

# Tourism and Support for Marine Conservation in Tofo, Mozambique



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## INTRODUCTION

A pilot survey of tourists visiting Tofo, Mozambique was conducted between July 10-31, 2017 to identify the types of activities tourists engaged in and their level of support for marine conservation. The survey was developed and completed in collaboration with All Out Africa, a consortium of organizations that provide volunteer, internship and tourism experiences.

By learning about the activities of tourists and their level of support for marine conservation in Tofo, steps can be identified to engage the local community and the tourism industry in the adoption of sustainable tourism practices.



A rocky shoreline south of Tofo

## METHODS

Interview surveys were conducted among English speaking adults 19 years of age or older in July 2017. Surveys included 22 questions and were completed within about 10 minutes.

Both closed- and open-ended survey questions were developed to gather: tourist demographic information, purpose and duration of visit, activities while in Tofo, spending, perceptions and level of interest in local culture, marine fauna, and supporting marine protected areas.

Survey data were then entered into an excel spreadsheet and analyzed using SPSS statistical software.



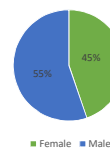
Whale Shark encountered on an Ocean Safari

## RESULTS

### RESPONDENTS

Of those who completed the survey, 55 percent were males and 45 percent were females. Respondents ranged in age from 19-54 years and represented 14 different countries.

Figure 1. Gender Distribution



### LENGTH OF STAY AND ACTIVITIES

The majority of respondents indicated staying between one and five days in Tofo (Figure 2). When asked about the primary reason for visiting Tofo, the top three reasons were SCUBA, snorkeling, and visiting the beach (Figure 3).

Figure 2. Number of Days in Tofo

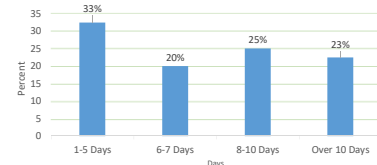
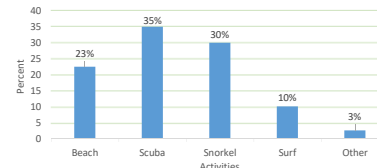


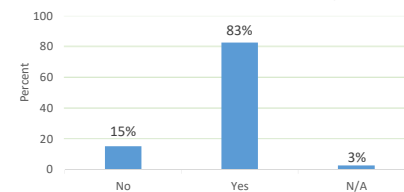
Figure 3. Primary Reason for Visiting Tofo



## SUPPORT FOR A MARINE PROTECTED AREA

Support for a Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Tofo, Mozambique was very strong. In addition, nearly three-quarters of respondents were willing to pay \$10 (USD) or more to support an MPA (Figures 6 and 7).

Figure 6. Willingness to contribute to a Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Tofo, Mozambique

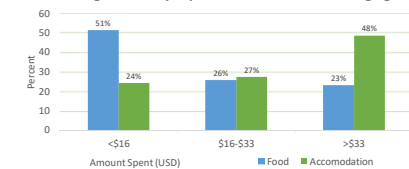


Juvenile Humpback Whale encountered on an Ocean Safari

### EXPENDITURES

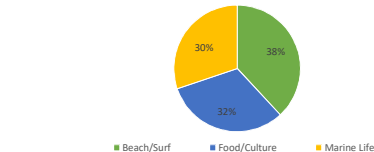
Although the greatest percentage of respondents reported daily food purchases of \$16 or less (lowest expense category), more were willing to pay higher prices for accommodations (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Daily Expenditures for Food and Lodging



Given that tourists primarily came to Tofo to experience the beach, SCUBA and snorkel, it is not surprising that their favorite attractions were beach/surf and marine life. However, tourists were equally attracted to the food and local culture (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Favorite Attractions Among Respondents (%)

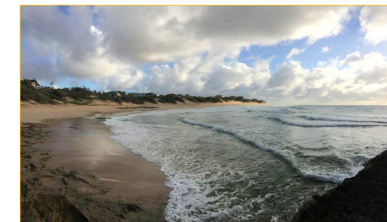


## DISCUSSION

Tourists are spending money on local food and lodging. They appear to have varied interests and reasons for coming to Tofo, implying a multi-layered foundation for tourism. They also show very strong support for a Marine Protected Area and indicated a willingness to pay into the program.

Tourism in Mozambique is rising, including in Tofo specifically. Projections suggest a sharp rise in tourism and tourism related spending, therefore Marine Protected Areas need to be established soon to be effective. An MPA is necessary as the region's unique marine wildlife are a significant part of why tourists are attracted to the area.

Interest in local food and culture suggests investments should be made to protect and support local cultural experiences in addition to the marine experience. There is emerging potential for eco-tourism in Tofo, however, a tourism industry cannot succeed without sufficient infrastructure and growth in supporting areas. Given tourism projections, policies to create an MPA are critical, and complimentary strategies to expand cultural experiences will add to a more robust tourism industry. Additional studies will help support responsible tourism.



Tofino Beach, south of Tofo

## LIMITATIONS

Convenience sampling was used, and therefore the results are not generalizable to the broader population of tourists. In addition, the sample size is small. Data were collected during the winter season which is the low season for tourism. Future surveys need to be conducted across all seasons to account for variations in tourist demographics and behaviors.

## REFERENCES

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