- Harmonization and normalization of the statistics on tourism ;

- Classification of hotels and touristic buildings ;
- Training on Hostellery and Tourism.

PREFERENTIAL EXCHANGE ZONES (ZEP)

The ZEP has not adopted particular dispositions on Tourism but the subject is not totally excluded to the main interest points of the Organization. It is therefore regularly mentioned in the Agenda of the general meeting of the ZEP/Chambers of Commerce Federation. Moreover, the ZEP has taken an important initiative towards the intra-regional tourist movements in creating a regional chamber for currency compensation. It helps the travellers of one country to use the local currency without searching for rare hard currency. In the same way, it has adopted a traveller checks system for business men and civil servants of the zone.

THE WESTERN AFRICAN COUNTRIES ECONOMICAL COMMUNITY (CEDEAO)

The creation treaty of the CEDEAO was signed in Lagos (NIGERIA) in 1975. Since then, the community concentrated its efforts in the implementation of various instruments aimed at the creation of a powerful community integrated frame such as intra-regional telecommunications, road, air, river and sea transportation and railways program.

On tourism, the signatories have convened the free circulation agreement of persons that bring in intra-regional tourists.

The CEDEAO has already put in place a permanent dynamic structure relating to tourism which, not only accelerated the co-operation between the sub-region states but also have actively organized the meeting of tourist decision-makers at any level including Ministers. In addition to that, a joint promotion association on tourism gathering the public and private sector is created. Joint action programs are set for the intra-African touristic development and the joint promotion of touristic products.

THE GREAT LAKES COUNTRIES ECONOMICAL COMMUNITY (CEPGL)

The CEPGL activity program gives a large place to tourism and is composed of the following main projects :

- Creation and commercialization of integrated tours inside CEPGL
- Creation of an hostellery and tourism training center ;
- Creation of a joint agency for touristic promotion.

INDIAN OCEAN COMMISSION (COI)

The COI grouping the Indian Ocean Islands (Seychelles, Madagascar, Comoros, Mauritius) and La Reunion, attributes an important priority to the development of Tourism and plans to implement a regional promotion program using the production and broadcasting of supports representative of the region and the starting-up of sub-regional interest projects aimed at up-grading this region at the Caraibes standard.

CENTRAL AFRICA STATES ECONOMICAL COMMUNITY (CEEAC)

The treaty establishing this community contains specific dispositions on the tourism development and the co-operation between the states in the sub-region.

Implementing measures are taken to put in effect such dispositions.

There are other inter-state organizations such as the Central African Customs Union (UDEAC), the Western African Monetary Union which activities programs do not specifically mention the tourism sector.

That does not mean that tourism is completely out of their concern as most of their decisions have a favorable impact on tourism expansion such as, for instance, the free circulation of goods and persons, the communications development and the monetary agreements and the harmonization of the hotel classification method, the training program and so on.

In addition to the above actions directly under the tourism chapter, one must note that tourism is an integrated part of the programs led by these institutions to implement an economical and political integration in the sub-region and in the Continent.

Therefore, tourism decision-makers are advised to keep being informed on the activities of these organizations which actions answer their concern.

Among their activities, we can remind for instance actions on transport and communication development on commerce and industries plus agricultural and environment development which impact is significant in Africa's tourism development.

Touristic projects are meaningless if they are not part of a general development plan within the frames of the above mentioned highest national and African authorities.

One should recognize that a large number of institutions do not necessarily involve a successful integration. On the contrary, such situation may scatter the interests, and slow down the dynamism of each other as some countries are members of several associations.

THE AFRICAN ECONOMICAL COMMISSION (CEA) :

has inside its branches a tourism unit which tries to coordinate the touristic points in Africa. To do so, it organizes each two years since 1987, a tourism governmental experts meeting followed each time by a Conference of African Tourism Ministers.

THE AFRICAN UNIT ORGANIZATION (OUA)

The Tourism chapter is handled inside OUA by the Economical Direction, more particularly by the Division of Commerce. The cultural aspect of tourism is under the cultural development sector. The Conference of the African Ministers for Culture have mentioned tourism in their activity program to be implemented in the cultural decenny. A close co-operation between AUO and AEC contributed to the writing of a clause specific to the tourism development in the Treaty establishing the African Economical Community. The protocol on tourism will define in detail the implementation instruments of the Treaty's pertinent articles. Presently, a tourism folio is provided in every intra-African commercial promotionnal activity. These actions bring the African touristic problems to the highest political levels (Conference of the African Heads of State).

THE INTRA - AFRICAN CO-OPERATION IN TOURISM

Moving a little bit in the past, one would note that, in spite of a long-winded political litterature, the implementation of the intra-African tourism knew all sorts of difficulties. The major causes that jeopardize such cooperation are mainly :

- The dependant situation of the African toward foreign contacts. The commercialization of the African touristic product was for a long time left in the hands of foreign tour-operators and travel Agencies whose interest is to perpetuate a situation in which the Africans cannot organize themselves to exploit the advantage of tourism international expansion ;
- Bad conception of the African tourism in which the concept of competition is more important than the complementarity one ; however, at least in a first step, the variety in volume and space gives a better chance for attracting consumers ;
- The very simplified image usually projected by Western media on the public opinion, representing, even nowadays, AFRICA as asole block described as "non-civilized" without mentioning, for instance, the diversity of cultural values if not to misinterpret them ;
- Nationalism and politico-economical differences encouraged by the prevoius colonial era which create invisible boundaries difficult to cross between countries, even now ;
- The lack of a product for Africans and of reliable operational inter-states tours in spite of the highly decided options for African integration through intra-African exchange re-inforcing ;

- And, above all, the lack of a systematic political will to implement the various options and decisions taken during the various kind of meetings at any level. This will should be also expressed at the national level in building projects in accordance with the deadlines defined in a common agreement. In certain cases, these mistakes are due to an unexistent control itself caused by the great mobility of the authorities concerned. But the first does not systematically justify the latter.

It becomes obvious that, nowadays, the political and economical environment appeals to a greater concertation and more powerful co-operation whether at the sub-regional level or at the continental one. The African tourism sector seems not to have assimilated the World political changes and the trends on political, social and economical evolution occurring in Africa.

The tourism authorities keep on chasing foreign currency. Gained by some quantophreny, they do not count the acquisition cost of foreign currency when they have to promote the touristic product on very far markets.

More serious is the weak contribution to the implementation of African integration policies whether on the cultural plan or on the political one.

The present situation of the intra-African touristic co-operation and the potential for its future development can be analysed in a way as to envisage an adequate strategy in view of obtaining the expected social and economical benefits such as earnings, creation of employment, raising of the populations' welfare, on the continent as a whole and the contribution of tourism in the African integration which has to be from now on the criteria for performance evaluation.

An analysis on the tourism intra-African co-operation gives the following situation :

- Existence of very few intra-regional tourism though these segments are money-generators at any level.
- Exploitation of some rare sub-regional tours under the initiative, most of the time, of non-African operators ;
- Conception of inter-States tours by National tourism administrations without consulting the private operators which leads to a bad exploitation or even an impossible implantation ;
- Lack of joint promotion of tours however conceived in common, each country trying to sell its product to the prejudice of the others and even of the tours ;
- Lack of commercial strategies and force to penetrate the international markets and lack of control system on the efficiency of the actions performed, sometimes very expensive and lack of professionalism ;
- Very poor harmonization of the policies and qualities of service ; lack of common standards and of efficient technics to value the products ;
- Political climate unfavorable for touristic tours combining some neighbor countries ; refusal of implementing the resolutions , distrust of the neighbor and preference to deal with the ex-metropoles than with the neighbor ;
- Low level of the travel facilitation and rigidity of the exchange regulation which discourage the touristic exchange promotion, some countries refusing the currency transfer in the case of "inculsive tours" combining several countries of the same region.

Consequently, the intra-African tourism cooperation's must are :

- a firm political will of the States and also
- a progressive implementation of measures, if not to eliminate, at least, to reduce the obstacles of a common action.

The compulsory way also the most practical one is to implement this co-operation is to create, after marketing studies, integrated touristic tours in each sub-region, supported by great greater actions such as the professional training and the promotion of products.

The arguments in favour of such co-operation are numerous at various levels. They were analysed in detail in the previous reports submitted to the Conference.

May we remind some of them :

At the level of touristic intra-regional tours :

- Tourists, travelling to far countries fairly wish to visit the maximum of sites, see the maximum of things, in a journey which cost them a lot. When they come back, they can relate to friends that they visited many countries and seen a lot of curiosities.
- A tour grouping several countries has more chance to be more attractive owing to the large possibility of diversifying the products and programs.
- The intra-regional integration can contribute to open up countries whose touristic resources are poor or which are far from the main touristic centers.
- Better opportunity to offer interesting specific products to the organization.

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TOURISM GOVERNMENT EXPERTS COMMITTEE
(22 - 24 FEBRUARY -1993)

THE INTRA-AFRICAN TOURISTIC CO-OPERATION
THE JOINT PROMOTION
OF
AFRICAN TOURISTIC PRODUCT

At the level of promotion and commercialization

- The co-operation between several countries in a same territory may express itself by the setting off in common the means devoted to the promotion and the commercialization of which the National Administrations of tourism are equipped with and in making the maximum of effects. To notice also the essential participation of the private sector, entirely.
- The strength negotiation with foreign tour-operators has a bigger impact when it's about a country-block decided to a same target. The same holds true with donors (CEE - PNUD - BAD AND other banks)
- The management of one or many tourism offices at outside brings up less difficulties because the expenses are divided into several countries instead of only one, from which advantages binded to scale economy
- More significant development and more easy in tourism practiced by Africans inside of their own regions or continent, creation of touristic products more conformable to african realities and effective participation in doing policy of african integration.

At the level of the form building, equipment and maintenance without forgetting recurrent expenses, few of African can presently have their own center of formation. On the other hand, owing to inter-regional co-operation calling upon each partner's effort, the investment may be less heavy and the profitability more satisfying cause of the population application for the courses.

Otherwise, trained in a same school, with therefore a same level of knowledge, the staff of a same region can that way make up one of the best solutions to the harmonisation of the quality of services problem.

Then the intra-african co-operation in tourism have to follow the other forms of regional co-operation relatively operational in our continent.

It must constitute a middle and long course target of the National administrations in charge of the tourism development in our respective states and so for the intra-african institutions which have been accepted to register tourism in their programs of activity at any level.

COORDINATION OF THE CO-OPERATION

The structures of dialogue preconized by the Economic Commission for Africa should play an important part in this estate.

If the principle of the intra-african co-operation is easily understandable on account of foreseeable advantages, the way to realize. It contains lots of difficulties. That requires a great dialogue and sometimes daring decisions.

These structures such as defined during the previous meeting of the african responsables of tourism as well at the subregional as the regional level, look as following:

At the level of inter-government co-operation

- Conference of the African Ministers of Tourism
- Subregional Committee for touristic promotion

At the level of inter-sectorial co-operation

- African association of Hostelry, independant of any institution
- African Association of Travel Agencies and Organizers.
- African Association of Touristic professional formation Centers and schools.

Such structures aren't still all borned but it needs to be set of gradually by the creation of sectorial association of professionals per country and sub-region having the regional structure. Besides, we must recommend all the african institution to be more attentive to the questions of tourism such as resumed in their activities' programs according obviously to the philosophy and the target defined by each organization . This action must be however registered as part of co-ordinated action destined before to set off the african policy of integrated development.

Besides these institutions, there is an important number of international organizations occuring in tourism development in Africa. These institutions can have a little bit diverging targets from those defined by the african authorities. The african states should have to attend to respect the outlines defined by their superior authorities. Concerning specifically the action of the African ministers of tourism conference, it's important that the African ministers attend to maintain cohesion between the decisions engaged during the different forums of which they are members and as which they participate and that everything have to be set off to avoid the double use and the waste of available rressources at the moment when these one begin to be seriously lacking. So it's suggested setting off an inter-institutions committee in order to assume the charge of necessary sub-regional co-ordination.

The committee will include not only the intergovernment organization for the african development and integration, but also the ECA, OUA and the BAD for Africa, and institutions as members of United Nations systems as BIT, UNDP as well as the ACP et the CFE whithout forgetting the OMT.

The committee's meetings gathering the high level experts designed by these institutions occuring in the african tourism development should be regularly hold to formulate relevant recommandations to the Conference of African Ministers of tourism which should dispose a kind of structure of co-ordination and programming from which works should permit to take realistic and harmonized decisions (cf ex). The CEA should ensure the Secretariat.

The CEA could receive mandate to carry out necessary the consultations in right to seth off such organization which only play a consultative role.

It wouldn't be too much to emphasize the importance of a bigger concertation at the level of all the operators, somehow it's necessary to combine all the efforts, instead of dissipating them, to reach the expected success. The tourism doesn't allow itself to miss the appointment of the African Common Market which must be expressed by the integration of all activities estates from which the African people devotes his efforts to come through the under-development.

Collectively, according to the suggested model, the initiative of all question coming over tourism should belong either to sub-regional committees, or to every permanent secretariat of inter-gouvernement organizations of whom the activities program covers the tourism estate. Dealed with ever of these two echelons, the file is subject to the examination of the co-ordination committee which studies it, in technical terms, in collating the ideas expressed at the time of its initiation with the grievances of the professional associations which views should be necessarily considered during the inter-institutions Committee of co-ordination assizes.

For more liberty in action, a point raised by the professional's Association is directly subject to the interested intergouvernement organization which must in it's turn sends it for study at the co-ordination committee with relevant remarks. This certainly requires that it should be forehand defined a framework of concertation between the professional Association and each of these sub-regional Organization.

Then the committee of co-ordination elaborates, for the Conference of the Ministers, some technical advices and suggestions considering the facts collected by all operators.

The Conference of Ministers takes decisions which content is beared to the knowledge of concerned intergovernment Organization. It should be pointed out that the proposed structure shouldn't cause additional expenses for the Conference of African Ministers of Tourism, each institution bearing his share of Committee's works.

It should be reminded that the Ministers of Tourism of States members aren't only members of the Conference of African Ministers of Tourism (CEA) but they constitute the most numerous group of the general Assembly of the OMT which Commission for Africa is their organization of concertation. These same ministers meet again in sub-regional institutions for tourism and allied sectors problems. In principle, a real cohesion in the policy and actions undertaken by these institutions in views of African tourism development, should be realized easily if the politic will was effective.

These arises the thorny problem of the tourism integration in the undertook actions in African framework and principally the tourism contribution to the setting of African co-operation and integration policy. That's why it should be, from now, estimated the efficiency, of programs, drafts and actions of touristic development compared to their contribution to these policy so that the tourism stops being considered as a marginal activity reserved for the rich visitors and whitout impact on the continent development. One of the criterions of estimation will be able to be defined compared to the Plan of Action and the final Act of Lagos and the Treaty establishing The African Economic Community.

Regional Committees

Intergovernment
Organizations

African Ministers
Conference

Co-ordination
Committee

Professional Associations

Model of integrated intervention network in touristic sector in Africa.

Shows the desired relation in transmission of the dossiers to be analysed and the possible exchanges of informations.

STRATEGIES OF DEVELOPMENT

1) Action upon the product

As the chosen process for the effective making use of the intra-african co-operation in tourism is the creation and the commercialization of inter-states tours ; we think that the priority must rest on the product which constitutes the basis of every process.

In fact, these tours can't only be validly commercialized on the sub-regional viewpoint where only occurs some countries being still a part of existing inter-government organization.

Indeed, we understand with difficulty a tour which should interest at the same time, for instance the UMA (Arab Maghreb Union) and the CEPGL. On the other hand the experiences may serve to better define and to exploit the products. It's also possible that the same

Country was a part of several inter-states tour out of their sub-regional politico-economic groups.

Then it will concern every sub-region to proceed to :

- a) Making use of mechanisms of cooperation in tourism equipped with efficient means supported by the political will of the national and sub-regional decision-makers.

Structures will be able, at first time, to benefit from the assistance of existing subregional organizations. But, rapidly enough, these structures will be able to be autonomous and to operate on their own means in all senses of this word.

- b) The definition of targets to reach considering those assigned to tourism part as global targets of development and general policy.
- c) The determination of the products to promote so much within scope of national and subregional tourism that for the inter-regional tourism development which must be considered, as possible, as a complementary of the one regarding to other missions assigned to the exchanges reinforcement.
- d) The inventory of the touristic supply resting on hotel-infrastructure, ways of access and communication, the attractions, the travel agencies and diverse allowers of services to establish the products degree of complementarity of the concerned countries of the subregion.
- e) The harmonization of all occurer's points of view, that is mainly the hotels, the air companies, the administration of customs, the services of immigrations, the respective travel agencies. This process is decisive for the strike force of the product that we prepare to launch into the market. The debate must clear up the contribution that everyone wants to bring so that the product should be proposed and served to the consumer in the better conditions. This stage which risks to be very long must not let to drag out the negociations on the point of discouraging them but rather bringing them about ensuring that no question has been let in secret. It's about the product's reliability. On seminars -workshops should be an ideal framework to favour the opening of ideas in this matter.

ACTIONS UPON THE DEMAND

Once the strong and the weak points of the product are identified and the balance established between the favourable factors and the obstacles with a view to determining its level of competiveness, the market study have to be run in order to determine the aimed customers according to its performance, its preferences and the fashion trade in vogue, that often brings to the notion of division of the aimed touristic population

It seems that the big difficulty is to organize the products in a common package and to create a right image and really representative of the space to commercialize and at the same line to keep objective and free of any chauvinist consideration or purely political seldom conciliable whith economic rentability.

It's always desirable, a this level of the marketing process, to have a pilot product marked out , at short or middle course, for becoming the spearhead of the promotion on the elected markets.

Nevertheless, at the present time context, the African product jointly conceived from the sub-regional viewpoint or individually from the national viewpoint won't have chance really to enter into international markets if it isn't bended by a willful politic of the african responsables themselves and at any level of decision.

The touristic product needs an environment which allow it to prevail itself over the professionnals and consumers, local and outside and this in spite of its great dependance towards operators external to continent up to, for instance, very high prices and non-coordinated air transport's schedules or prohibitive rates in the hotels managed by the multinationales. About the inter-african tourism, it's essential to proceed at a total reviews of the suggesteed products and to determine the kind of administration more in accordance to needs and local environment.

As the authorities display, without any exception, their desire to develop the profits from tourism, they also must consent to particular effort to assume the appropriate measures of support to the product. Then they must take into account the wishes of the consumers and operators of the sector. These wishes are essentially about the administrative and tax easines (facilitation of immigration and emigration facilities, visas, customs, organization of occupation) and tax (no taxation, reduction of some fees, access to the credits) as well as all the infrastructures wich investment or responsibility is generally within the competence of public sector (communications, roads, harbours and airports, security) and which constitute, often a neck of strangulation to the tourism.

The integration of the craftsman's trade development and the valorisation of ethnografic patrimony and african cultural productions can contribute in significant way to the elaboration of attractive and quality products.

Africa can also play the card of quality in developing the personalized service, the tourism discovery of nature and man, liable to compensate for some obstacles.

That suppose an high level of professionalism and so once more the staff should be able to specialize in varied domains as reception, guide techniques, liveliness, environment, all the careers in hostelly, history and deep perspectives of daily life of the receiving populations. Also there, the active intervention of the authorities is extremely necessary. But the determining element will be the active and responsible participation of the local collectivities and the behaviour of the visitors respectful of human and natural environment.

PROMOTION AND COMMERCIALIZATION ACTIONS

To the aimed customer must correspond a kind of message and supports which fit to them. The part of the promotion will be to do his best so that the product should be known, loved and even preferred compared to the others.

Each states wish to dispose an office of promotion inside of the countries but, as we know it, few of them can allow it themselves cause of financial charges that it involves. In the process of regional integration it's better to anticipate the creation of this kind of office wich principal tasks are:

- To inform and to educate the receiving and visiting publics by all public ways and at any occasion. The information will be broadcasted in written, oral or visual forms and delivered during diverse kinds of shows (touristic shows or multipurpose forum- expositions) or through the direct works and contacts.
- To keep up the public relations either with the press (press messages, press conferences, educatours for journalists and desk- agents, press photographies, press competition) or directly with the public (organization of many kinds of promotional events as gastronomic days, commercial or private).
- To ensure the radiophonic touristic publicity, televisual or written in using the advertisement films of cinema, the billboards or the "direct-mail". There, the personal relations will have to play to win all these environment confidence.

In addition of purely promotional activities, this or these offices will stick to provoke, facilitate and materialize the definitive purchasing act of intra-african's product by trying to contact the maximum of professionals in tourism presents the aim-market. To that effect, it will meet the case to manage all the handing channels likely to make optimum the advocate action. The ideal is to win or at least to involve all the operators in the sale of the dream, that is mainly to say the travel agencies, the tour operators, the opinions-leaders (or leaders), the system of sale-carriers and the hotel managers without leaving out the processing and the correspondance. Besides the office will constitute a central head office of hotel rooms reservation and organised stay.

Here is data processing system extremely needful.

To the light of these few considerations, the subregional tourism representation will be asked to assume important responsibilities which require a great spirit of enterprise and a real marketing spirit so it's about a specialized unity which, in order to product it's full efficiency, will have to make use of free handling but obviously, without escaping a minimum of states- control. Above all, it doesn't have to be considerate as a diplomatic aerial of the sub-region which has decided its creation. It will be falling in the case of some countries which, for lack of better and for financial reasons, entrust the touristic promotion role to their embassies and consultants for ascertaining after that the result leaves much to be desired. Such an aerial won't be able to justify itself only if the means to being into play really exist. At the first time, this activity could be entrust to a professional firm on the basic of a fair convention agreement and which the effects are checkable!

CONCLUSION

The debate about the inter-african co- operation about tourism as that of about intra- african tourism development doesn't date today because since ten years soon, with the conference of Niamey in 1984, this subject cause practically back on the working tables of most important authority's responsables of tourism in Africa. In spite of the worry, many a time expressed during various forums, the meetings, the conferences or the seminars about the african tourism, the pool of efforts especially to start the inter-states systems is staying, at some initiatives near, in the pure intentions and this, in spite of the existence of an institutional setting which appears through the regional organisations-series aiming in its great majority the creation of an economic space for all african people's common better-being.

There isn't no doubt that the sub-regional co-operation will permit the african neighbouring countries or gathered in these organisations to create a fruitful collaboration in many fields so as to easily and quickly resolve the problems tight both to the administrative and technical aspects. Tourism could benefit at it directly or not.

Into consideration of provided requirements of touristic market, direct consequences consumers, only an approach won't require only important investments but also and above all a solid political will especially concerning the obligatory purchase of "KNOW - HOW and the establishment of liberalised norms - The widest public and private sector powers concertation is strongly recommanded to match the points of view about the allowance to furnish.

- Regional and subregional supple but operational concertation mechanisms proved to be necessary today if we want to concrete the ideas till now favorable to the creation of integrated touristical product, to its promotion and its joint marketing. whithout it, there is no doubt that the multinationales will go on getting the greatest part in the exploitation of multiple Africa's potentiality.