The eco-rating scheme, a certification initiative for the tourism sector has existed in Kenya since the year 2003 when eco-labels were awarded to the first five tourism accommodation facilities. Since then, interest in certification by tourism facilities has been increasing with close to sixty (60) tourism facilities having received various levels of awards by mid 2012. As with many certification schemes, the eco-rating scheme uses a composite criteria comprising environmental, socioeconomic and cultural indicators in assessing whether a tourism facility qualifies for an eco-label award. In many certification schemes, the environmental criterion is better known and has received much more analysis compared to the economic, social and cultural criteria. This paper examines how destination level communities have benefitted from the eco-certification initiative in Kenya by looking at how economic, social and cultural factors are considered in ecotourism practices of a certified ecotourism facility. The study finds that there are ecotourism operators with a genuine interest in working with local communities to improve their lot. Secondly there are real and tangible benefits that local people derive from ecotourism practices that serve as a motivation for their involvement in tourism endeavours. The study also suggests that local people’s participation in ecotourism enhances interest in conservation of nature and culture as well as promoting development at the destination level.