



# Ethiopian News

October - November 2013 Issue

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# Ethiopia: A Tourist Paradise

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## Family Planning conference concludes with praise for Ethiopia's efforts



The third International Conference on Family Planning, the largest global gathering on family planning closed with a Call to Action for governments to prioritise family planning in the new global development framework that replaces the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) after 2015. The **Addis Call to Action on the Post-2015 Development Framework**, launched with signatures from 35 civil society organisations and individuals, will be presented to the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, to stress the essential role that global development goals play in catalyzing action and holding countries accountable.

Jointly organised by the Ethiopian Ministry of Health and the Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, this year's conference was held under the theme, **Full**

**Access, Full Choice.** It brought together more than 3,000 advocates, researchers, health professionals and political leaders from over 100 countries. The conference's main focus was on the benefits of giving access to contraceptives to the people of the world, allowing them to live their lives in accordance with socio-economic development and their environment, to reduce morbidity and mortality.



Speaking at the opening ceremony, PM Hailemariam Desalegn recognized the work of the

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) for their continued assistance to Ethiopia's development of the reproductive health sector. Ethiopia has made great progress in attaining the MDG on Family Planning so that population growth matches the rate of socio-economic development.

The use of family planning is now regarded as one of the more crucial elements of human rights embedded in Ethiopia's constitution and other government policies. The PM said the Government was committed to providing family planning services to at least 11 million women by 2020, and said the Government would be allocating more resources to further expand family planning services through a major "government-led" and "country-wide" Health Extension Programme. This has already trained and deployed over 38,000 health extension workers in communities across the country; two for every village. Ethiopia is also promoting women's participation through the Women-Centred Health Development Army to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on reproductive health and family planning services, the PM added.



Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, Dr Tedros Adhanom, signed a petition on 14<sup>th</sup> November which supports family planning as a way of building a mass constituency of support for the equality of girls and women around the world.

Ethiopia was also given special recognition for its sustained political commitment to family planning. Over the past few years, Ethiopia doubled the percentage of women using contraceptives (from 15% in 2005 to 29% in 2011) and has pledged to more than double that percentage again (to 66% by 2015). Ethiopia's family planning successes are due to innovative use of front-line health workers who deliver family planning services in rural and hard-to-reach areas.

## UK Parliamentarians, Businesses Explore Ethiopia's Initiative for Investment, Trade

Members of the Ethiopia All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) and scores of businesses agreed to boost relations with Ethiopia and promote investment and trade, exploiting to the full the enabling environment created by one of Africa's emerging economies.



The announcement was made at an annual event, on 30<sup>th</sup> October, jointly organised by the Embassy and the APPG on Ethiopia, where parliamentarians discussed and explored areas for engagement in Ethiopia's multi-faceted development programme. The main focus was on agriculture, manufacturing, infrastructure, services and the development of social facilities.

Flow of FDI has risen to over \$4 billion and Ethiopia has put in place policies and strategies that foster a carbon-free economy in its bid to join the community of middle-income nations by 2025.

The Ethiopian government recently signed an agreement worth over \$4 billion with **Reykjavik Geothermal** for construction of a plant that will generate up to 1,000MW of geothermal power.



Addressing the gathering at the event held at the Ethiopian Embassy in London, H.E. Berhanu Kebede, Ethiopian Ambassador to the UK, cited the five-year **Growth and Transformation Plan** that envisages creating millions of new jobs, providing

homes to hundreds of thousands of people, constructing educational and health facilities and constructing railway networks and massive dams,

which will feed power to the emerging industries and manufacturing plants.

The Ambassador called for more British investment in Ethiopia, citing corporates Diageo, Nyota Minerals, Pittards, South West Energy and Unilever - a new addition to the growing list of Ethiopia's development partners.

In addition to its intensive engagements in the fight against poverty through the implementation of its pro-poor programmes, the government has put in place a democratic order that gives precedence to the sovereignty and equality of nations and nationalities in their pursuit of a better life and a prosperous country.

Chairman of the APPG on Ethiopia, Mr Lawrence Robertson MP, noted how exemplary bilateral relations between Ethiopia and the UK are.

He said it was moving to hear about how much progress has been made, and congratulated Ethiopia on what has been achieved. He noted that the plan to move forward in terms of education, housing and power generation is very impressive.



"It is wonderful that we have such a great relationship between the UK and Ethiopia in terms of friendship and development and in so many other ways". It is really something to cherish and will continue to grow even stronger, he added.

He also announced upcoming visits to Ethiopia by two delegations, in keeping with the momentum of engagement and cooperation between the two nations.

Speaking at the event, Foreign Secretary of the Royal Society, Professor Martyn Poliakoff, elucidated the relationship between his organization and the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences (EAS), which is now working on the promotion of scientific research, including work on "green chemistry", the Professor's area of expertise.

The Ethiopian government, he said, has taken a bold measure in encouraging 70 per cent of new entrants to study science and engineering, in a bid to develop technology that will spur the country's growth and benefit the people concerned and preparing them for skilled employment in key areas.



He said the newly established EAS is one of the strongest academies of science in the region. "Ethiopian scientists are making themselves felt and are becoming integrated into the greater scientific effort." Himself an acclaimed chemist, Professor Poliakoff noted the growing focus on science and said "We look forward to the first Ethiopian Nobel Prize."

Ethiopian cuisine and refreshments were served. A film depicting major development projects and Ethiopia's transformation was also shown.

### **Africa's biggest wind farm inaugurated**

Ethiopia witnessed a landmark in the development of renewable energy in Africa with the official opening of the Ashegoda Wind Farm, the largest in sub-Saharan Africa, with a capacity of 120MW – enough to supply energy to over 100,000 homes.



*Ashegoda Wind Farm*

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, who officially opened the complex on 26<sup>th</sup> October, said the wind farm was vital for maintaining Ethiopia's

development, adding that all future power projects will be based on renewable energy sources.

The PM took the opportunity to pay homage to his predecessor, the late PM Meles Zenawi, whom he referred to as "Africa's green growth champion".



H.E. Hailemariam Desalegn at the grand opening of the wind farm ©Vergnet

There is no development without energy, PM Hailemariam said, and ensuring a power supply is key to achieving Ethiopia's national vision of becoming a middle-income country. He thanked the French government for helping realise the Ashegoda Wind Farm.

EEPCo CEO, Mihret Debebe, said besides contributing power to the national grid, the Ashegoda Wind Farm has facilitated technology transfer. French Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ms Brigitte Collet, said the Ashegoda Wind Farm exemplifies Franco-Ethiopian friendship. Ethiopia's leading role on climate change is highly appreciated, she said, and France will stand by the government in its endeavour to ensure economic and social development.

The farm took four years to construct at a cost of €210 million, financed by BNP Paribas of France, the French Development Agency (ADF) and the balance by EEPCO.

With planned annual production of 400GWh, the farm, located in Mekelle, will save 300,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year.

The 84 wind turbines were erected by Vergnet SA, the leading specialist in renewable energy production in challenging environments. It has already installed 830 wind turbines, and supplies water to over 50 million people worldwide.

## UK supports Ethiopia's green energy

The Ethiopian government and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) recently signed a MoU in support of Ethiopia's ambitious plan to build a Climate-Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) by 2025.

The £15m grant will be committed to the CRGE Facility, used to support implementation of the Sector Reduction Mechanisms process, to generate and fund high-quality strategic investments that meet the priorities of the Ethiopian government.

The finance will support Ethiopia in building a Climate-Resilient Green Economy across different sectors. "This transformative approach, developed by the Government of Ethiopia, will provide a clear example of green economic transformation, not only in Africa but across the world," the ministry said in its press statement.

Ethiopia's commitment to climate-resilient green economy means that growth in Ethiopia is better for all, able to withstand the shocks and stresses and contributes to the imperative global goal of dramatic and sustained declines in emissions and a successful de-coupling of economic growth from emissions," the ministry added.

## 300MW solar project approved

The Ministry of Water and Energy and the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCo) have approved the construction of three solar power stations, capable of generating up to 300MW, by two US companies Global Trade and Development Consulting (GTDC) and Energy Ventures.

The Water and Energy Minister, Alemayehu Tegen said, "This project represents a significant advance in our energy initiative and is now part of our comprehensive Energy Plan. Given Ethiopia's large hydro-electric generation capacity and now wind and geothermal power generation coming on-line, large-scale solar fits nicely into our energy portfolio and will provide significant power generation capacity, much faster than the other renewable technologies. We welcome this project with open arms."

"We spent months analyzing the potential for a large-scale solar project in Ethiopia. We found that Ethiopia has some of the highest solar irradiance factors in Africa," said Dr Yonnas Kefle, CEO of GTDC. "As with all our projects, we intend to also maximize the amount of local content and resources in performance of this project."

"We are excited to be the Project Developer leading this important project for the Ethiopian people. The power that this project will deliver will have a dramatic effect on millions of Ethiopian people's quality of life," said Mr Lynn R. Hogg, Founder and CEO of Energy Ventures.

The project is included in US president Barack Obama's 'Power Africa' initiative aimed at improving access to electricity in sub-Saharan Africa.

Located in the eastern region, the three 100MW facilities will create around 2,000 construction jobs and inject millions of dollars into the Ethiopian economy.

### **Ethiopia, Kenya secure funding for power lines**

\$1.26bn of funding has been secured for the Ethiopia–Kenya high-voltage transmission line for improving electricity supply, due for completion in 2015.

The project, which will produce up to 2,000MW of electricity, is co-funded by the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the French Development Agency and the Ethiopian and Kenyan governments.

### **Renaissance dam to generate 700MW next year**

The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), set to be the biggest power plant in Africa upon completion with a 6,000MW generating capacity, will start generating 700MW of electricity next year according to the National Coordination Office for the dam. To date, 25.4% of the dam has been completed, creating 6,000 jobs.

### **Gibe III to generate power next year**

The Gilgel Gibe III hydro-electric dam is expected to start generating power in the first months of

next year, as one of the turbines goes operational producing 187 MW. This will be the first of ten turbines which will be installed at the project. Upon completion, the dam will have a total generating capacity of 1,870MW, which would almost double the present amount of power generated in Ethiopia.

### **Ethiopia launches space observatory program**

The Ethiopian Space Science Society (ESSS) has established a \$3.4m space observatory in Addis Ababa to enhance the country's knowledge of the extra-terrestrial universe.

The Observatory is the first phase of a space exploration program, which includes East Africa's largest observatory, designed to promote astronomy research in the region. It is installed 3,200 metres above sea level on the Entoto Mountain, ideal because of its minimal cloud cover, moderate winds and low humidity.

Funded by Ethiopian-Saudi business tycoon, Mohammed Alamoudi, the Observatory has two telescopes, each one metre wide, to see extra planets, different types of stars, the Milky Way, and deep galaxies.

Observatory director, Solomon Belay, hopes this new venture will boost "astronomy tourism" among space fans interested in coming to one of the least likely countries in the world to have a space programme, an added economic benefit.

The Ethiopian Space Science Society also plans to install a second observatory on the mountains of Lalibela, 4,200 metres above sea level in Northern Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian government plans to launch a space policy in the coming years and also launch its first satellite within the next three years to study meteorology and boost telecommunications.

### **Road coverage in Ethiopia reaches 70%**

A recent review of Ethiopia's Road Sector Development Program (RSDP) revealed that total road coverage reached 86,000km in the past 16 years at a cost of over 142 billion Birr.



The total federal road coverage increased by 62% with 11,301km of asphalt and 14,455km of gravel road laid. The regional road network also reached 32,582km, while the overall performance of the Woreda roads sub-sector reached 27,628km.

When the program was launched in 1997, Ethiopia's total road coverage stood at 26,550km. It is currently in Phase IV of its implementation stage, begun in 2010.

### **Track laying for Addis Ababa light railway project launched**

Track laying for the Addis Ababa light railway project was officially launched on 30<sup>th</sup> October in the presence of high government officials including Mayor of Addis Ababa City Administration, Diriba Kuma and Transport Minister, Workneh Gebeyehu.



The two-line rail tracks extend 17.35km from east to west stretching from Ayat Village to Torhailoch passing through Megenagna, Legehar and Mexico.

In the north to south direction, a 16.9km rail track will pass through Menelik Square, Merkato, Lideta, Legehar, Meskal Square, Gotera and Kaliti. The two directions will have a common track of about 2.8-km.

The Light Rail Transit will have a total of 41 coaches each capable of carrying 286 passengers, providing transportation services to 15,000 people an hour in one direction and 60,000 in all four directions.

Mayor of Addis Ababa City Administration, Diriba Kuma, said the project will play a significant role in

alleviating transportation problems in the metropolis once completed in 18 months' time.

The railway project is the first of its kind in the country.

Diriba also called on the public to continue their support until the project is complete, as there are big hopes for the future.

Transport Minister, Workneh Gebeyehu, said the project, will expedite ongoing economic growth.

43% of the 34km railway project has so far been completed.

### **Over one million lifted from extreme poverty**

Abraham Tekeste, State Minister of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development of Ethiopia said that over one million people were lifted out of poverty as a result of GDP growth achieved last year - the total number of people in extreme poverty has declined to 26% last year from 29.6% two years ago.

This was achieved with a 9.7% GDP growth rate during the last fiscal year (July 2012 to June 2013).

Briefing journalists at the Ministry, Abraham said "We believe we can meet the MDG targets, as we've already reduced child mortality by two-thirds in just two decades. The country's growth of 9.7% last fiscal year was a major milestone in achieving the targets before the 2015 deadline."

The Ethiopian government estimates that for every one per cent of economic growth it has been able to reduce poverty by two per cent.

### **Ethiopia doubles number of girls in schools in 10 years**

A new report, African Report on Child Wellbeing 2013: Towards Greater Accountability to Africa's Children, released by the African Child Policy Forum (ACPF) says the number of girls enrolling in primary school across Africa has soared in the last decade, with Ethiopia and Angola showing the most dramatic improvements.

The report released on 18th November, ACPF's 10th anniversary, states that in Ethiopia, girls'

enrolment rose to 83% from 41% between 2000 and 2011. It analyses and ranks the performance of 52 African governments in a Child-Friendly Index, comparing progress since the first ranking in 2008. Developed by ACPF - an independent, pan-African institution - the Child Friendliness Index is based on 44 indicators that measure governments' commitment to the protection of their children, provision for their children's basic needs and the participation of children in decisions that affect them.

Chairperson of the ACPF Board of Trustees, former President of Mozambique Joaquim Chissano, said "More and more governments are allocating a larger share of their budgets to sectors that have a direct impact on children including health and education, and most governments are taking steps to enhance the legal protection of children from abuse and exploitation."

The report also found that the greatest gains in Africa over the past five years were in reducing child deaths, with Ethiopia among the countries which recorded significant gains.

In September, Ethiopia achieved the millennium development goal to cut the mortality rate for children under the age of five, ahead of the 2015 deadline.

According to the 2013 UNICEF progress report, Ethiopia reduced child deaths by more than two thirds over the past 20 years. In 1990, an estimated 204 children in every 1,000 in Ethiopia died before the age of five, by 2012 the rate had dropped to 68, a massive 67% fall in the under-five mortality rate.

### **Number of hospitals to rise to 800 by 2015**

The Ministry of Health said efforts are underway to increase the number of hospitals to 800 by the end of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) period in 2015.

By improving health service delivery, Ethiopia hopes to become a medical tourism destination, thus enabling it to earn foreign currency.

Ethiopia has 3,245 health stations, 16,048 health posts and 229 referral hospitals. And in order to reach the target, 175 hospitals are being constructed in the SNNP, Oromia, Amhara,

Benishangul Gumuz and Afar regional states, as well as in Dire Dawa. The hospitals are expected to give healthcare services for up to 1.5m people.

During the last fiscal year, four hospitals went operational.

## **TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

### **PM Hailemariam urges investment in Africa**

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, during the Global Green Growth Forum (3GF) in Denmark in October, said that investing in Africa, with its vast arable land and cheap labour, is very profitable.

The Premier, who represented Africa at the Forum, said the continent is registering the fastest economic growth next to Asia, and is working to make the transformation of its economy from agriculture to industry, is considering a green growth strategy. The PM also expressed Ethiopia's keenness to welcome businesses and investors at the Forum, to invest in renewable energy in the country.

The Forum discussed how governments can improve their investment policy framework to reduce risk and attract long-term private finance in support of green growth.

The Ethiopian Investment Agency also announced plans to significantly increase the flow of investment into the country this year, with more than 1,000 new investment projects, with an estimated combined investment capital of 129.6 billion birr, receiving investment licences. The plan is 165% higher than the previous budget year.

Ethiopia is fast becoming a prime investment destination in the Sub-Saharan region as a result of its sustained economic growth and attractive investment incentives. The country expects 264 projects with a combined investment capital of about 64.6 billion birr to go operational this year, according to Getahun Negash, Public Relations Director with the Agency. The government remains committed to attracting more investment in agriculture, agro-processing, food and medicine, garments and tanning.

## TOURISM

### Ethiopia celebrated during WTM week

A 20-member delegation led by Solomon Tadesse, Director General of the newly-established **Ethiopian Tourism Organization**, introduced Ethiopia's tourist sites to visitors from across the globe at this year's World Travel Market (WTM) in London.



Ethiopia showcased tourist destinations including UNESCO-designated heritage sites; UNESCO has designated 129 World Heritage Sites in Africa, located in 37 countries, nine are in Ethiopia.

WTM, the leading annual global event for the travel industry, is a four-day business-to-business exhibition for the worldwide travel and tourism industry, where almost 48,000 senior travel industry professionals, government ministers and the international press, negotiate and discover the latest industry opinion and trends. Now in its 34<sup>th</sup> year, it is the event where the travel industry "conducts and concludes its deals".

Proceedings kicked off with the official opening of the Ethiopian stand on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November in the presence of H.E. Ambassador Berhanu Kebede, the Director General of the Ethiopian Tourism Organization, the Area Manager of Ethiopian Airlines, Michael Yared and Ethiopian tour operators.

On the second day, the Director General of the Ethiopian Tourism Organization and the Ambassador took part in the Ministers' Summit, held under the theme "**How to bridge the gap between tourism and aviation policies**". The summit, organised by the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and WTM brought together 200 tourism ministers and their aides. The main issues discussed included the

prospects for global tourism, the contribution of aviation to the tourism industry, regional integration, airport infrastructure, the impact of taxation on the development of tourism and the interface of private and public sectors in enhancing the role of tourism as an engine of economic growth and sustainable development.



World-renowned dance troupe, Dankira, delighted visitors to the Ethiopia stand with a wide range of dancing styles and music. This year, the stand attracted a record number of visitors and offered networking opportunities for the UK tourism sector with the Ethiopian Tourism Organization, Ethiopian Airlines, tour operators and lodges.

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November saw an Ethiopian Cultural Evening at the Embassy, which brought together Ethiopians and friends of Ethiopia to celebrate and promote Ethiopia's rich and diverse culture and exotic heritage, flora and fauna. Coinciding with WTM, it is jointly organized by the Embassy and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Tourism associations, tour operators, travel writers, prospective investors and representatives from the airline industry were among the guests.

Addressing guests at the event, Ethiopian Ambassador to the UK, H.E. Berhanu Kebede, said Ethiopia is known for its cultural heritage. "Famous for its world-class elite athletes and for being the cradle of humankind, Ethiopia is also a habitat for the Gelada Baboon, Mountain Nyala, the Red Wolf and a number of other exotic wild animals that live in Ethiopia's woodland, savannah grassland and lush meadows, valleys and high rugged mountains," the Ambassador said.





“The five-year GTP envisages further developing essential infrastructure and the hospitality industry so as to cater for the needs of the ever rising number of tourists visiting Ethiopia.

The government has recently announced several new authorities, including a Tourism Agency and an Organization, which will address any challenges and boost climate-neutral tourism, which Ethiopia needs as a source of revenue and job generation.

The Ambassador stressed that conserving tourist attractions is crucial to maintaining and enhancing the flow of tourists and ensuring the protection of Ethiopia’s coveted treasures. Ethiopia is set to be one of the top ten tourist destinations on the African continent in the coming years, he said.

In remarks made at the event, Director General of the Tourism Organization, Solomon Tadesse, said that the Government has set up a **Tourism Transformation Agency** under the Chairmanship of H.E. the Prime Minister, the **Ethiopian Tourism Organization** which he heads, and the **Ethiopian Tourism Board**, which will be fully established when the delegation returns to Ethiopia and will include members from both the public and private sectors, which will give the sector a competitive edge.



He said he appreciated the Ethiopian tour operators’ hard work and diligence in promoting Ethiopian tourist attractions to visitors at the World Travel Market.

Ethiopian cuisine was served at the event, a musical show was staged and a film, *Heaven and Earth* was screened, about the role of religious institutions as custodians of culture and tradition

and their contribution to traditional education and literacy.



In an introduction to the film, author and producer of the film, Mekonnen Michael, expressed his belief that the documentary tells untold stories about Ethiopian culture and tradition.

The new democratic Ethiopia has enshrined in its Constitution the right of the people to freely practice their religion. This has paved the way for enhanced endeavours to safeguard and preserve the country’s religious and cultural assets for posterity.

[Please visit our website for the full press release.](#)

### Why go to Ethiopia?



Levison Wood, co-founder of Secret Compass, talks about his visit to Ethiopia, as he prepares to take a group of 12 MTB adventurers there on an epic world-first trip next year. The following are extracts from his

blog, the full version can be found on the Secret Compass website:

<http://secretcompass.com/ethiopia/>

“It has taken Ethiopia a long time to shake off its international image as a nation blighted by famine... When I visited the African country recently I expected the worst...What I encountered was a totally different experience,” Levison says.

“Driving through the highlands of Ethiopia I was totally unprepared for the sheer greenery and abundance of beauty. Long grass savannahs were interspersed with dramatic and ear-splitting waterfalls...Small, neat villages without a spot of litter line the well-paved tarmac roads and we don’t see another car for hours.”

“High in the jagged peaks of the Simien Mountains and Amhara highlands, life is almost unchanged since our ancestors left some 50,000 years ago. Subsistence farming and hunting continues and traditional village life is a tempting draw for increasing numbers of visitors who want to visit Ethiopia before this way of life is gone forever.”



“The list of attractions in Ethiopia is endless, the stone castles of Gondar are a true marvel for anyone interested in history, as are the ancient rock-hewn churches at Lalibela and the obelisks at Axum. The Omo Valley is home to some of the most fearsome and traditional tribes in all of Africa, not to mention a vast array of wildlife and endemic species. Ethiopia is famed for its tasty coffee and local culinary delights. Culture and pride pervade every aspect of society. The people regard themselves as Ethiopians first and foremost and take delight in reminding visitors that theirs was once a great civilisation that resisted even the most

determined of imperial invaders. It is the source of the Blue Nile and allegedly home to the Ark of the Covenant. It was a playground for explorers and hunters.”

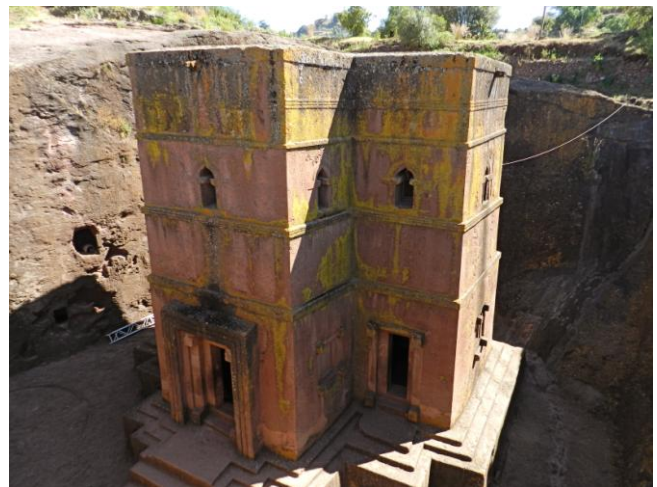
### Lonely Planet’s best value travel destinations for 2014 – Ethiopia



Ethiopia was named as one of the top ten best value travel destinations for 2014 by Lonely Planet - the largest travel guide book publisher in the world, in their annual publication, **Best in Travel 2014**, which is researched by Lonely Planet’s travel experts who have hand-picked the best trends, destinations, journeys and

experiences for the upcoming year.

“When times are tight, we suggest you travel more, not less – but pick carefully. This is where your wallet will smile at the memories for years to come,” writes Tom Hall.



Rock-hewn church in Lalibela

“While you can’t get everywhere in Ethiopia on US\$30 a day, you can see a huge amount by taking great-value, time-saving flights along the country’s Historic Route. This astonishing journey includes the Lake Tana monasteries and the Blue Nile Falls, the rock-hewn wonders of Lalibela and much more. True, the budget goes out the window if you hire a vehicle and driver or join an organised tour – which you need in order to get the most out of the

country's Wild West, but you can always save that for another visit. This is one slice of Africa that rewards the curious as well as the deep-pocketed. Budget hotels abound, but the best are newer properties."

### New Lodge with a Focus on Conservation

*The New York Times*  
**In Transit**  
 Expert Travel Advice

New York Times' Elaine Glusac reports on a new eco-lodge in Ethiopia's wildlife-rich Bale Mountains National Park, Bale Mountain Lodge, opening in November, poised to expand the African safari checklist beyond the Big Five.

"Overlooking a mountain stream at an elevation of 7,800 feet, the eco-lodge was designed with such features as hydropower and biogas for cooking to be carbon positive. Rooms include private decks and wood-burning stoves, and common areas include a waterfall-fed pool and spa."

"The lodge employs a resident naturalist and is working with universities from Mississippi to Stockholm to encourage research in the remote area."



"The goal, according to the lodge owner, Guy Levene, a former British Army colonel, is to use tourism for conservation ends. "We really believe that we can make a difference by raising the standards of service available in Ethiopia, highlighting the numbers of rare endemic species within the park and by reducing man's negative impact upon the environment through reducing illegal grazing, deforestation and cultivation."

You can find the full article on: [http://intransit.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/24/a-new-ethiopian-lodge-with-a-focus-on-conservation/?\\_r=0](http://intransit.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/24/a-new-ethiopian-lodge-with-a-focus-on-conservation/?_r=0)

Bale Mountains National Park (BMNP), located in Southeastern Ethiopia, 400km southeast of Addis Ababa, is a national park with one of the highest incidences of animal endemism of any terrestrial habitat in the world.

The park is known for being home to the largest populations of both endemic and endangered mammals, including five that are only found in the Bale Mountains, these include the Ethiopian wolf, Mountain Nyala and Bale monkey.



Bale Mountains National Park is home to over half of the global population of Ethiopian wolf, the rarest canid in the world - there are just 400 remaining.

The Park is also home to 1,321 species of flowering plants, 163 of which are endemic to Ethiopia, and 23 to Bale alone. There are also over 282 species of birds, of which 16 are endemic to Ethiopia.

### A truly unique African country: Ethiopia

According to Negusse, who sent in a travel piece to Deutsche Welle (DW), "Ethiopia is a very special place both culturally and historically. Not only do they have the best coffee in the world, but a trip here will make you a few years younger."



"With mountains over 4,500 meters high, Ethiopia is the roof of Africa. The source of the Nile with its gigantic waterfalls is also located here. Here globetrotters can experience everything from art, festivals and cultural practices to unique buildings, breathtaking nature and much more."

His full article can be found on the following link: <http://www.dw.de/a-truly-unique-african-country-ethiopia/a-17180979>

## Tourism sector sees a 12% growth

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism announced that the Ethiopian tourism sector saw a 12% growth on average in the concluded fiscal year, and expects to collect \$1.9 billion in the current Ethiopian calendar budget year.

The Ministry attributed the rise to the promotional works and development of tourist destinations in terms of providing efficient hotel services and increasing tour operators - the number of tour and travel agencies has now reached 310 from only one 13 years ago.

Over \$633 million was earned from tourism during the period from over 600,000 tourists who visited sites in various parts of the country – a significant increase compared to the previous years' figures.

By the end of the Growth and Transformation Plan period, the Ministry plans to increase the number of tourists to one million. Efforts are also underway to make Ethiopia one of the top five destinations in Africa by the year 2020.

## Ethiopian expands its fleet; wins more awards

Boeing has delivered Ethiopian Airlines' first 777-300ER (Extended Range), the largest airplane in the Ethiopian flag-carrier's fleet, to provide it with increased capacity and improved operating economics on key routes from its base in Addis Ababa.

"The introduction of the B777-300 ER into our fleet is a major milestone, as it will be their biggest aircraft with a 400-seat capacity. Ethiopian B777-300 ER will give passengers the best possible travel experience with its spacious cabin interior, high ceiling, advanced in-flight entertainment system, increased stowage capability and additional cargo uplift flexibility," said Mesfin Tassew, Chief Operation Officer of Ethiopian Airlines. "The aircraft will be deployed on our long-haul, non-stop routes to the US and China and will give us exceptional range capability and fuel efficiency."

In future months, an additional three 777-300ERs will join the continuously expanding fleet, providing the carrier with more options on new and existing routes across Africa and beyond.

Ethiopian Airlines, **one of the fastest growing and profitable airlines in Africa**, currently serves **76 destinations across five continents** and was recently named African Business of the Year at the annual African Business Awards. The carrier's partnership with Boeing stretches back over six decades, with a current fleet of nearly 50 Boeing airplanes that includes Next-Generation 737s, 757s, 767s, 777s, and 787 Dreamliners and a cargo fleet that includes 757s, an MD11 and 777 Freighters.

The Pan-African Award Committee, comprising travel professionals and journalists from across Africa, on 27<sup>th</sup> October recognised the Ethiopian Airlines with multiple awards, including "**African Airline of the Year**" and "**Best Cabin Crew in Africa**" at the opening ceremony of the 9<sup>th</sup> Travel Market, AKWAAB, meeting in Nigeria. Addis Ababa Bole International Airport was also recognized as "**Best Airport in East Africa**".



Travel Market, AKWAAB, is the only annual international travel fair in West Africa bringing together all the stakeholders in the tourism industry value chain, including airlines, hotels, travel agencies, tour operators, restaurants, national tourism boards and media. While receiving the awards, Ato Essayas WoldeMariam, Managing Director of Ethiopian International, said "We are honoured to receive these awards today which will encourage the 8,000 strong work force of Ethiopian to double their efforts for African Aviation development."

Tewolde Gebremariam, Ethiopian Airlines CEO, said, "It is a special honour and privilege for Ethiopian...to receive these multiple awards...The awards are strong testament and recognition of our continuous and remarkable performance. By combining the best and latest aircraft technology like the B-787 Dreamliner and well trained, qualified and highly motivated employees

supported with the latest information and communication technology systems, Ethiopian is connecting the continent of Africa with the rest of the world better than any other carrier...We are also making intra-African connectivity easier and more convenient with our multiple hubs thru our partnership with ASKY in West Africa and soon Malawian Airlines in Southern Africa.”



Ethiopian has also won the 2013 SKYTRAX award for “Best Airline Staff Service in Africa” and the 2013 Passengers Choice Award for “Best Airline in Africa.”

Tewelde Gebremariam, also recently won the 2013 Planet Africa **Professional Excellence Award** at a ceremony held at the International Centre in Toronto, Canada.

The event was held under the theme “Celebrating the Dream”, in commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the “I have a Dream speech” by renowned American civil rights leader, Dr Martin Luther King. His daughter, Dr Bernice King, delivered a keynote speech and received the Legend Award in recognition of his legacy.



Planet Africa Awards recognizes commendable individuals, businesses and organizations for their hard work and excellence in leadership demonstrated through a visible difference brought to the lives of people of African heritage globally, especially the young generation.

“I am highly honoured to receive this Award at the ceremony marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dr Martin Luther King’s “I have a Dream” speech, which has inspired and continues to inspire people all over the world. I dedicate this award to the 8,000 strong men and women of the Ethiopian Airlines family, who are working hard every day and night to make our Pan-African airline shine high in the sky and realize its Vision 2025. It is

their success. Thanks to their unique commitment and dedication, and despite the daunting challenges prevailing in our industry, Ethiopian is registering one of the highest rate of growth and expansion with the most modern fleet and sound balance sheet”, said Tewelde upon receiving the award.

## SPORTS

### Haile Gebrselassie inaugural marathon sees Ethiopian double

The 2013 Haile Gebrselassie Marathon, the first of its kind, took place on 20<sup>th</sup> October in Hawassa, southern Ethiopia, attracting 150 elite Ethiopian athletes and over 150 foreign “fun runners”.

By hosting a world-class marathon in the heart of Ethiopia, race organisers hope “to introduce participants to a country that is truly remarkable for the warmth and generosity of its people, its impressive historical sites and dramatic landscapes, and its ancient culture with roots that trace back to the time of Solomon...Resilient, determined, and passionate, Ethiopia embodies the spirit of the marathoner.”



The marathon saw Gudisa Shentema, the 2006 Berlin Marathon runner-up, win the men’s race in 2:15:23. Gudissa said it was a historical victory for him as he had never run a competitive marathon on home soil, and that it has encouraged him to train harder. In the women’s race, Almaz Negede won in a time of 2:39:50 – this was her second marathon.

In the mass race, first across the line was USA’s Jason Doland who was awarded with the Mike Long Trophy, in memory of the elite athlete



coordinator from Elite Racing, organisers of this race. The UK's Simon Newton came second, while Ethiopia's Esayas Yayneshet took 3<sup>rd</sup> place.



Gudisa Shentema (left) and Almaz Negede



(l-r) Race organiser and Ambassador, Haile, 3<sup>rd</sup> place mass finisher Esayas Yayneshet, 1<sup>st</sup> place Jason Doland, 2<sup>nd</sup> place Simon Newton, and Belay Welasha

In a statement Haile said, “It was exciting to see runners of all ages and from 16 different countries gather together in Hawassa to share the experience of running in this first-ever race. It was my pleasure to host you in my country and introduce you to the culture and people of Ethiopia.” Haile hopes the event will grow in the future, perhaps to gain global standing and rival the New York or London marathon.

## **NEWS IN BRIEF**

### **Ethiopia to get over \$1 billion from coffee**

The Ministry of Trade and Industry said Ethiopia is working to earn over \$1bn from exporting 277,000 tonnes of coffee during the current Ethiopian budget year, up from \$740m the previous year.

### **Project to end drought emergencies in pastoralist areas launched**

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has launched a five-year disaster resilience and sustainability project in the Afar and Somali States with an outlay of 48 million Birr.

The project will be implemented in 15 *woredas* in these states and will support the activities being undertaken by the government in pastoralist areas to end drought emergencies.

The African Development Bank will fund the project as part of a regional platform being implemented in IGAD member states. The IGAD Regional Platform is aimed at ending drought emergencies in the Horn of Africa, preventing droughts deteriorating into famine ever again.

### **Schoolnet programme connecting secondary schools in Addis**

Addis Ababa Education Bureau will connect all secondary schools in the metropolis with the Schoolnet programme this academic year, with 2,500 computers purchased at a cost of 23m Birr.

The connection will encourage integration among teachers and students and help students benefit from computer networking.

Owing to the efforts made to maintain education quality, the Bureau has deployed BA degree holder teachers at grades 5-10 and MA degree holder teachers at preparatory schools. Secondary, primary and kindergarten education coverage in the metropolis has reached 80%, 105% and 93.5%, respectively.

### **EU Scientists work together on potato project**

EU scientists are working together to help Ethiopia develop sustainable seed potato systems. The project “Developing sustainable seed potato production systems for improved livelihoods” was set up as part of the new policy on international food security of the Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority (Teagasc). If successful, the research will be disseminated to help local subsistence farmers, firstly in Ethiopia, and then across sub-Saharan Africa, through a “Potato Coalition”.

Teagasc is partnering on the project with Vita, the Irish NGO, Wageningen University and Research, the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research, the International Potato Centre, Arba Minch University and the Irish Potato Federation. The director of Teagasc, Professor Gerry Boyle is in Ethiopia to visit a pilot project. "This project is being implemented with Vita in the Chencha region," she said. "The project will empower and strengthen the local knowledge base by funding and training three Ethiopian PhD students."

## ETHIOPIA IN THE NEWS

### Earth, wind and water: Ethiopia bids to be Africa's powerhouse



Oliver Joy reports for CNN's Marketplace Africa on Ethiopia becoming a powerhouse for its regional partners with renewable energy projects under construction – Ashegoda Wind Farm and the Grand Renaissance Dam – which will increase the country's electricity capacity to 10,000MW from the current 2,000MW.

"And with further commitments to geothermal power and potential for oil exploration, Ethiopia's energy resources are set to be among the most diversified in Africa."

Will Macpherson, sub-Saharan African energy analyst at African Energy Consultancy, says ***"People in the energy industry, particularly in renewables, say the government is good to work with...they deliver on commitments and build good relationships with investors."***

Oliver also mentions last month's development - the Ethiopian government signed a contract with U.S.-Icelandic development company Reykjavik Geothermal to develop one of the world's largest geothermal power projects.

The full article is on: <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/11/08/business/earth-wind-water-ethiopia/index.html>

### UK hand in glove with booming leather sector

James Jeffrey visits one of the factories owned by UK leather goods company, Pittards, which has operated in Ethiopia since the 1920s.



Pittards' leather comes from the Ethiopian hair sheep, which does not grow a thick coat of wool and also has much thinner skin than its European brethren, thus making it ideal for delicate leather apparel such as ladies' gloves

The company has ambitious plans to grow its Ethiopian operations, which help contribute towards the firm's £39m (\$60m) annual revenues.

Ethiopia's attractions for Pittards, and other Western firms, include the country's large pool of relatively low-cost labour and duty-free status for most manufactured products exported to Europe, the US and other countries.

"Ethiopia has come a very long way over the last 23 years since I first visited, and the last decade in particular has witnessed massive positive changes," said Pittards' CEO Reg Hankey.

"Ethiopia has worked very hard to establish itself as a preferred country for economic development within Africa."

The full article is on the BBC website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-24610075>

### Ethiopia's poor turn to the humble potato in quest for food security

To mark World Food Day, Elissa Jobson visits Ethiopia's Dessie Zuria district, where planting potatoes has transformed lives.

In 2007, an initial potato pilot project was launched with just 16 households. The yields...were high...and so far 10,000 farmers in Dessie Zuria



have now benefitted, and the *woreda* administration has rolled the programme out to a further 7,000 smallholders. <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2013/oct/16/ethiopia-poor-potato-food-security-world-food-day>

### **Teff: Surprising Addition to Gluten-Free Diet**

Shelley Case, consulting dietician, writes on the benefits of using Teff, a major Ethiopian cereal crop and the smallest grain in the world.



“Teff is more nutritious than major cereal grains such as wheat and corn for several reasons. For one, its small size means the germ and bran account for a higher proportion of the seed compared to other grains,” she says.

Link to full article: <http://allergicliving.com/index.php/2013/10/07/teff-a-surprising-addition-to-the-gluten-free-diet/>

### **Fit at 40: Ethiopian running legend shares his secrets**

Jenny Vaughan (AFP) interviews long distance legend, Haile Gebrselassie who, at 40, is still giving much younger men a run for their money.

“...barely slowing down, Gebrselassie says his enduring presence in international athletics has nothing to do with fancy foods or the latest gizmos...The key ingredient, he said, is in the mind.”

“The “Haile diet” is no fad, being made up of Ethiopia's staple *injera* - an iron-rich, fermented pancake - plus lots of lean, raw meat. His home country also provides him with an ideal location to train, he said, with its temperate weather and high altitude.”

[http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hC4cqBanmi29\\_q8koMLWtn\\_ILqTQ?docId=dea5d0d5-f4f3-4295-827a-e1f16e2d61e6](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hC4cqBanmi29_q8koMLWtn_ILqTQ?docId=dea5d0d5-f4f3-4295-827a-e1f16e2d61e6)

See also Kate Carter’s piece on the Guardian website: “**Haile Gebrselassie: ‘A day without running is not a day’**”, which includes a video featuring interviews with some of the greatest Ethiopian runners...Haile Gebrselassie, Kenenisa Bekele, Meseret Defar and more. <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/the-running-blog/2013/oct/25/haile-gebrselassie-great-ethiopian-run>

### **8 Ethiopian Artists Bringing East Africa to the Future Fiddles, Casios, and Neck-Dancing, Oh My**



“Electrified lyres. Auto-tuned vocal acrobatics. Undulating digital synths. Extremely funky dance moves, all happening above the shoulders. Those are just a few of the awesome things to expect when you go to see an Ethiopian pop music concert in 2013”, writes Marlon Bishop.

“The modern music of Ethiopia is very little known outside the country and its diaspora. That’s a shame, because Ethiopian music is amazing and sounds like nothing else on the continent — or in the rest of the world, for that matter.”

Unlike many other regions of Africa, where hip-hop and other foreign styles are coming to dominate the soundscape, Ethiopia sticks close to its roots in sound and style. Younger artists are even including the traditional *masenko* fiddle and *krar* lyre on the tracks, playing along with the high-flying synthesizers.”

Read Marlon’s full article where he lists Ethiopian artists to watch out for, from Ethio-rockers Jano Band, to Ethiopia’s first girl group, Yegna, to “the most famous reggae performer in Ethiopia”, Jah Lude, who sings Jamaican-style roots reggae in Amharic. <http://www.mtviggy.com/lists/8-ethiopian-artists-bringing-east-africa-to-the-future/>

