REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND WILDLIFE
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR TOURISM

PRESS RELEASE

GOVERNMENT TARGETS BIGGER ROLE IN TOURISM FUNDS MANAGEMENT

NAIROBI, 20 August 2026 —

The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife has proposed the separation of the responsibility of collecting levies from hotels and restaurants and the management of the funds for greater efficiency and transparency.

In its submissions on the Tourism Amendment Bill to the Departmental Committee on Tourism and Wildlife, the Ministry has recommended that the Tourism Fund retains the role of collecting levies while the Cabinet Secretary oversights the management of the Funds.

Currently, the Tourism Fund collects two percent of revenue from regulated hotels and restaurants and then disburses the monies to government-owned tourism institutions such as the Kenya Tourist Board, Tourism Research Institute, Bomas of Kenya and the Kenya Utalii College.

If the proposals are adopted, the CS responsibilities will be enhanced to include formulating the Fund's operation policy and "determining the amounts of money payable for the purpose of the Fund and formulate the conditions for disbursement."

Tourism CS Rebecca Miano told the Committee chaired by Maara MP Kareke Mbiuki that the amendments were necessary to enable the Government effectively Fund tourism activities and institutions and to align with emerging sector realities.

"We therefore need to amend and modernise the law so that it reflects the realities of the sector today, responds to emerging opportunities and provides a stronger foundation for its future growth."

She said the reforms are expected to strengthen coordination, improve institutional efficiency and create a more enabling environment for investment, innovation and sustainable growth in the tourism sector.

Tourism PS Julius Bitok said the recommendations mirror the complementary and specialised roles played by the Kenya Revenue Authority and the Central Bank of Kenya.

"We are borrowing the approach underpinned by the Public Finance Management where KRA collects money through e-Citizen and deposits the funds with CBK for allocation through Treasury."

He said a clear and efficient flow of tourism-related revenues would enable the Ministry to plan and implement programmes aimed at developing and promoting the sector more effectively and strengthen the financial architecture supporting the tourism sector.

The Committee is considering the Bill alongside other proposed amendments to the Tourism Act that are intended to harmonise Kenya's tourism legislation with the global realities and enhance the country's appeal in a competitive market.

Among the proposals are the merger of the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) and Tourism Research Institute (TRI), as well as the restructuring and consolidating selected Semi-Autonomous Government Agencies (SAGAs).

Hon. Mbiuki promised extensive public participation on the Amendment Bill to capture broad consensus on pertinent issues.

"We are inviting all stakeholders and the public to present their views on the Bill. We want to have as much consensus as possible including on sensitive areas around tourism."

The MP challenged the Ministry to broaden the tax base for applicable levies beyond the current hospitality industry to include Airbnb and other facilities.

The meeting also received submissions from Office of the Attorney General, the Kenya Law Reform Commission, TRI and KTB.

ENDS