

## An Alluring Paradise for Tourism: Cape Palmas a reference point in Liberia

Solo Otto Gaye<sup>1</sup>, Adetunde, I.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institutional Advancement Programme Unit, <sup>2</sup>College of Engineering and Technology  
William V. S. Tubman University, Harper, Maryland, Liberia

### Abstract

This paper is an extension of the earlier submission to [24] and [25] articles. This article focuses on an alluring paradise for tourism, with a reference point to Cape Palmas in Harper, Maryland County of Republic of Liberia.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Cape Palmas, World Tourism Organization (WTO), International Union of Official Travel Organizations (IUOTO), Harper.

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### Introduction

Tourism simply means travel for recreation, leisure, religious, family or business purposes, usually for a short limited duration. The general believe by some people is that tourism is commonly associated with international travel; it may also be seeing as to travel to another place within the same country for retreat, recreation, leisure, religious, family or business purposes . The World Tourism Organization defines tourists as people "traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes"[1].

Tourism as of this day becoming integral part of economic development, it serves as another major source of income for many countries. Tourism can be domestic or international, and international tourism has both incoming and outgoing implications on a country's balance of payments and affects the economy of both the source and host countries, table 1 and 2 are good justification to see travellers' rates in the ten most visited countries. Tourism is an important essential activity to the life of every nation because of its direct effects and impacts on the social, cultural, educational, and economic sectors of national societies and on their international relations.

The most important organizations as per tourism is concern are the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and International Union of Official Travel Organisations (IUOTO). Several conferences have been held by these organizations.

Every aspect of tourism can be grouped into: Heritage tourism (Sustainable tourism) [2, 3], Ecological tourism [4], Pro-poor tourism [5], Sports tourism [26], Social tourism [26], Last Chance tourism (Tourism of Doom) [6, 7, 8], Dark tourism [9 – 14], Experiential tourism [ ], Educational tourism [26], Medical tourism [26], Space tourism [15], Creative tourism (Cultural and Crafts tourism [16, 17]), Recession tourism [26].

The main objectives of this paper are to emphasize the importance of tourism in developed and under developed countries, which are summarized as:

- source of income for many countries: tourism brings in large amounts of income into a local economy in the form of payment for goods and services needed by tourists, accounting for 30% of the world's trade of services, and 6% of overall exports of goods and services.[18 - 20]
- It also creates opportunities for employment in the service sector of the economy associated with tourism
- It is a benefit to (i) transportation services industries, such as airlines, cruise ships, and taxicabs; (ii) hospitality services, such as accommodations, including hotels and resorts; (iii) entertainment venues, such as amusement parks, casinos, shopping malls, music venues, and theatres (iv) providing markets to the business men and women of that country through goods bought by tourists, which including souvenirs, clothing and other supplies.

According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO) reports the following ten countries are the most visited in terms of the number of international travellers in 2014.

**Table 1: The ten most visited countries by international travellers**



Rank	Country	UN WTO Region <sup>[21]</sup>	International tourist arrivals (2014) <sup>[22]</sup>	International tourist arrivals (2013) <sup>[23]</sup>
1	 France	Europe	83.7 million	83.6 million
2	 United States	North America	74.8 million	70.0 million
3	 Spain	Europe	65.0 million	60.7 million
4	 China	Asia	55.6 million	55.7 million
5	 Italy	Europe	48.6 million	47.7 million
6	 Turkey	Europe	39.8 million	37.8 million
7	 Germany	Europe	33.0 million	31.5 million
8	 United Kingdom	Europe	32.6 million	31.1 million
9	 Russia	Europe	29.8 million	28.4 million
10	 Mexico	North America	29.1 million	24.2 million

WTO reveals that International tourism receipts grew to US\$1.245 billion in 2014, corresponding to an increase in real terms of 3.7% from 2013.<sup>[4]</sup> The World Tourism

Organization reports the following countries as the top ten tourism earners for the year 2014, with the United States by far the top earner.

**Table 2: International Tourism Receipts for 2013 and 2014**

Rank	Country	UNWTO Region <sup>[21]</sup>	International tourism receipts (2014) <sup>[22]</sup>	International tourism receipts (2013) <sup>[23]</sup>
1	 United States	North America	\$177.2 billion	\$172.9 billion
2	 Spain	Europe	\$65.2 billion	\$62.6 billion
3	 China	Asia	\$56.9 billion	\$51.7 billion
4	 France	Europe	\$55.4 billion	\$56.7 billion
—	 Macau, China	Asia	\$50.8 billion	\$51.8 billion
5	 Italy	Europe	\$45.5 billion	\$43.9 billion
6	 United Kingdom	Europe	\$45.3 billion	\$41.0 billion
7	 Germany	Europe	\$43.3 billion	\$41.3 billion
8	 Thailand	Asia	\$38.4 billion	\$41.8 billion
—	 Hong Kong, China	Asia	\$38.4 billion	\$38.9 billion

Rank	Country	UNWTO Region <sup>[21]</sup>	International tourism receipts (2014) <sup>[22]</sup>	International tourism receipts (2013) <sup>[23]</sup>
9	 Australia	Oceania	\$32.0 billion	\$31.2 billion
10	 Turkey	Europe	\$29.5 billion	\$27.9 billion

**Table 3: Showing the following cities as the top ten biggest earners on tourism worldwide in 2015 according to MasterCard reports**

Rank	City	Country	International tourists spending <sup>[24]</sup>
1	London	 United Kingdom	\$20.2 billion
2	New York City	 United States	\$17.3 billion
3	Paris	 France	\$16.6 billion
4	Seoul	 South Korea	\$15.2 billion
5	Singapore	 Singapore	\$14.6 billion
6	Barcelona	 Spain	\$13.8 billion

Rank	City	Country	International tourists spending <sup>[24]</sup>
7	Bangkok	 Thailand	\$12.3 billion
8	Kuala Lumpur	 Malaysia	\$12.0 billion
9	Dubai	 United Arab Emirates	\$11.6 billion
10	Istanbul	 Turkey	\$9.3 billion

## Materials and Methods

### Study Area

**Cape Palmas:** The study area of this research work is Cape Palmas in Harper, Maryland County of Republic of Liberia. Cape Palmas is located in the Southern part of Liberia in Harper Town of Maryland County. Cape Palmas is known with its small rocky peninsula linked up with the mainland by a sandy isthmus. It is bounded by west of peninsula with the estuary of the Hoffman River and towards the east by the Cavalla River that make the border with Côte d'Ivoire. It is full of hiking, biking, safari, fishing, rafting, boating, sun bathing; beaches lined with coconut trees which could give peace and a better environment for tourists attraction. Cape Palmas is characterized with the landmarks, estuary of the Hoffman with *Russwurm Island*, which was named after the first black governor (John Brown Russwurm) of Maryland in Africa (later Republic of Maryland) as the history said. This island is connected to the peninsula by a breakwater. There is also a lighthouse warning of the numerous shoals in the surrounding sea area. Clearly visible from offshore is a white building with an enormous golden orb on the roof, this being the masonic lodge hall located in the city of Harper, Liberia (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia [26]). See Figure 1 to 4.

According to the report written by Gomes for Prince Henry (which was written in Latin, and the term used was *caput palmarum*); it was recorded that in 1482 Prince Henry the Navigator of

Portugal sent his captain Diogo Gomes (1440-1482) on a voyage of discovery, trade, and slaving that took him and his crew as far south down the coast of West Africa as the mouth of the cape and estuary, which marks the point where the direction of the coastline of West Africa ceases to have any southerly component, but turns definitively to the east, beginning the Gulf of Guinea. Gomes named this geographic feature Cabo das Palmas, [2] i.e. "Cape of the Palms", which was later semi-Anglicized to Cape Palmas. The river was named Rio das Palmas, later to be called the Hoffman River. Interestingly, the name Cape Palmas (while Liberia was still known as the Malaguetta Coast in Europe) first appeared on various maps of Africa in Latin and later numerous European languages. The earliest map of Africa with the name Cape Palmas is Cantino planisphere completed in 1502 (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia).

From the historical point of view it was recorded that originally a branch of the American Colonization Society that founded Liberia in 1822, Maryland State Colonization Society decided to establish a new settlement of its own that could accommodate its emigrants and named it Maryland in Africa on February 12, 1834. With Cape Palmas at its center, the colony was granted statehood on February 2, 1841 and then independence on May 29, 1854. On March 18, 1857,<sup>1</sup> the state of Maryland was annexed as a part of the Republic of Liberia, after signing an annexation treaty with the Republic of Liberia (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia).



**Figure 1: Some Children of Cape Palmas Harper Community at the Beach.**

**Harper, Maryland County:** Harper is geographical located on the globe coordinates of Longitude 4° 22' 30" North, and Latitude 7° 43' 1" West. The city of Harper, Liberia came in to being in the year 1835 by the Maryland State Colonization Society. Harper is the capital of Maryland County in Liberia; it is the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) largest town in the Republic of Liberia, with a population of 17,837 as recorded by 2008 National Population and Housing Census of Government of the Republic of Liberia. The town Harper is named after Robert Goodloe Harper, who was a prominent U.S. politician and member of the American Colonization Society. It was he who proposed the name Liberia for the American Colonization Society's settlement in Africa, and the town of Harper was named in honor of him [23]. Harper was the capital of the short-lived Republic of Maryland.

Histories have it that in 1854 Maryland Colony declared its independence from the Maryland State Colonization Society but did not become part of the Republic of Liberia. It held the land along the coast between the Grand Cess and San Pedro Rivers. By 1856 the independent state of Maryland (Africa) requested military aid from Liberia in a war with the Grebo and Kru peoples who were resisting the Maryland settlers' efforts to control their trade. President Roberts assisted the Marylanders, and a joint military campaign by both groups of African American colonists resulted in victory. In 1857, Maryland became a county of Liberia [23]. See Figure 1 to 9 on the City of Harper.



**Figure 2: Harper Coast.**





**Figure 3: Harper Coast 2.**



**Figure 4: Harper Coast 3.**



**Figure 5: The War Dance of the Cape Palmas People 1.**



**Figure 6: The War Dance of the Cape Palmas People 2.**



**Figure 7: The War Dance of the Cape Palmas People 3.**



**Figure 8: The War Dance of the Cape Palmas People 4.**

Cape Palmas is one of the areas that mark Harper as a new and key destination for tourism; Cape Palmas alone can boast of several lovely beaches and lakes. The beach at Rock Town, 3 Kilometers from Harper is found at the mouth of a huge, green lagoon where alluvial waters rush in and out daily. Harper is indeed a new paradise where investors in the tourism industry can invest in order to display undiscovered incredible beaches, high plains savanna, lagoons, rivers, lakes and islands. Harper is the birth place of William V.S. Tubman, president of Liberia between 1944 and 1971. Shaped like an obelisk with an open pavilion in the center containing two statues (A Grebo Chief & a Free Slave) locked in an embrace, the monument (see figure 1 below) embodies nineteenth century events, from African repatriation to nation-building [24].



**Figure 9: Centennial Monument.**

### **Prospects of Cape Palmas Been a Tourism Center in Harper, Republic of Liberia**

In the early 1850s, Harper was a small, yet thriving, harbor town. The colonists constructed a tower on the top of Cape Palmas, and they imported a lighthouse mechanism from England, the

beams of which could be seen by sailors 20 miles out at sea. Today this light house still stands in Harper [23]. If the Cape Palmas is look at by the Government, Philanthropists, business men, business women and individuals to be a tourism center or tourism attraction, the earlier stated objectives of the article will definitely be achieved. Cape Palmas will then be:

- (i) Income generating revenue to the government of Liberia, even though traveling from Monrovia to Harper is a thirteen (13) hour drive; tourists will like to be visiting the place. Though commercial flights have not been introduced yet, the city still maintains a small airport that could be used by private or chartered aircrafts; this will also boast the generation of revenue to the country Liberia. Now are days, several boats have already started moving between Harper and Monrovia, this will also contribute to the well-being and standard of living of the people of Harper.
- (ii) It also creates opportunities for employment in the service sector of the economy associated with tourism.
- (iii) Transportation services industries, such as airlines, cruise ships, and taxicabs will benefit tremendously if Cape Palmas is turn to be tourists' attraction.
- (iv) Hospitality services, such as accommodations, including hotels and resorts; will take parts of the advantages of Cape Palmas for their services.
- (v) Entertainment venues, such as amusement parks, casinos, shopping malls, music venues, and theatres will not be left behind in benefitting if Cape Palmas is transformed to be a tourism center.
- (vi) Provision of markets to the business men and women of the Harper and the neighbouring towns and neighbouring countries through goods bought by tourists, which including souvenirs, clothing and other supplies.
- (vii) It may serve as an opportunity to meet with colleagues, buyers and suppliers of travel services.
- (viii) It may also serve as environmental development and sustainability.
- (ix) The objectives of International organization like, World Tourism Organization (WTO) and International Union of Official Tourist Propaganda Organizations (IUOTPO) will be achieve likewise in Republic of Liberia,

with all the attractive pictures of the figures shown in the body of the work the prospects of Cape Palmas been a Tourism Center in Harper, Republic of Liberia will be achievable.

## Conclusion

Having seen some of the prospects of Cape Palmas has been a tourism Center in Harper, Republic of Liberia. We quite believe that the City of Harper, Maryland County and Republic of Liberia should have benefit a lot as other World tourism centers is doing to the countries. See Tables 1 to 3.

Active tourism has not started yet; many people have already placed the city on their tourism map for much needed relaxation and rest. In recent times, the city has witnessed an increase in foreign guests curious to relax on oceanfront beaches with access to "stress out reduction" regime of swimming, boating, joking, fishing and good sea food. As stated in the earlier publication, lobsters, swordfish, crayfish, dolphins, manatees and other marine species are abounding in the under-fished waters of Harper.

Arguably, the most exciting event to witness is certainly the traditional war dance and funerals with "talking coffins". Across the Hoffman River in Big-town, a Harper suburb, traditionally occupied by the Grebos is most often a scene of traditional "false burials. It is an annual event to celebrate and remember the spirits of the dead [23].

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