

# SABYINYO ECOLODGE

## KINIGI, RWANDA

CLIENT International Gorilla Conservation Partnership (IGCP) SUSTAINABLE MASTER PLANNER EDSA (United States) ARCHITECT Hitesh Mehta (Kenya/United States) COMMUNITY TOURISM SPECIALIST Christine Guchu-Katee (Kenya)

Sabyinyo Ecolodge site is located several kilometers west of Kinigi town and close to the edge of Parc National des Volcans (PNV). The site location is one of the most beautiful in this region. From the top of the site, all of the six Virunga volcanoes are visible on a clear day. Sabyinyo Ecolodge is to be used as a base from which guests will drive to the Virunga National Park boundary and begin their treks to observe mountain gorillas and rare golden monkeys. Guests at the ecolodge will also have the added benefit of staying overnight at a satellite-tented camp planned to be located at the northern shores of Lake Burera. One of the main purposes of developing the ecolodge and tented camp is to demonstrate how tourism can help elevate the livelihood of local people. The ownership of the lodge and tented camp will rest with the respective local communities, while the management and marketing will be undertaken by

a private sector partner. Funds from the tourism projects would go through the local districts for community development.

The site plan is experiential and takes into consideration the varying views: from the car park to the reception and then to either the luxury villa or to the dining/lounge areas. Designed to be built entirely with local materials and by local craftsmen using alternative forms of energy, water conservation, and sewage treatment, Sabyinyo Ecolodge was designed to become the flagship eco-accommodation facility in Central Africa. Eucalyptus poles are used to great effect to create roof lines that mimic the slope angles of the Sabyinyo Volcano, at the base of which the ecolodge was proposed to be located.

There is currently a lodge on this site but it has no resemblance to the planning and design approach above.

