

JUNE 2021

EDITION

01

Boujanala

NELSON MANDELA MONTH

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- Deputy Minister of Tourism in Namibia
- Sam Nzima Lecture



tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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EDITORIAL

Welcome to this winter edition of Bojanala. This edition comes at a time when the country faces the wrath of the third wave of this obstinate pandemic. So far, more and more provinces have announced that they have indeed hit the higher than normal numbers. This has resulted in the new measures which have recently been announced by the president, as he took the country on Alert Level 3.

While this is the case though, I want to ask that we do not despair. We should find hope with our government as it continues to roll out its vaccination plan. We must remember nonetheless that while awaiting our turn for vaccination, we should continue being extra careful by observing the health protocols, especially in our various establishments.

On that note, albeit quite worrying, you are once again most welcome to this Youth and Mandela Month edition of our magazine. The edition takes you through various segments which took place within the tourism space between April and June.

Some amongst these include the Tourism Budget Vote, which took place in May. Read about the priorities and plans set by the Minister of Tourism, Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane as well as the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Fish Mahlalela for the year ahead.

As always, Minister and Deputy Minister had an opportunity to engage with the sector before the Budget Vote. On the cards during these engagements were various issues affecting the sector players as well as a discussion around means to help them through a recovery process.

Read about the Tourism Incentive

Programmes, which was established by the Department and how this all-important initiative aims to stimulate growth and development in the tourism sector through the provision of financial assistance to tourism enterprises.

The edition also takes you through an array of news, views and opinions. It also talk to the current vaccination roll out, the recently implemented infrastructure maintenance plan introduced by SanPark's in response to the pandemic, as well as a voice from the Tourism Transformation Council of South Africa (TTCSA) as they weighed in on the current court bid.

Also, you will read about the 1st memorial lecture about Sam Nzima as the country hails him as an icon worthy to be remembered. This lecture and remembrance of Nzima could not have come at a better time, as the country commemorates the 45th Anniversary youth of 1976. He will forever be remembered for his photograph of the helpless Hector Pietersen.

If you have not had a chance to read the Tourism Recovery Plan, we have summarised it for you. Thus, have a look at it as we together walk this road to recovery.

Once more, thank you for your positive minds and as we weather the storm together, let us never leave other soldiers behind, no matter how big or small they may seem. We need every soldier on the other side of the river.

See you all in Spring

Blessing Manale



TOURISM TRANSFORMATION AND RECOVERY A PRIORITY FOR THE SECTOR BUDGET VOTE 2021

Staff Reporter

"Government will not be deterred in its efforts to accelerate the transformation of the tourism sector," said Minister of Tourism Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane during her Tourism Budget Vote speech at a virtual parliament seating on Tuesday, 18 May 2021.

"As a Department we have responded to the growing sense of unease amongst the previously disadvantaged emanating from the slow progress of transformation of the economy – most visibly in the tourism sector. Our Government has a responsibility to transform the economy and to create an inclusive non-racial society in which South Africans share equitably in the wealth of our country. In this effort we shall not be deterred," she further said.

Kubayi-Ngubane was largely referring to opposition – from other political parties (ACDP and the Democratic Alliance) as well as trade union Solidarity and human rights lobby group, AfriForum – to the R1.2 billion Tourism Equity Fund (TEF).

The Fund, launched in January this year, was designed to provide a combination of debt finance and grant funding to facilitate equity acquisition as well as new project development in the tourism sector by enterprises with 51% black ownership.

However, the processing of applications has been interdicted by the court following an application against the Fund by AfriForum and Solidarity.

"Once again, the efforts to transform the economy to make it more inclusive are being frustrated. Our lawyers are studying the reasons for the interdict and a response to this shall be provided," said Kubayi-Ngubane.

During the Budget Vote debate most political parties welcomed the TEF; the most critical issue for tourism is to focus on stabilising the sector in order to preserve jobs.

Some of the key highlights of the Budget include:

Tourism Transformation Fund – Kubayi-

Ngubane highlighted that while some success has been recorded in the implementation of the Tourism Transformation Fund – which is administered in partnership with the National Empowerment Fund – it would be restructured. "This is in response to the feedback we received from entrepreneurs on their experiences with the Fund in its current form. We are currently redesigning the Fund to be more efficient and more accessible to entrepreneurs and we will be making an announcement in the coming weeks," said the Minister.

Enterprise development – In order to increase participation of the SMMEs in the tourism sector for inclusive economic growth, the Department will expand its Incubation Programme to support tourism youth-owned SMMEs. This will include business support and development through the addition of the Tourism Tech Incubator (in partnership with the Technology Innovation Agency – TIA). The Tour Operators Incubator will also be implemented in this financial year.

SA Tourism gets R1.3 bn – For the financial year



2021/22, the Department's budget allocation amounts to about R2.4 billion, of which about R1.3 billion is earmarked for South African Tourism.

Protecting infrastructure and assets – Protecting and rejuvenating supply entails amongst others, the support for the protection of core tourism infrastructure and assets. "Our total infrastructure commitment is just under R700 million over a five-year period," said Kubayi-Ngubane, noting that an amount of R270 million of the funds has been made available to the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) who serves as the implementing agent for the Department's infrastructure programme. A further R222 million has been budgeted for this financial year.

Also speaking during the Tourism Budget Vote

presentation in Parliament, Deputy Minister of Tourism Fish Mahlalela said that he was proud of the collective resilience and determination of industry players in ensuring the successful implementation of initiatives set to steer the sector on a path to recovery.

"In spite of an increase in the hosting of virtual and hybrid conferences, limitations on mass gatherings brought about by COVID-19 preventative measures have had a profound impact on the meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) sector. We will continue to support small and medium-sized events that drive domestic tourism, through partnerships and an enhanced National Convention Bureau at SA Tourism, capable and agile to harness their potential."

"We will continue with our efforts to strengthen

the local government infrastructure and service to grow tourism, and accelerate service delivery through the District Development Model. Prioritised initiatives from our tourism spatial masterplans will be integrated into the plans for the OR Tambo District, eThekweni Metro, Pixley Ka Seme District and Namakwa District," concluded Mahlalela.

Internal staff members at Tourism House in Sunnyside were also afforded an opportunity to fully engage the Budget Vote as they grabbed snack packs before the speech began and relax in front of their computers and laptops in their offices while watching their principals delivering and debating the speech online. This was to educate and keep the staff informed of the Department's plans towards the sector and country's economic recovery.

WORLD RENOWNED DR ESTHER MAHLANGU

BRINGS HER ARTISTIC FLAIR TO A REVAMPED SOUTHGATE MALL FOODCOURT



World-renowned, Dr Esther Mahlangu has partnered with Pareto Limited to create her biggest indoor artistic works at the newly revamped Southgate Food court.

To mark its 30th anniversary Southgate Mall owned by Pareto Limited honoured Dr Esther Mahlangu for her global success. The acclaimed visual artist and much-loved cultural ambassador has collaborated with Southgate Mall to support Pareto's vision to promote,

celebrate and reflect the richness and diversity of the cultures of the surrounding communities, the people of the South. This makes Southgate a true "Melting pot of the South".

Dr Mahlangu, or Mam Esther as she is affectionately called by many, learnt the art of house painting from her grandmother and mother as is tradition amongst the Ndebele nation.

She established herself as a visionary

and disruptor from an early age and is renowned as the first person to reimagine Ndebele design onto modern contemporary platforms. This has led to her painting anything from planes, cars, motorbikes and bicycles to canvas, walls, mannequins and even wall helmets.

Dr Mahlangu has spent extensive time in the world's largest cities collaborating with leading museums, galleries, curators, art fairs and global brands. She



has worked with many iconic brands including, BMW, Rolls-Royce, SAA, British Airways, Fiat, the Smithsonian Museum of African Art and many others in her illustrious career that spans 7 decades.

Malose Kekana, the GCEO of Pareto said "Dr Mahlangu's lifelong devotion to the Ndebele traditional art form, and her contribution to the South African heritage will leave a legacy in the world of arts. We are proud to have someone of her stature to have agreed to be part of the new chapter for Southgate, and believe that these murals when considered together will most likely be the largest completed by Dr Mahlangu to date and will be sure to attract tourists, art collectors and bring pride to our stakeholders and communities" The unveiling of the 16 x 5m murals took place on the 25th November at the newly revamped Southgate Food Court to reveal the bold and abstract design for which Mam Esther is so globally acclaimed.

It is significant that the unveiling transpired during the month that Dr Esther Mahlangu turns 85 years of age. This is also the month in which she has launched 'Esther Mahlangu 85', one of a handful of solo exhibitions presented by her in South Africa, at The Melrose Gallery.

Amongst the attendees at the closed media event was, Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Mr Geoff Makhubo; Chairman of the Pareto Board, Mr Saul Gumede; Pareto Group CEO, Mr Malose Kekana and Dr Esther Mahlangu to name a few.

The vision of the reconfiguration of the food court is anchored by Pareto's commitment to providing a superior customer experience to its loyal customers and surrounding communities.

"The company is excited about the investment made into the

redevelopment of Southgate Mall's food court into a world class facility and the upgrade of the external fades. The development includes enhancements to the overall look-and-feel of the food court offering quality, dining experience for families and friends alike, increased seating area, large LED screens for entertainment, natural lighting, open and airy aesthetically curated space held together by cultural cues and biophilic touchpoints in line with international design trends" continued Kekana.

Southgate would like to thank its loyal shoppers and tenants for their patience and cooperation during the redevelopment process.

For more information on Dr Esther Mahlangu see www.themelrosegallery.com and use this link to view 'Esther Mahlangu 85' her solo exhibition <https://themelrosegallery.com/viewingroom/6-esther-mahlangu-85/>



THE CHANGING ECONOMICS OF TOURISM DURING COVID-19

THEMBINKOSI LEHLOESA:

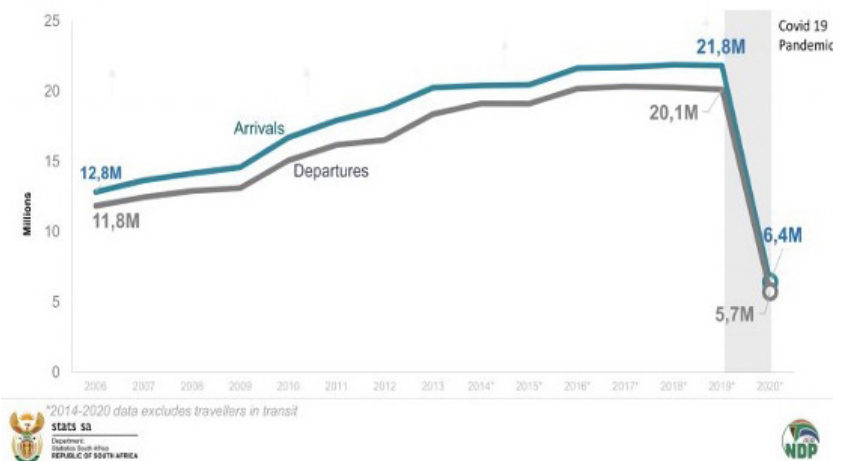
THEMBIKONSIS IS ONE OF OUR
BOARD MEMBERS IN E.CAPE

Covid-19 has changed the economics for tourism. A year after the disease emerged it now is possible to see that costs and markets have been radically affected. This is apart from the health conditions where previously tourists simply relied on their credit card or cash to enter a nature reserve.

Costs in any economy are affected by demand. After Covid-19 started and since July 2020 economists have been advising countries to increase demand in their economies generally to grow their Gross Domestic Products (GDP) and make the economies recover. Data indicates the demand for tourism has distinct requirements from general demand. General demand relies on stimulus advocated by the economists. The demand of tourist destinations while it can be supported by the stimulus still has artificial barriers suppressing it. The requirement at airports which now has been implemented throughout the European Union (EU) including South Africa is for travelers to pay for their testing and if found to be positive also pay for their quarantine and eventual return to their home countries. Travelers pay £1,750 to quarantine in hotels in Britain. Furthermore, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has issued from 7 May 2021 'red, amber and green list rules' for entering. They inspect the 10 days

Trends show that the overall number of travellers (arrivals and departures) decreased by 71,0% between 2019 and 2020. The overall number of travellers decreased by 50,7% over the 15-year period from 24,6M recorded in 2006 to 12,1M travellers recorded in 2020.

Number of arrivals and departures of travellers by year of travel, 2006 – 2020



destination prior arrival in Britain. A list of countries is under each category developed. It determines what you must do if you have been in the countries under any list. If you have been in a country or territory on the red list in the 10 days before you arrive in Britain you will only be allowed to enter if you are a British or Irish citizen or you have residence rights.

You must follow the rules even if you have been vaccinated. You must have

proof of a negative Covid-19 test from your point of departure. Exempt from taking the test or proving a negative status are only children aged under 11. If the results are inconclusive you must take another test. You do not need to take a test if you began your journey to Britain from Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man, Jersey or Guernsey, Falkland Islands, St Helena, Ascension or Myanmar, EU. If you are from Africa you do. The booking of another coronavirus test for after you

arrive is still at your cost. All this means you cannot get to Britain without getting advice including the latest information on coronavirus, safety and security, entry requirements and travel warnings, all of which can be costly in the future. This changes traveling for all countries. The economics support a domestic demand economy. They are no longer about an international economy. The country best suited to adapt quickly to them and cope is Britain. Its government already buys services worth £257 billion from its private sector.

The Red List affects Africa most. Countries on the Red List are categorised to have a 'high risk of exposure to Covid-19'. The variant South Africa had in November 2020 is stated as the reason. Britain however suffered a variant too in December 2020. From 24 December Britain suspended direct flights from South Africa. Visitors arriving into the UK and were in or transited through South Africa in the previous 10 days were refused permission to enter. British and Irish citizens and third country nationals with residence rights in the UK however were allowed entry via indirect routes from South Africa. All that South Africa's Department of Health has on the other hand for travellers into the country at ports of entry is the completion of a questionnaire on travel history two days prior arrival. The FCDO advises against all but essential travel to the whole of the US. It is on an Amber List though it has more than South Africa Covid-19. It has one-fifth of world infections. The FCDO advises travellers from the US to take a Covid-19 test and get a negative result during the 3 days before they travel, book and pay for 2 Covid-19 travel tests to be taken on or before day 2 and on

or after day 8 of travel tests. These rules differ from those in the Red List. There you will only be allowed to enter the UK if you are a British or Irish citizen meaning you are banned.

The UK has administered 57.8 million vaccines including 36.9 million people with their first dose and 20.8 million with both. It has the most advanced genomic healthcare system in the world. Like South Africa it has a programme currently providing insights on the Covid-19 variants first identified in India and South Africa. The work involves researching sewage and chemicals. It is this programme the UK government boasts about partly in making its health care system be the most advanced in the world in genomic sequencing. South Africa has just starting and can be estimated to have already vaccinated 366,101 health workers 73,478 of whom since recommenced vaccination. Most of the health workers came from northern KwaZulu-Natal and rural Eastern Cape.

They vaccinated with the Johnson and Johnson vaccine the SAMRC confirmed has excellent protection of more than 80 percent and has no severe Covid-19 side-effects or death. Side-effects in the vaccine are the same as United States (US) that include severe allergy (anaphylaxis) or the rare clotting condition called VITT (Vaccine-induced Immune Thrombotic Thrombocytopenia) affecting between one and four people per million vaccinated. The vaccinated include the old aged. South Africa has no discrimination and does not boast about being far advanced in genomic sequencing. The fact that it also has the programme made no difference to the FCDO in discriminating. The

leading institution in South Africa is the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) which presents the results as already positive. The UK's is the Environmental Monitoring for Health Protection (EMHP) Programme, led by the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC), a part of the newly-formed UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). South Africa too has a new health agency – the National Health Insurance (NHI). It reports a new milestone of testing wastewater for more than two thirds of Britain's population.

South Africa's use of a Johnson and Johnson vaccine is world standard. This further underlines there should be no discrimination. There is an assumption new passengers unknown to UK health officials and who never tested within its soil are able to mix with a traveller who travels in transit a red listed country. So they are required to test and quarantine in the UK where they are found positive.

If all the costs are taken into account on average a traveller would pay R20,000 extra what they used to pay to visit South Africa. Before the FCDO's rules South Africa had 15.1 million visitors. A quarter came from the UK.

If a traveller is a citizen of a country in an Amber List they can upon having tested positive quarantine at home or in the place where they were staying for 10 days. They will only be treated like citizens of a country in the Red List if they have also been in or through a country on the Red List during their travel. Citizens of Red List countries quarantine at hotels. Because they bear most expenses if they are not government officials who are exempt they will require more foreign exchange.

Number of countries in Amber List	List of countries in Amber List	Number of countries in Red List	List of countries in Red List	Restrictions by countries in Red List against nationals of other countries
3	United States, Australia	45	All African countries Countries from other continents Panama, Chile, Mexico	Angola prohibits entry except for Angolan nationals, resident foreign nationals and visitors travelling for essential reasons. It has banned entry to arrivals from Brazil and India, with exceptions for Angolan nationals and those with residence permits who must go into mandatory quarantine on arrival

This requires developing countries to reignite their tourism sector focusing on the domestic economy. For markets have radically changed too. Domestic markets had been traveling less because they do not have income. But unlike international markets that are seasonal

they are relatively constant because they are within a country. They have more enjoyment of heritage. The total number of foreign travellers who visited South Africa from Africa, overseas and unspecified countries according to StatsSA during 2020 was 4 586 387.

Foreign arrivals were made up of 699,804 non-visitors and 3 886 583 visitors. Visitors were made up of 1 084 263 same-day visitors and 2 802 320 tourists with a breakdown by sex and age of 1 629 263 males and 1 173 057 females. About 121,081 were less than 15 years, 227,962



were aged 15-24, 737,033 were aged 25-34, 821,383 were aged 35-44, 471,212 were aged 45-54 and 259,140 were aged 55-64. Adults aged 65 and older were 164,509. StatsSA uses administrative records from South Africa's Department of Home Affairs to compile the data. This consists of residents and non-residents.

The refocusing towards the domestic market has the requirement therefore of increasing the budget component

of the heritage driving tourism. It must increase to more than half or 52 percent. Biodiversity programmes protected Africa's and South Africa's natural inheritance sufficiently historically and all that is needed now is continual management with the application of laws passed since democracy in 1994.

It is a long body of legislation that exists already that has never received violation from communities threatening the

existence of even wildlife. The reason some of the legislation still exists such as the Transkei Conservation Act was to enforce the eviction of communities along the Kei River. The creation and population of Bantustans during apartheid was made with the forbidding of Africans near the sea or a river. All white farmers supported that when they vacated land for settlement within the borders of South Africa.

Drivers of employment in tourist's refocusing	Quantity	Budgeting
SMMEs	15,000	R15 million
Investment in heritage infrastructure	45,000	R100 million
Support services especially films and distribution	5,000	R10 million
Digital technology	100,000	R73 million

By 31 October 2020 countries had made a total of 2,031 policy interventions affecting international trade generally because of Covid-19 according to Global Trade Alert. That represented a total of 74 percent over the same period in 2019 and 147 percent higher than in 2015-2017. The report is the most comprehensive yet to account for the fallout from government measures of different countries taken to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic since 2020. Tourism does not show in these interventions especially the very drastic and discriminatory practices Britain has taken against Africa in total and Africa. There is a general trade distortion of 13,6 percent of world goods covered and reforms covering 8,2 percent. Britain's overhaul of travel policies to the detriment of South Africa's and Africa's tourism in entirety happens as also economists

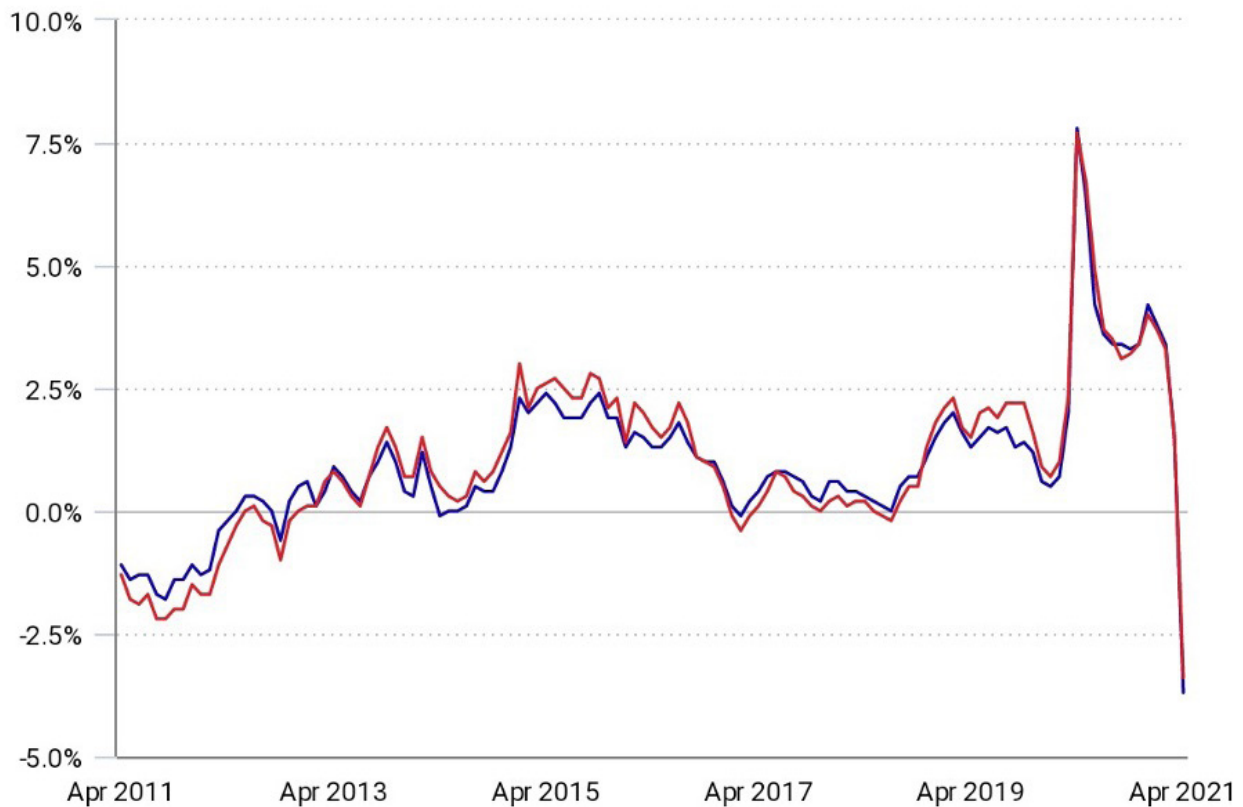
from its London School of Economics (LSE) Centre for Economic Policy have researched the impact of Brexit. They record Brexit caused more harm to Britain's GDP particularly the exchange rate than Covid-19. Brexit made Britain's GDP fall by 20 percent which is more than China's. China's had a 6 percent decline yet it is the biggest economy after the US. The total impact in terms of infections and deaths of Covid-19 to Africa meanwhile has been minimal compared to the economic impact.

Hence, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) revised growth projections for Africa from 5 Tourism in Africa thus stands to decline further because there are from Britain policy initiatives harming it including from the EU and the US. They are only open to each other in anticipation now of the summer season.

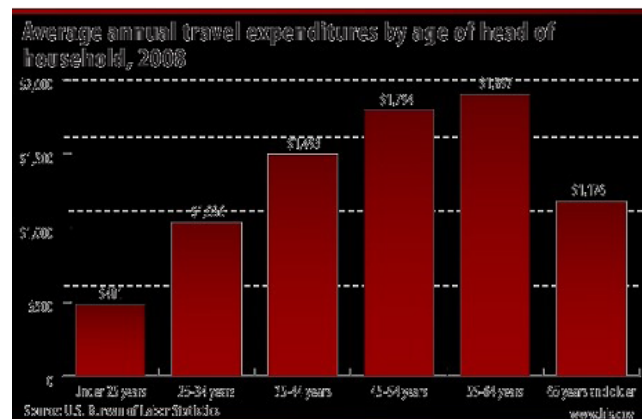
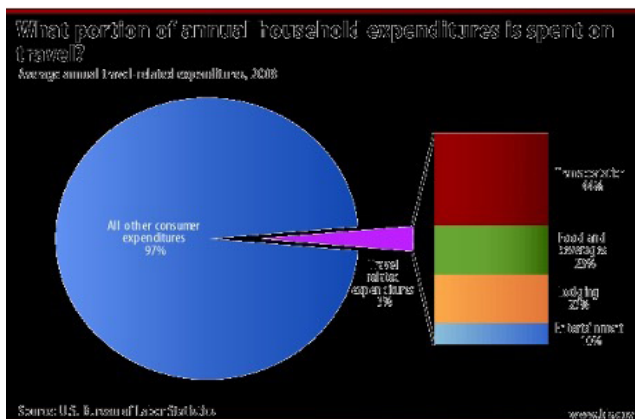
A refocusing of Africa's or South Africa's tourism budget towards heritage can grow SMMEs and build new infrastructure. But the countries would still need a regeneration of manufacturing. For if more employment is not achieved and more growth is not created the institutions responsible for tourism will close. Governments will add to debt which already is at 15 percent if that does not happen. Since projections are still not near of Covid-19's end ten years may be the long-term into which this happens. Furthermore, the general condition is such that more employment even in sport will be lost. Football clubs of which there are many will soon be asking for financial support to pay players. They have over six months been playing with stadiums empty because of

12-month percent change in real hourly and weekly earnings, private sector employees, April 2011 to April 2021

- All employees, average hourly earnings
- - All employees, average weekly hours
- ... All employees, average weekly earnings
- Production and nonsupervisory employees, average hourly earnings
- - Production and nonsupervisory employees, average weekly hours
- ... Production and nonsupervisory employees, average weekly earnings



Click legend items to change data display. Hover over chart to view data.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



Covid-19 regulations. The global governing body FIFA is in the same position. In 2015-2018 it had a revenue of USD 5,656 million funding 211 associations. It had a budget of USD 1,746 million for the four-year cycle 2019-2022. It is running out of money.

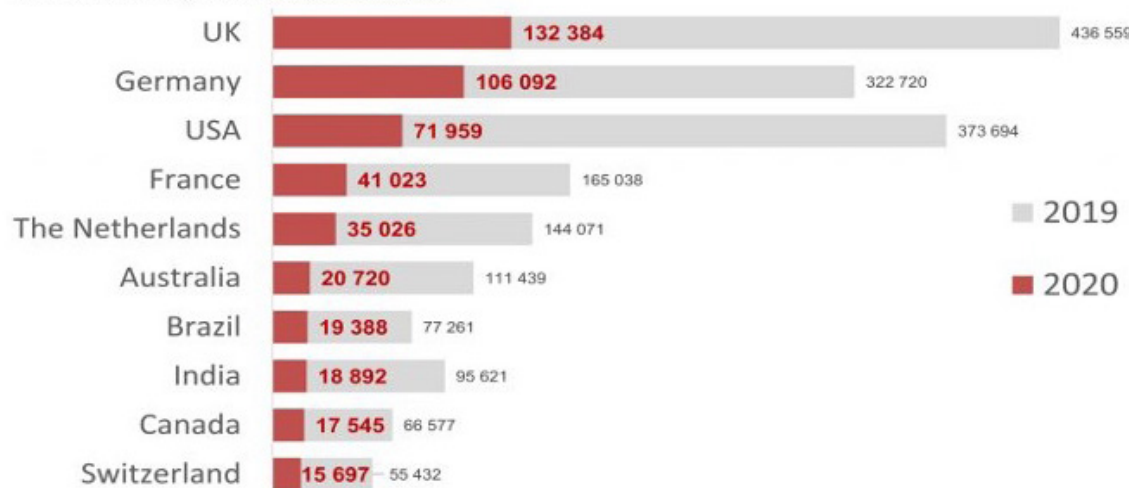
Table 2 above from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics shows labour in the country has been receiving increases above inflation since 2015. Just before Covid-19 the increases were 7,5 percent. During the 2008-2009 Financial Crisis traveling US households spent on average \$1,415 on transportation, lodging, food and beverage, entertainment, and gifts while on vacation. This was 3 percent of total household expenditures. The largest travel expense was for transportation. This contribution generated 16,676 jobs

in South Africa in accommodation (5,424), air transport (3,524), sports and recreation (2,900), car rental (2,400), shuttle services (4,000) and travel agencies (411). About 4,5 percent of South Africa's workforce therefore was employed in tourism representing 722,013 of 16.2 million workers. South Africa receives annually approximately 100,000 Chinese tourists. The tourists spent R2.4 billion. By April 2021 the direct contribution of the tourism sector to GDP was 130,1 billion. The UK had 132,384 visitors topping the list followed by Germany with 106,092 visitors. South Africa also had a travel ban on selected foreign nationals from 'high-risk countries' on 18 March 2020. Of the 53 land ports 35 were shut as well as 2 of 8 sea ports. Should South Africa lose the UK's and Germany's visitors that will represent 56 percent

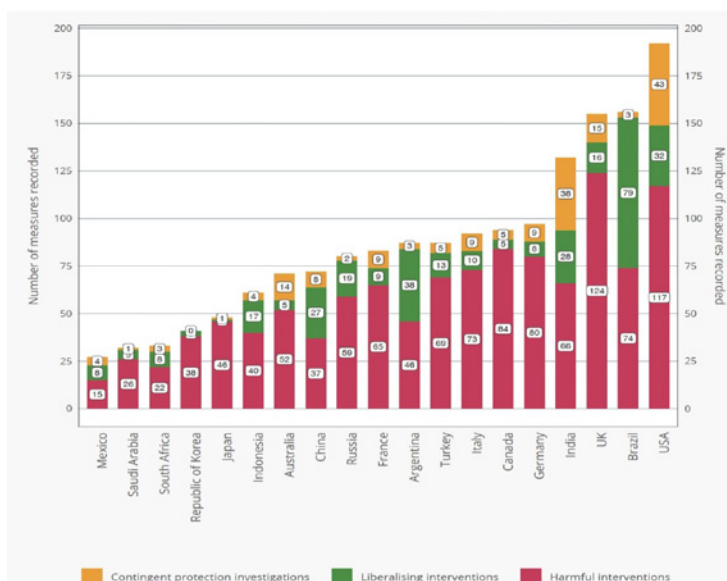
of tourism revenue. Human beings do not as the South African struggle against apartheid proved react quickly to discrimination. Hence, a change in this picture can only be expected after 10 years. By that time South Africa would have had employment increased annually by 2 million people. Social unrest will follow. The US employs 0,2 percent of its workforce in industries that are related to tourism like filming. It will not feel this impact. When South Africa refocuses marketing it will have to look toward Nigerians that already are leading in volumes. indicates that the number of tourists decreased in all ten leading overseas countries. Côte d'Ivoire had the largest percentage decrease of 77,4%.000 and length of stay has increased usually travel as groups and 44 percent of the total amount spent.

Tourists from the UK topped the overseas visitor list. When comparing the 2020 volumes with the 2019 volumes, the number of tourists decreased in all ten leading overseas countries. Australia had the largest decrease of visitors to SA by 81,4%.

Tourists from the top 10 overseas countries, 2020

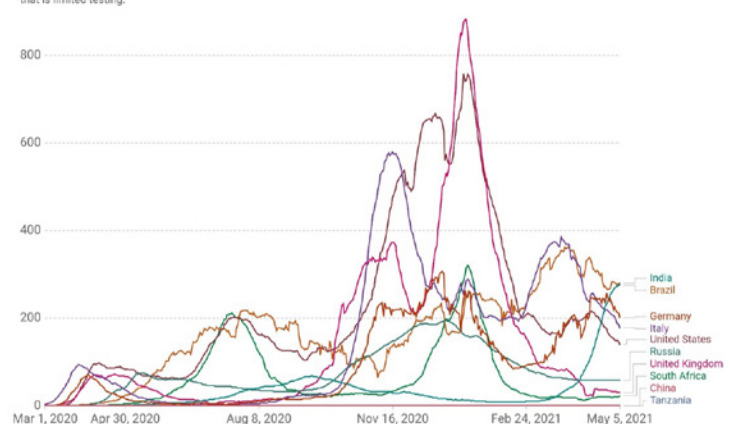


All countries are affected by Covid-19. The US has lead in both infections and deaths. Therefore no country will borrow to FIFA.



Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases per million people

Shown is the rolling 7-day average. The number of confirmed cases is lower than the number of actual cases; the main reason for that is limited testing.



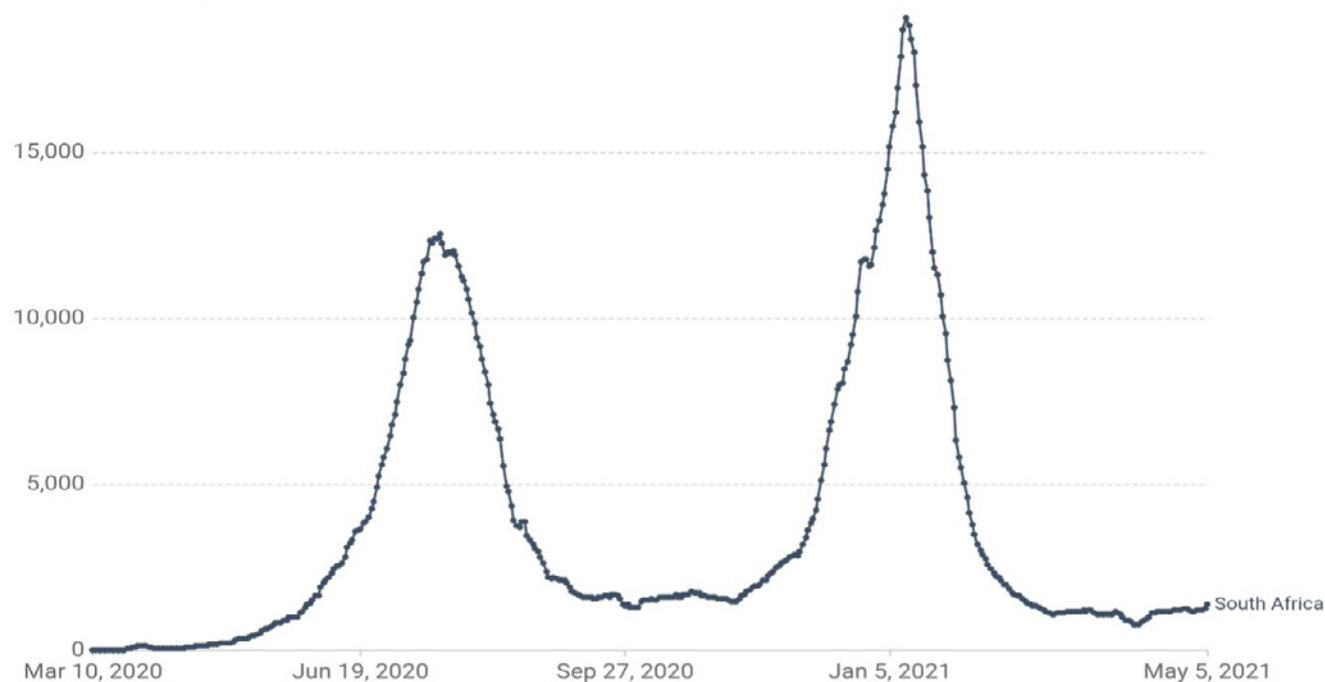
Source: Johns Hopkins University CSSE COVID-19 Data

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Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases

Shown is the rolling 7-day average. The number of confirmed cases is lower than the number of actual cases; the main reason for that is limited testing.

Our World
in Data



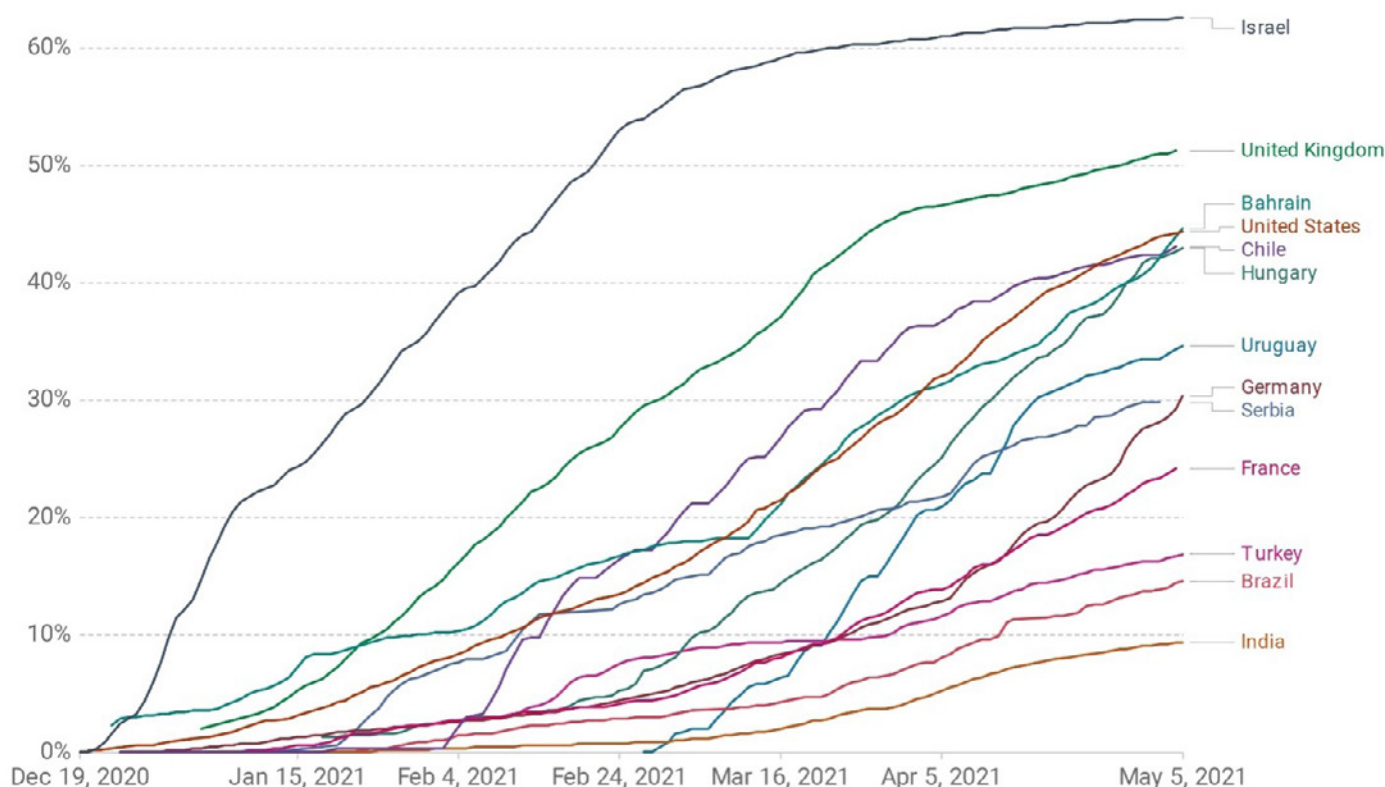
Source: Johns Hopkins University CSSE COVID-19 Data

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Share of people who received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine

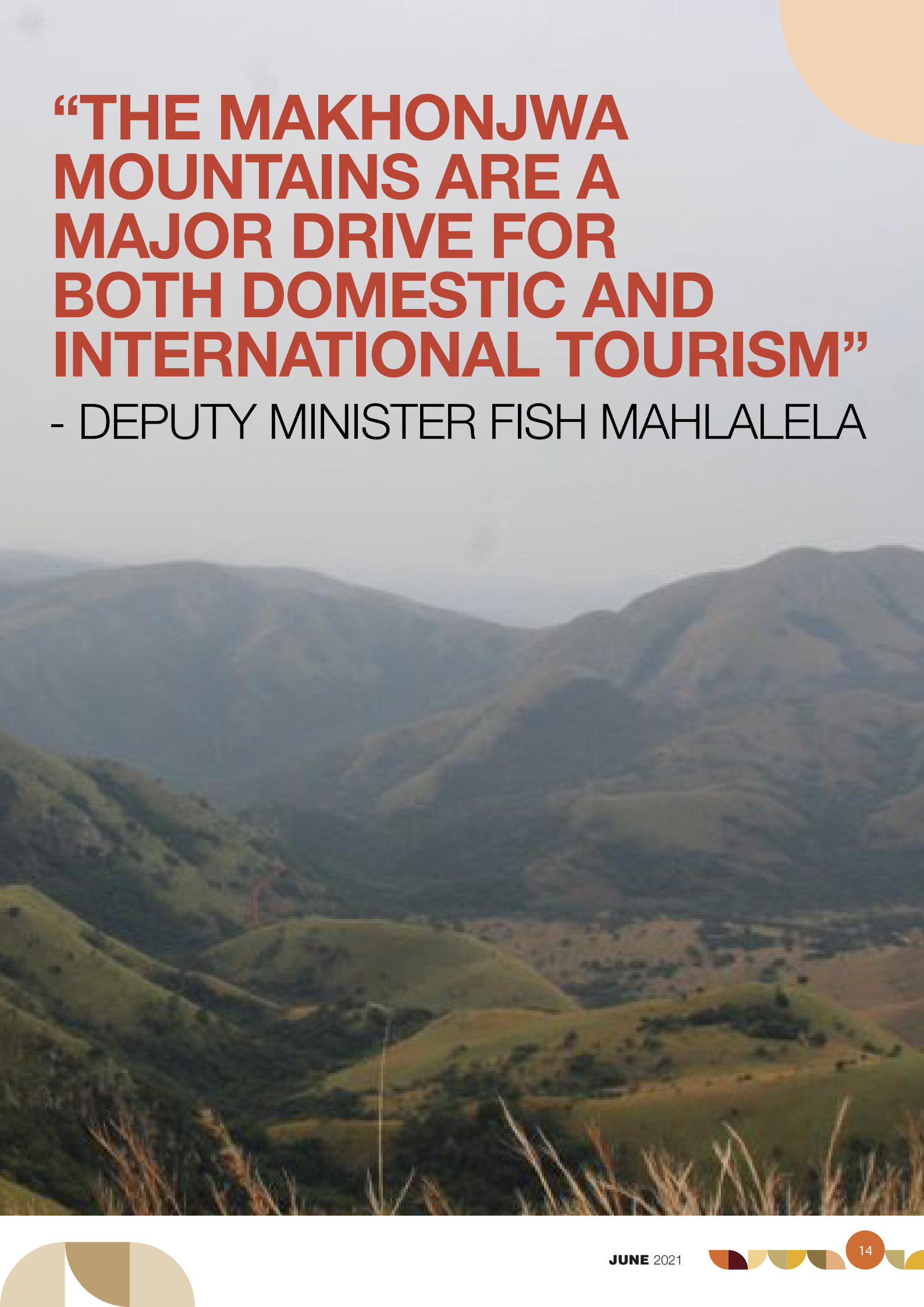
Share of the total population that received at least one vaccine dose. This may not equal the share that are fully vaccinated if the vaccine requires two doses.

Our World
in Data



Source: Official data collated by Our World in Data

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**“THE MAKHONJWA
MOUNTAINS ARE A
MAJOR DRIVE FOR
BOTH DOMESTIC AND
INTERNATIONAL TOURISM”**

- DEPUTY MINISTER FISH MAHLALELA



Deputy Minister Fish Mahlalela addressing the students.



University of Pretoria students with Deputy Minister Mahlalela and Chairperson of MTPA Board Thulani Nzima.



Wits MSc Candidate Phumelele Mashele sharing her presentation.

Staff Reporter

Deputy Minister Fish Mahlalela hosted Geology and Tourism students from University of Witwatersrand (Wits), University of Mpumalanga and University of Pretoria in an engaging networking dinner at African Rest Lodge in Nelspruit, on 29 April 2021 ahead of the Makhonjwa Geo-trail Tour the following day. The objective is to expose the Geology and Tourism students together with the domestic travel market to the Barbeton Greenstone Belt ancient rock formations that date back from the Archaean period, more than three billion years ago.

The Department has funded the Barbeton Makhonjwa Mountains initiative to enhance the tourism experience, prior to it being listed as South Africa's 10th World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 2018. A total amount of 24 million Rands has been spent between 2012 and 2014. The project was implemented by the Barbeton Chamber of Business in partnership with Barbeton Tourism Biodiversity Corridor, supported by provincial and local government. The project deliverable includes the development of the Geo-Tourism Route.

Shining the spotlight on the world renowned Makhonjwa Mountains, Phumelele Mashele, an Msc candidate

from Wits University presented on extending the existing Barbeton Makhonjwa Mountains and linking this Geo-trail towards other tourist attractions. It was proposed that the Geo-trail be linked with one of the secondary roads that connect towards the N4 which is a popular route used by visitors to neighbouring countries and other provinces. This is in order to expose the hidden tourism gems such as the Nkomazi Game Reserve, Warm water springs in Badplaas, ghost mining towns that have been turned into cultural villages and pre-colonial iron ore mines that have tourism potential and hold rich cultural history especially to the Swazi Clan.

In his address, Deputy Minister Mahlalela said that the importance of investing in domestic tourism as part of the recovery process cannot be emphasised enough and that to mitigate effects of the pandemic, the sector developed a Tourism Sector Recovery Plan.

"As government, we are very hard at work to ensure that the resilience of the tourism sector is enhanced and continues to immensely contribute to our country's efforts to economic recovery and reconstruction; as tabled and adopted by Parliament in October 2020 and presented by the President. We are on reconstruction and recovery

mode" he highlighted.

In order to have a thriving socio-economically inclusive industry, community involvement is pivotal. "In order for all the products we are developing to be sustained, they must benefit the communities. If communities don't see any beneficiation of any product, they will not be in a position to protect and preserve it" Deputy Minister said. The Makhonjwa Mountains are a major drive for both domestic and international tourism" he added.

"By exposing and giving the youth access to the world heritage site, we believe our efforts will contribute to the overall efforts being made to improve tourism numbers, thereby entrenching the culture of travel and tourism amongst the youth who are our present and future travel market" Deputy Minister Mahlalela concluded. As the networking event drew to a close, students grabbed the opportunity to engage with Deputy Minister Mahlalela with both hands, raising critical issues in the Geology and Tourism industry and mapping the way forward with solutions on how to grow the sector. The following day, the students took an early, rainy and much educational trip to the Barbeton Makhonjwa Mountains.

DOMESTIC TOURISM ACTIVATION IN KWAZULU-NATAL





Staff Reporter

Deputy Minister of Tourism, Mr Fish Mahlalela, kicked off the Domestic Tourism Activation Campaign with a visit to the uMkhanyakude District, in the area of uMhlabuyalingana on Tuesday, 20 April 2021.

He was accompanied by the KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mr Ravi Pillay and Local Government leadership as they visited various sites in the district, including the Nhlanga Lake, Kosi Bay Lodge and Utshwayelo Lodge.

The Deputy Minister also used the opportunity to engage with various tourism industries as part of assessing the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism sector as a whole. The programme is part of the nationwide domestic tourism activation campaign being undertaken by the Department of Tourism with the aim of encouraging South Africans to travel and experience the scenic beauty of their own country within the confines of the COVID-19 regulations and health protocols. The campaign recognises that the boost in domestic tourism will offset the sharp decline in the international travel market.

On Wednesday, 21 April 2021, Deputy Minister Mahlalela wrapped up his two-day visit to KwaZulu-Natal with a visit to Ilembe District in KwaDukuza.

During the two-day visit, the Deputy Minister engaged with various stakeholders within the tourism sector. These included the representatives of community tourism organisations, tour operators, tour guides, the hospitality industry, women in tourism and business people operating within the tourism value chain.

"To protect our economy and the sector we must use the funds provided to us by government wisely; it was not sufficient but it made a huge impact in saving jobs and businesses from closing," said Deputy Minister Mahlalela.

He used the campaign to engage beneficiaries of the tourism relief fund. They spoke of how the relief funding had helped to rescue their businesses from closing and retain jobs. The engagements also focused on transformation of the tourism sector as a whole with a view to rapidly improve on the pace of transformation in the tourism sector in relation to ownership and control.

"The sector must not only recover to what it was before COVID-19 but it must also be transformed. When you look at the tourism sector, about 60 to 70% of the labour force are women. But when it comes to management, women are nowhere to be found. This is a world-wide phenomenon, but in South Africa it is worse," Deputy Minister Mahlalela stated.

Site visits in Ilembe District included the Luthuli Museum in Grootville and a visit to the Fairmont Zimbali Hotel which went under business rescue last year.

Deputy Minister Mahlalela was satisfied with the progress made so far by the provincial and local spheres of government in assisting the sector to navigate through these trying times of the pandemic, of which tourism is the hardest hit, and committed the Department of Tourism in partnership with the provincial and local governments to address all the challenges raised and come back in the near future to reflect on progress made.



TOURISM TRANSFORMATION COUNCIL SUPPORTS MINISTER'S COURT BID TO DEFEND TRANSFORMATION OF THE SECTOR



Staff Reporter

The Tourism Transformation Council of South Africa (TTCSA) welcomes the Announcement by the Minister of Tourism on 29 May 2021 to defend the Tourism Equity Fund (TEF).

Afriforum and Solidarity are contesting the legality and rationality of the 51% black owned/managed qualification criteria for the fund and have labelled it as racist, irrational, unconstitutional and a deviation from the Tourism B-BBEE Sector Codes in terms of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Act.

The true intention of their legal contest seeks to maintain and perpetuate the status quo where the sector remains untransformed.

The 2018 State of Tourism Transformation Report revealed that transformation in the tourism sector is still very slow. Only a limited number of enterprises had achieved the 30% black ownership target. It was of concern that less than 50% of enterprises in the three sub-sectors (accommodation, hospitality and travel) achieved the minimum ownership targets, and less than 35% of them achieved targets for black women ownership. With regard to management control, it was shown that despite the tourism sector employing a large number of women, only 11% of enterprises had black women representation at board, executive and senior management levels with overall

poor performance on the promotion of black management in general. The 2019 B-BBEE Survey Report and others also highlighted that there is no change.

Yet Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) estimated that the direct contribution of tourism towards the country's GDP increased from R118,977 million in 2017 (2.6% of GDP) to R130,163 million in 2018 (2.7% of GDP) which was a growth of 9,4% compared to 2017. However, studies showed that even prior to COVID-19, the economic benefits of tourism did not accrue to black people as desired under the gazetted Tourism B-BBEE Sector Code.

"We need a transformed and shared tourism economy now than ever before if we are serious about reviving our image, particularly a tourists' drawcard, of a rainbow nation of Tata Nelson Mandela", said Ms Sangweni-Siddo, TTCSA Chairperson.

The Tourism Transformation Summit held in 2017 resolved that the Department of Tourism should establish funding programmes targeting companies with black ownership majority and control, to create access to funding in order to stimulate economic transformation and inclusivity in the sector.

The historic R1.2 billion TEF is intended to fund majority black-owned and black management-controlled tourism enterprises (minimum 51%)

in accommodation; hospitality; travel and related services. The Fund provides combination of grant funding, concessionary loans and debt finance to support equity acquisitions and new and expansion developments in the tourism sector.

"We reiterate that delays in implementing the TEF will negatively affect black businesses which have already negotiated deals and applied for the funding through the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (Sefa). So, it is our unwavering resolve that the fund is a necessary intervention, within the constitutional values and imperatives for the creation of an equal society and addressing the imbalances of our country's past.

Numerous reports continue to show that the country's economy does not equally benefit all its citizens and is predominantly owned by the white minority, who make up only 10% of the country's population, whereas the black majority (Africans, Coloureds & Indians) who make up 90% of the population are perpetually alienated from the mainstream economy.

"The council welcomes the Minister's decision for taking the giant leap to make access to funding a reality and for putting the codes into practice to ensure that the economic benefits of transformation accrue to black people as well", added Sangweni-Siddo.

DM GEORGE DOMESTIC TOURISM ACTIVATION

Staff Reporter

Nestled in the fertile Outeniqua valley, the Southern Cape displayed all its splendour during the Deputy Minister's domestic tourism activation in this region.

To stimulate domestic tourism, the Department of Tourism hosted a series of domestic tourism activations across the country, lending impetus to its Tourism Sector Recovery Plan.

Deputy Minister of Tourism, Mr Fish Mahlalela, visited the Garden Route and Klein Karoo town ahead of his Budget Vote to engage various stakeholders within the tourism sector.

Ever the proponent of skills development, on Friday the 14th May 2021 the Deputy Minister hosted engagements virtually with academics and tourism students from Cape Peninsula University of Technology. This highlighted career opportunities in the sector as well as the tourism landscape post-pandemic.

The picturesque town of George hosted the Department where the Deputy Minister proceeded to engage with representatives of Community Tourism Organisations, Tour Operators, Tour Guides, Hospitality industry, Women in Tourism and business people operating within the vast tourism value chain in the Garden Route and Klein Karoo area. The Deputy Minister gave expression to the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan with the focus on reigniting the domestic travel market. This platform presented an opportunity for tourism businesses to raise concerns and challenges in the sector.

This engagement also focused on transformation of the tourism sector as a whole with a view to rapidly improve the pace of transformation in the tourism sector in relation to ownership and control.

"National government has developed the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan to resuscitate the economy. In response to this Plan, the Department of Tourism has developed Tourism Sector Recovery Plan which has since been approved by Cabinet.

The Plan and the gains made in the Risk Adjusted Strategy, are a result of extensive consultation and collaboration between government, tourism sector and civil society. The Plan is set to revive tourism, and set the sector on an optimal path to recovery, transformation and long term sustainability" said Deputy Minister Mahlalela

The Deputy Minister further then visited the harbour town of Mossel Bay, home to the Mossel Bay Zipline, the longest over-ocean Zipline in the world. This tourist attraction is perfect if you enjoy adventure and adrenalin.

Thereafter, he proceeded to the historic town of Pacaltsdorp where he participated in the Pacaltsdorp historical walk, highlighting areas of indigenous, cultural and historic significance. The day culminated in an initiative called "dine with locals" which is a culinary melting pot attraction, which offers local cuisine, -prepared by locals and shared in a local setting. This showcased the region in all its diversity.

The morning of the 15th May started with a breathtaking game drive at the Buffelsdrift Game Lodge which showcased the fauna and flora of the Karoo. Thereafter the Deputy Minister proceeded to Oudtshoorn to visit to the iconic Cango Caves. This spectacular underground tourist attraction largely attracts the international travel market and he encouraged the domestic travel market to experience the wonders of nature in the Caves.

Deputy Minister Mahlalela concluded the visit with a Budget Vote Awareness session. The Budget Vote Debate coincides with rolling out of the nationwide Domestic Tourism Activation Campaign. The campaign is aimed at encouraging South Africans to travel and experience the scenic beauty of their own country within the confines of the COVID-19 regulations and health protocols. The campaign recognises that the boost in domestic tourism will offset the sharp decline in international travel market.

The Deputy Minister was accompanied by Executive Mayors of Garden Route District, George and Oudtshoorn Local Municipalities and senior officials from the Provincial Department of Economic Development and Tourism. Deputy Minister Mahlalela was satisfied with the progress made so far by the provincial and local spheres of government and thanked them for assisting the sector to navigate through these trying times of the pandemic.



A BOOST FOR WOMEN IN WINE TOURISM

Staff Reporter

While we are battling the pandemic and learning to live alongside the virus, the business of tourism has to continue. To this end, the Minister congratulated Nhlakanipho Holdings, headed by Dimakatso Malwela, for the launch of the House of D'licacy non-alcoholic wine brand. In a hybrid event, the Minister officiated the launch and welcomed this new player to the market.

The tourism sector has suffered a devastating blow with the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic. And while the pandemic continues, this sector will, in the meantime, have to operate alongside the virus, potentially facing numerous stop/start cycles as restrictions are changed and adjusted in line with the evolution of the virus.

The close links between the wine industry and tourism is part of the reason why the pandemic has had negative impact on the wine industry. The global collapse of the tourism supply and demand market, led to a significant reduction in the number of travellers. This means that hotels and restaurants are seeing lower occupancy levels and patronage respectively.

Given the direct link between tourism and hospitality and the wine industry in terms of providing an outlet for the consumption of wine, the lower demand was felt across the value chain. As a result of fewer visitors, the revenue generated at the wine farms has reduced and several wineries have shut their tasting rooms due to the risks of the virus. The wine industry is an important part of the tourism value chain. South Africa has an increasing number of world-class restaurants, with South African wines being part of the highlight. In the Western Cape the wine industry is a boon for hotels, guesthouses,

restaurants, wellness spas, game lodges and golf courses. More significantly, various wine routes which offer a wide variety of activities, from horseback trails to mountain biking and hiking are also part of diversity of our tourism offering.

South Africa is the world's eighth-largest producer of wine and the wine estates are part of our most visited attractions in our country. Globally, South African wines are regarded as some of the best wines in the market and they have carried our country's brand to all corners of the world. The wider economic benefit of this industry is that in the process of manufacturing, packaging, exporting and distributing wine products, throughout the entire value chain, the local wine industry supports a wide spectrum of economic activity. These includes a wide range of producers and suppliers, such as wine grape farmers, as well as retailers, distributors and the downstream industries such as hospitality industry, restaurants and so on.

A study commissioned by the wine industry body, Vinpro, found that wine tourism is a significant revenue generator for the South African economy having contributed R7.2 billion to GDP in 2019. This includes direct expenditure of a visitor at a wine farm, indirect expenditure of goods bought by wineries from other local businesses to deliver the tourism service, as well as induced expenditure by the wineries' employees at shops.

The wine industry is indeed an important contributor to the South African economy in terms of jobs, the multiplier effect and national income. To reverse the impact of the devastation of the tourism sector by the pandemic, we have outlined the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan (TSRP)

which has been developed together with the private sector. The plan elaborates on the actions that will be undertaken by various implementing agents, public and private, for the tourism sector to get on the path to sustainable tourism recovery. The Plan is anchored on three interlinked pillars or strategic themes: protecting and rejuvenating supply, reigniting demand and strengthening enabling capability for long term sustainability.

The addition of a new brand into this important sector can only bode well for our economy and for the economic recovery. More importantly, the addition of a black-woman owned wine brand enterprise is a positive step for economic transformation not only for the wine industry but for tourism and the wider economy.

Women in the tourism sector are in the majority in terms of participation however they are found at very low level jobs. This initiative will involve women and youth in tourism business; and that the launch will be followed by Non-alcoholic Wine Transformation Programme through the Women of Value SA's enterprise development incubator.

The main objective of the House of D'Licacy is to house non-alcoholic women-owned brands and also assist them by creating local and export marketing. It is important that as we rise, especially as women, we also lift others who need a helping hand.

The collective management of the pandemic combined with the vaccination programme will push our country to a new equilibrium in which there will be some level certainty. The sooner we attain this certainty the better for our economic recovery. In the meantime, we have to adapt to our new normal.

TOURISM RECOVERY PLAN – THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

Staff Reporter

The tourism sector is one of the critical intervention areas that have been identified in the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan as tourism is a key driver of the economic recovery in the country. The Department of Tourism together with its stakeholders, have collaborated to develop the robust Tourism Sector Recovery Plan.

Tourism is a vital contributor to the South African economy. With its extensive value chain and labour absorption capacity, it is acknowledged as a tool for economic development, playing a significant role in responding to the country's socio-economic challenges. Among these, is the provision of employment to individuals of varying skills levels, the employment of women including in rural areas and ensuring the geographic spread of tourism benefits. The sector is also a significant foreign exchange earner. It further impacts on the wider economy through its significant forward and backward linkages with other economic sectors.

The COVID-19 pandemic introduced an unprecedented crisis to the global economy. Tourism was one of the first economic sectors to be deeply impacted by the pandemic with measures to contain its spread, including restrictions on movement. Operations were halted under various phases of lockdown and tourism revenues were severely diminished. The sector is thus facing profound and simultaneous demand and supply shocks.

Historically, the tourism sector has demonstrated resilience through global financial meltdowns and health pandemics. However, the scale and depth of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 health and economic crisis suggest that the road to tourism recovery will be long and highly uncertain. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) expects the sector to return to pre-crisis levels only in 2023. Until then, the sector will largely be in survival mode. Many tourism jobs remain at risk, while some businesses within the sector face the possibility of a permanent closure. Destinations globally are grappling with the challenge of reigniting their tourism economies. Key source markets have placed travel restrictions to and from South Africa

as the South African brand continue to be under pressure due to the country's association with the 501Y.v2 variant of the COVID-19 virus.

The Tourism Sector Recovery Plan (TSRP) is a response by the sector and its constituent partners to the multiple challenges brought on by the pandemic. This Plan is anchored on three interlinked pillars or strategic themes: protecting and rejuvenating supply, reigniting demand and strengthening enabling capability for long term sustainability.

Rejuvenate Supply

- Conclude a comprehensive industry and government partnership to collaborate on all aspects of tourism recovery.
- Deploy an enhanced Tourism Supply Support Package to protect tourism assets and core infrastructure.
- Implement globally recognised biosecurity protocols across the value chain to enable safe travel and to rebuild traveler confidence.
- Convene a national air access team and implement an air service development programme to reconnect South Africa to the world.

Re-ignite Demand

- Partner with departments to remove barriers to travel and enable freer entry, reduced tourist crime and provide stronger personal safety and security guarantees.
- Catalyse domestic demand through the phases of economic re-opening with informative and inspirational messaging that encourages safe tourism and domestic vacation experiences.
- Execute a global marketing and travel trade programme targeted at higher potential source markets and intrepid travel consumer segments to re-ignite international demand.

Strengthening Enabling Capability

- Launch an investment and market entry facilitation programme to stimulate capital investment, transformation and product diversification.
- Prioritise cooperation with neighbouring destinations towards

a regional value proposition and a seamless visitor experience.

- Review and transform institutional architecture to deliver efficient, effective and purpose-led support for sector growth and development.

The Tourism Sector Recovery Plan is therefore a targeted response by the sector and its constituent partners to the multiple challenges brought on by the pandemic. This Plan acknowledges the need for targeted and coordinated action to mitigate the impacts of the crises and sets the sector on the most optimal path to recovery, transformation and long term sustainability.

Developments around the global deployment of COVID-19 vaccines are likely to boost tourism consumer and business confidence. However, the distribution of the vaccines is likely to be uneven. It will also take time to achieve population immunity in many parts of the world. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects that with growing vaccine availability, improved therapies, testing, and tracing, local transmission of the virus is expected to be brought to low levels across the world only by the end of 2022. The situation is further compounded by the uncertainties around the efficacy of the vaccines against new variants.

While forecasting the full extent of the impact the pandemic on the tourism sector remains a challenge, it is clear that a return to business as usual is not possible. This is exacerbated by the continued possibility of the emergence of different variants of the virus coupled with the occurrence of new "waves" almost imposing seasonality of their own. The sector has to operate within a "new normal" context, which includes finding ways for the tourism economy to coexist with the virus, at least in the short to medium term.

The implementation of interventions outlined in the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan are aimed at not only returning the tourism sector's performance to levels it reached before the outbreak of COVID-19, but to place it on a long-term sustainable growth trajectory that fully realises South Africa's vast and diverse tourism potential.



VACCINATION ROLL OUT- HOW FAR ARE WE?

Staff Reporter

A vaccine is intended to provide immunity against COVID-19. In general, vaccines contain weakened or inactive parts of a particular organism that triggers an immune response within the body. This weakened version will not cause the disease in the person receiving the vaccine, but it will prompt their immune system to respond. Some vaccines require multiple doses, given weeks or months apart. This is sometimes needed to allow for the production of long-lived antibodies and development of memory cells. In this way, the body is trained to fight the specific disease-causing organism, building up memory against the pathogen so it can fight it in the future.

The vaccine rollout is carried out in a three-phase approach that begins with the most vulnerable in our population. Our target is to vaccinate 67% of the population by the end of 2021, which will allow us to achieve herd immunity. Phase 1 will focus on frontline healthcare workers; Phase 2 will vaccinate essential workers, persons in congregate

settings, persons over 60 years and persons over 18 years with co-morbidities. Phase 3 will focus on persons older than 18 years, targeting 22,500,000 of the population.

A month after the vaccinations kicked off beyond healthcare workers, by the end of 13 June a total of 1,297,520 people aged over 60 had received the first of two Pfizer doses. Just over five million over-60s in the country were meant to be vaccinated by the end of June, according to the national health department's own targets. Earlier targets, like vaccinating 1.2 million healthcare workers, were also not reached. At the end of the Sisonke J&J vaccine trial, a total of 479,768 healthcare workers got the jab, according to official records.

The latest figures from the Health Department show that 3,871 vaccines were rolled out over the past 24-hour cycle. These take the number of people who've now had at least one dose of a COVID-19 shot to 1,777,288. Over the same 24-hour period, 114

more people have died in South Africa after contracting the coronavirus, pushing the national death toll to 57,879. The country has also recorded 5,552 infections over the past 24-hour cycle, taking the known caseload since the start of the pandemic to 1,752,000. So far, 1,611,000 people have recuperated so far, which works out to a recovery rate of 91.9%.

Meanwhile, Aspen Pharmacare has now detailed its plans to bolster South Africa's COVID-19 vaccine rollout after batches of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine were found to be contaminated and had to be destroyed. Johnson and Johnson will "within days" provide the country with 300,000 vaccine doses "for South African teachers", Aspen said in a statement. Johnson & Johnson will also deliver "substantial quantities" of finished vaccines to South Africa "to replace the lost stock thereby ensuring the momentum in the South African vaccine initiative is maintained".



By Monika Luel

THE FUTURE OF POST-COVID-19 GATHERINGS

Events, exhibitions and meetings have consistently put destinations on the map. From boosting the economy to raising the profile of the host city or town, the investment opportunities and knowledge-sharing value of business events are unbounded.

Bringing with it insurmountable losses across a variety of sectors, the events sector is yet another casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the very nature of events defying the basics for mitigating the spread of the virus, eventing professionals have been challenged to rethink and re-imagine the entire landscape. To survive and adapt, planners find themselves asking many questions, amongst them, 'How can I engage my audience to provide a meaningful experience in an interactive and safe manner?'

With countries around the globe slowly emerging from varying levels of lockdowns, now is the time to rethink the future of events. Today's events are no longer about dates, rates, and space – they are about safety, efficiency, and transparency. As we collectively re-imagine the sector, below are five key considerations for hosting a successful and safe event:

1. Create a safe environment at your event

It is important to follow up-to-date South African National Department of Health and the World Health Organization guidelines, strictly adhering to the guidance for onsite events. The South African Events Council, consisting of 12 event and exhibition associations across South Africa, has published reopening guidelines in line with the national COVID-19 protocols and regulations. This document, which is available here, is an easy-to-reference resource to ensure your event observes all protocols.

Embracing the 'touchless economy' as far as possible for sign-in, for example ensuring that drinks and refreshments are packaged in a safe, sealed yet sustainable manner, goes a long way to prevent spread, and instilling a sense of safety in delegates.

2. Create a plan and communicate it

with all stakeholders

Deliver essential information in a quick, clear, and transparent manner to assure your stakeholders that the necessary precautions and guidelines will be followed to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, accompanied by a succinct communication plan on how issues will be dealt with should they arise.

The best place to create and maintain this plan is on a webpage of your event website. The following steps should be included when creating your plan:

- Coordinate with local health officials in your area to determine steps for identifying and isolating attendees with elevated risk, should a delegate prove to be symptomatic.
- Create an organised project workflow and communication strategy that includes partners, vendors, and attendees to ensure everyone feels confident and comfortable with your event plan.
- As events coordinator, contact all meeting spaces, hotels, and venues to ensure an understanding of their health protocols.
- Publish your company policy on your website.

3. Maintain prevention and control measures and proactively update your attendees, partners and venues

Venues and event organisers should have an event safety officer in place who can fulfil the roll of the COVID-19 compliance officer.

Maintaining an updated log of attendees (containing full name and contact details) is of utmost importance to easily manage contact tracing should the need arise for exposure notifications post event.

4. Establish health and safety rules for your event

In addition to venue rules and regulations, and to add an additional layer of protection, creating clear health and safety rules specific to your event is advisable.

As people start to come together again in group environments, there is a wide range of comfort levels to accommodate, especially when it comes to physical proximity and contact. Many people, who will in a lot of cases be seeing colleagues and industry

friends for the first time, also find it awkward to let others know their preference.

Global event strategist network PCMA is finding creative solutions to the aforementioned problem. Taking their cue from traffic lights, they've created colour-coded wristbands with red indicating 'no contact', yellow meaning 'elbow bumping allowed', and green meaning 'high fives and handshakes welcome'. Thus, individual preferences are easily communicated without anyone having to say a word. With 'touchless' networking encouraged locally, the colours can be creatively rethought to accommodate your event.

5. Create a hybrid event

While we are still in an unsure immediate future while vaccine roll-outs commence, virtual and hybrid events are here to stay for the interim.

The best thing about hybrid events is that they combine the best of virtual and in-person gatherings, providing a format that allows event organisers to safely bring back live experiences, while still realising the benefits of a digital event platform.

Final thoughts

The South African events sector has consistently brought professionally organised, world-class sport, business, and entertainment events to a destination, with Cape Town and the Western Cape being home to many flagship events attended by visitors from across the globe.

Building on months of experience and some realistic expectations on global health trends, it's not a matter of if, but how, the meetings and events industry will continue to experiment and change. Despite the shift to virtual spaces, the value and hunger for in-person knowledge sharing and connection have not disappeared. As we progress, it is about finding a new medium to marry innovation with in-person interaction, enabling the events landscape to metamorphose into a new state of being. As we collectively craft what the new world of events looks like, we call on our local sector to experiment with new technologies and formats in a safe and responsible way. Cape Town and the Western Cape will always be a place where great minds meet!



SANPARKS INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME: OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19



Thatching



Roads



Fencing

By Dr Laetitia Jacobs

The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting the tourism industry around the world and South Africa is no exception. STATS SA (2021) indicated the related travel restrictions imposed in 2020, the decreased volume of tourists (domestic and international) by 72,6% from 10,2 million in 2019 to 2,8 million in 2020.

As the world is suffering the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Tourism along with SANParks implemented the Infrastructure Maintenance Programme in national parks across the country. This programme is aligned to the Tourism Recovery Plan (TRP) as well as the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) of South Africa. SANParks have actioned by developing a detailed plan for what needs to be done to maintain and refurbish its existing tourism infrastructure and assets within the national parks across the country. Therefore, as the world reluctantly embraces the new normal of limited travel and social distancing, it gave the opportunity for maintenance work to be done – ensuring

that our tourism supply is improved and preserved.

The primary objective of the SANParks Maintenance Programme is to improve and ensure proper maintenance of National Park Assets for destination enhancement, job creation and SMME development. The maintenance work is performed by SMMEs and Co-ops comprised of community members that surround the national parks as first preference and expanded according to the need in compliance with the Tourism B-BBEE Sector Code and the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). To date, the programme has appointed sixty (60) SMMEs and approximately 600 workers from the local communities surrounding the respective national parks.

Their daily maintenance activities include paving, painting, general maintenance, thatching, and repairing roads and fences within the parks. Some teams are also including beautification aspects such as cleaning the beaches and areas adjacent to

these national parks. The teams work very closely with the technical teams of SANParks, so that teams acquire in-house technical skills such as electrical, plumbing and basic construction. The maintenance teams also received their COVID-19 PPE to ensure the safety and continuing of the programme, uninterrupted. This programme has therefore aided to combat the hostile consequence of unemployment as a result of COVID-19 in the tourism industry and the country as a whole.

During the national parks site assessments, the appreciation and thanks by the SMMEs and participants for this programme does not go unnoticed, especially during this time of global uncertainty and concern.

The project management team, Directorate: Tourism Integration in the Destination Development Branch continues to quality assure product offerings through maintenance work to enhance the visitor experience and for destination competitiveness.

TOP-FIVE TACTICS TO INFLUENCE A HOTEL'S POST-COVID RECOVERY



By Darryl Erasmus

It's challenging to manage any business in the unknown and, without a doubt, the last six to twelve months have been a very anxious and troubling period for the travel, tourism, and hospitality industry at large.

When countries around the world start to progressively loosen lockdown and travel restrictions, the hospitality sector will start to cautiously reopen and generate much needed revenue to sustain itself.

Easy e-Bike Table Mountain, Cape Point & Winelands

But how do we get our guests back?

How do you make sure we capitalise on the new upswing in demand?

Hotels will need to rethink their revenue, channels, distribution, marketing, and staffing strategies to find a new balance in the 'next normal'.

We have come up with five tactics to consider as you plan your comeback:

1. PERFECT YOUR PRICING

The key to perfect pricing lies in a holistic revenue management approach to maximise and optimise the profits of a hospitality business.

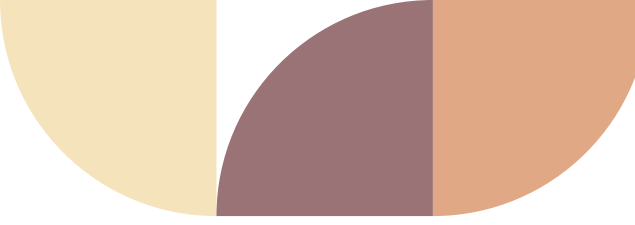
Total revenue management is a data-driven process that identifies the distribution needs of a business. The close study of the internal and external environments allows hotels to develop internal processes to maximise the overall profitability of the property.

Once all the processes have been established and tracking implemented, each sales and marketing campaign will become more quantifiable as it will be focused on the exact needs of the property. This results in a statistical and data-led approach to investments in sales and marketing activities that will deliver better focus and conversion, much-improved revenue, and healthier profitability.

Big data lays the foundation for the success of all pricing activities and can assist in developing an effective sales and marketing strategy that maximises all investments.

Five considerations when perfecting your pricing:

- Channel Content Evaluation – Hotel content, facilities, amenities, and description evaluation should be up to date across all major platforms.
- Room Type and Rate Code Evaluation – It is critical to do a thorough room type and rate code evaluation across all major channels. This will ensure that you have all available products distributing correctly across all online platforms with rates attached.
- Promotion Parity Check – A promotion parity check conducted across all major channels will benefit your property. Standardisation of online and channel promotions is essential to ensure rate parity exists and your ranking is improving on platforms.
- Online Channel Availability Test – A full-year rate shop per channel will need to be conducted to identify any potential distribution issues. This test will identify any restrictions that may be in place, and identify room-type availability issues for the next 365 days.
- Daily/Weekly Rate Shop – Rate shop



your competitor set regularly to determine the best-selling prices to apply to generate revenues and set your rates accordingly.

- OTA Extranet Management – Find time to audit and learn the OTA Extranets. This includes content updates as well as the activation and management of promotions.

2. DELIBERATE DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL CHOICES

Global Distribution Systems

There is a common misconception that connecting independent and smaller properties to the world's most prominent global distribution systems (GDS) is a costly exercise. The technology stack you choose to utilise will determine the costs and it can be surprisingly affordable when associating with the right channel partners.

If your business mix contains corporate and government business, being bookable on the GDS is a must. Corporate and government travellers and their associated travel management companies are actively utilising the various GDS platforms to source and secure accommodation. Making your property available to travel bookers and travellers across the globe through connectivity to Amadeus, Galileo, Sabre, and Worldspan and their 500 000+ travel agents is possible and affordable.

If you are already bookable on a GDS, something to consider:

- Make sure your location details and address are always 100% accurate.
- Make sure your GDS profile is content rich and codes are reviewed annually.
- Provide thorough property, room, and rate type descriptions.
- List your property-specific GDS codes on your website and marketing collateral.
- Ensure rate parity that creates confidence.

OTA

Optimise your visibility and ranking on all your chosen channels via their extranets. This will give you the best exposure and drive conversion. Responding to guest reviews and ensuring your Review Score and Reply Score are higher than the area average, making sure your rates are dynamic and aiming to achieve 100% on your price quality score (PQS) and property page scores (PPS) for each platform, will improve your ranking.

3. OPTIMISING STAFFING

Hospitality is a labour-intensive sector. It is, therefore, no surprise that COVID-19

restrictions have had a massive impact on staffing and employment for the sector. To remain operational but profitable during such varying occupancy levels, most hotels have had to reduce staff and this has increased the need to cross-train and utilise remaining staff with multiple departmental responsibilities.

But cross-utilisation is not all that straightforward. Whilst a more versatile employee is a more valuable employee, there are many areas of hotel operations with very specialised skills, and hotels need to be aware of the risks associated with cross-utilisation to avoid sacrificing service quality. Flexible scheduling and an optimised staffing approach are key considerations to ensure suitable staffing whilst maintaining service quality as the sector recovers. An agile operation will have the greatest opportunity for success.

A wide network of part-time, on-call employees or contracted service providers will allow hotels to achieve profitability more quickly by adjusting staffing costs and total payroll burden to meet required service levels in real-time.

Innovative labour management practices will without doubt be part of our 'next normal' state for the hospitality sector.

4. EXAMINE YOUR BIG DATA

'Big data' is the term used to describe the large volumes of structured and unstructured data that a hotel or business collects every day. Through the analysis of big data, hoteliers can gain insights that lead to more informed business decisions, an advantage over competitors, detailed guest profiling, and much more.

Hotels often misunderstand the very concept of big data. For example, generic data that is collected at the market level, such as STR reports, does not qualify as big data.

Big data represents a significant competitive edge at your disposal, but only if you have the most suitable tools to understand it. Most hotel data is unstructured data – which is where a customised and scalable tool earns its salt. A big data tool organises large volumes of data into smaller, manageable insights you can use to make pricing, marketing, sales, and general operational resourcing decisions.

For example, a revenue management tool will source and import rate shop data from many data sources, including competitor hotel websites and online platforms. Then,

using carefully crafted skills like artificial intelligence and robotic learning provides actionable intelligence and insights in a clean user-friendly interface for hotel staff to interpret and use. It's accurate, efficient, real time and a huge cost saving whilst providing unrivalled data interpretation.

5. CREATE NEW CONTENT

Creative content marketing has been proved to deliver resounding results. According to Booking.com, a 100% content score can increase conversion by up to 18%. Regular content updates mean more guests.

One of the most effective methods of growing audience engagement, expanding your brand presence and driving conversion, content marketing is a mission-critical growth method for most businesses in the hospitality sector.

Targeted, interactive, and appealing content helps you build and foster stronger customer relationships and trust while it educates your community. Building brand awareness with useful content engages target buyers and drives conversions and effective content will bring more traffic to your website and your direct booking channels. More content gives your site visitors a reason to stick around and improve search engine optimisation (SEO) and online visibility.

Valuable content helps you build credibility and authority, and you can use quality content to position your business as an industry expert.

Content is shareable! The more content you share, the more social media traffic you can generate, and content marketing can help you make personal connections.

Video content is a great option to significantly increase engagement:

- Videos on landing pages increase conversion by more than 80%.
- Marketers who use videos have 41% more traffic in web searches than marketers who do not use video.
- Blog posts, including videos, generate three times more inbound links than posts without videos.
- Postings on social networks with video generate 12 times more shares than just text and images.
- E-mail content with video generates more than 40% involvement.



POLOKWANE GATHERS TO BREAK BREAD



Staff Reporter

Scores of revellers braved a nippy mid-morning and descended upon the Jack Botes Civic Centre Gardens to attend the inaugural Ka Moraleng Cultural Food Festival in Polokwane on 22 May 2021. The event was hosted in partnership with Polokwane Municipality, Limpopo Tourism Agency and the Department of Tourism. The main objective of the festival is to get visitors trying and experiencing good African food and drinks. It also encompasses fashion, which is another vital aspect of any festival. The festival also showed that events can be successfully hosted with strict non-surgical protocols in place during this global COVID-19 pandemic.

SMMEs of greater Polokwane had an opportunity to showcase their products ranging from delicacies, art (paintings, crafts, music) and fashion. The day culminated in live performances on stage by local artists and bands. Organisers of the event

said, "Generally, festivals assist with the development of tourism and stimulate the local economy, as well as the social and cultural developments of the destination." They are looking forward to staging the festival on a bigger scale to ensure that all aspects of Limpopo Province get to shine, which will result in domestic tourism thriving. The Festival, unlike other on this scale, brought an exciting element filled with mouth-watering indigenous Limpopo food, music, fashion, dance, arts and crafts, with a modern twist to attract the new age market. The food, fashion, music, dance, arts and crafts village was the order of the day, complemented by a kiddies zone for the young ones.

Although this was the first Annual Ka Moraleng Cultural Festival, there is no doubt that many more are coming. The event also played its part in promoting and encouraging the lifestyle of culture and heritage, especially

in Limpopo, which prides itself on so many heritage and cultural opportunities. The province is the only one in the country with more cultural groups residing and sharing whatever is on offer together in harmony. The Northern Sotho people make up the largest percentage of the population, making 52% of the province. The Tsonga people comprise about 24.0% of the province; the Venda make up about 16.7%. Afrikaners make up the majority of Limpopo's white population, about 95,000 people; English-speaking whites number just over 20,000. Coloureds and Asians/Indians make up a very small percentage of the province's total population.

While English is regarded as a business language, other native languages such as Tshivenda, Sepedi, Xitsonga, Setswana, IsiNdebele and Afrikaans are widely spoken and in other instances are even used for business.

2021 Youth month CELEBRATION



Staff Reporter

This year marks the 45th anniversary of the 16 June 1976 student uprising in Soweto when young people protested against imposition of Afrikaans by the apartheid regime as a medium of instruction.

The uprising ended tragically with hundreds of young people being brutally killed. Following the advent of democracy in 1994, the new democratic government declared 16 June as National Youth Day and June as the Youth Month. Aimed at remembering those who died and suffered during this dark day, as well as to celebrate those who carry their legacy and principles of selflessness, determination and devotion that are necessary for success and growth for any society or nation.

The declaration honours the contribution of the youth in the struggle for the liberation of South Africa. The year further marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of liberation struggle heroine and human rights campaigner, Charlotte Maxeke. The National Youth Day and Youth Month will be celebrated under the theme: "The Year of Charlotte Maxeke: Growing youth employment for an inclusive and transformed society."

Tourism Month is celebrated in September to highlight South Africa's

diverse tourism offerings, and the sector's significant contribution to the country's economy. However most international guests visit South Africa during the month of June to celebrate the month of June with us and know more about our history, it is unfortunate that due to COVID-19 pandemic most international tourists might not visit South Africa because of the looming third wave, the 2021 Youth Month will be celebrated in a hybrid format.

The youth month festivities will take place against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic - which has had a crippling impact on business. However, the sector has established Health and Safety Protocols in line with global guidelines, to minimise the risk of transmission as well as a robust Recovery Plan to chart the way forward. South Africans are encouraged to travel and explore their country to try and help revive the sector as well as to promote nation-building and social cohesion.

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities and its agency, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) in partnership with the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture have launched Youth Month on Tuesday, 1 June 2021.

South Africa is fortunate to have a

youthful nation. However, the recent unemployment statistics pertaining to young people is cause for concern. The 2020 fourth quarter Labour Force Survey found that about 8,6 million young people aged between 15 and 34 years are not in education and not in employment.

In helping to draw more young people into the economy, government has under the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention initiated various youth development and empowerment initiatives to support young people. It ranges from formal education and training; learner ships and internships as well as support for youth entrepreneurship. The initiatives provide the necessary support for young people to take on their challenges and win.

During this month of youth, government and its agencies such as the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) will host a number of engagements, including youth expos, dialogues and youth entrepreneur hubs to showcase opportunities available to young people. The entire country is further encouraged to participate in Youth Month by recognising the present and future role of the youth in shaping the socio-economic landscape of the country.



COVID, TOURISM AND THE WORLD

Staff Reporter

South Africa participated in the G7 for the collective action taken to overcome the current global health crisis and the commitment to create a better, greener and more prosperous world.

"Ending the pandemic is the world's immediate priority. COVID-19 is not over. Globally, there were more COVID cases reported in the first five months of 2021 than in the whole of 2020. We therefore have to act with urgency and at an unprecedented scale. To successfully contain a virus of this nature, to limit loss of life and to prevent the emergence of new variants that requires many of the world's population to be vaccinated in the shortest time possible." Emphasised President Cyril Ramaphosa at the G7 leaders' summit in Cornwall United Kingdom.

Substantial financial gaps for tests, treatments, critical supplies like oxygen

and the health systems that enable testing, treatment and vaccination were addressed. The G7 countries - UK, US, Canada, Japan, France, Germany and Italy - which together account for more than half of global output - provide substantial support to the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator.

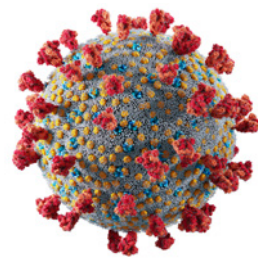
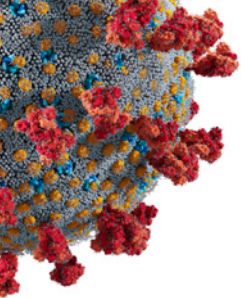
Since its formation a year ago, the ACT-Accelerator has supported more than 70 countries to expand lab infrastructure for testing and delivered millions of rapid diagnostic tests; accelerated development and production of vaccines; delivered more than 69 million doses since February 2021; and procured PPE with a value of more than US\$ 500 million.

The ACT-Accelerator has the potential to fundamentally change the global trajectory of this disease, but only if all countries contribute their fair share to close the 16.8 billion funding gap for

this year. If all G7 countries met their fair share target, this initiative would be two-thirds funded - and it would be 90 per cent funded if all G20 countries made their fair share contributions.

He further said that, "If we are to save lives and end the pandemic, we need to expand and diversify manufacturing and get medical products to treat, combat and prevent the pandemic to as many people as quickly as possible."

If the world is to emerge from this grave crisis, it is essential that we work together to mobilise and direct resources to those countries in the greatest need - and that we do so now. Berlin-based entrepreneur support company, enpact, and the TUI Care Foundation have announced the start of a joint Tourism Recovery Programme which will support young founders in the travel and tourism industry.



For micro, small, and medium-sized tourism enterprises in Egypt, Mexico, South Africa and Kenya. The Tourism Recovery Programme is designed to support innovative tourism businesses on their path of economic recovery.

A joint press release from the two companies' highlights that the future of tourism depends on resilient tourism businesses offering sustainable products and services, particularly in developing and emerging economies. With the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals at its core, the Tourism Recovery Programme builds capacity around leadership, resilience, sustainability, innovation, and digital transformation. Additionally, the aim is to create a flourishing international network of tourism businesses.

The Tourism Recovery Programme aims to empower travel and tourism businesses that were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in the four target countries and which demonstrate a technologically, socially or environmentally innovative business model. While much of the continent is only just setting off on its tourism expedition, Kenya has been juddering along the road for decades, becoming synonymous with game drives, bush camps and the quintessential African holiday. But it has now reached something of a crossroads. Historically, classic safari destinations have been all about nature. Tourists tend to swerve its towns and cities, and, and the continent's human history largely intangible.

Around Africa tourism has been an important part of Kenya's recent history, resulting in the creation of vast national parks and game

reserves, the outlawing of hunting, and generating a high percentage of GDP. But Kenya's ability to adapt to this shift – moving the emphasis from wildlife to people – will determine the impact that tourism has on its future.

Meanwhile is South Africa, "The Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) will continue to lobby for the reopening of international travel," said CEO of the industry body, Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa.

He welcomed the opening of inter-provincial travel and the unbanning of alcohol sales, noting that it would "go a long way in helping the industry to recover".

This means accommodation, hospitality venues and tours will be permitted according to approved protocols that ensure social distancing. Restaurants, bars and taverns will also be permitted to operate according to approved protocols as to times of operation and numbers of people. "South Africa can hold its head high among the community of nations because we remain a country that is free and united and determined to succeed." Tshivhengwa said.

Gatherings such as the G7 are important opportunities for South Africa to promote

its view of a fairer and more peaceful world. They are also an opportunity to promote our country as a destination in which to invest and do business, as a partner for development, and as an ally in resolving the most pressing social and political issues facing humankind.

"When times are tough, it is easy to be pessimistic. We are making progress in resolving many of our challenges, from corruption to energy shortages to the obstacles that discourage investment. The pace of reform is picking up. We do not take the patience and resilience of the South African people for granted. We acknowledge our shortcomings as a government and are working to remedy them." President Ramaphosa alluded.

"Our democracy was founded in hope where there seemingly was nonAe. We emerged from a desperate situation that threatened to engulf us and built a new nation. Over the last year and a half, we rallied together to fight the pandemic, united in the belief that better days would come."

Ramaphosa mentioned that, Throughout the course of our history we have had setbacks and false starts. But our resilient nature allowed us to weather many storms. It is this drive and determination that must continue to propel us forward as our country recovers socially, politically and economically.

He finalized by saying, "Let us look ahead and move forward. Let us nurture the green shoots of progress. Let us not only hope for better days, but let us work even harder to achieve them."

UPCOMING EVENTS



International Mandela Day: 18 July 2021

Mandela Day is a global call to action that celebrates the idea that each individual has the power to transform the world, the ability to make an impact (Internal Activation)



Tourism Month Media Launch: 27 August 2021

To officially launch Tourism Month to all citizens of South Africa.



National Tourism Career Expo: September 2021

To share the highlights and experiences of the NTCE 2018 to the tourism stakeholders. To create awareness on NTCE and the opportunities for the tourism industry to participate at the Expo. To solicit buy in and commitment from the tourism industry on the need for them to pledge internship, learnership and part / full time job offers as they register for exhibition at the NTCE 2019.



Women's day: 09 August 2021

The day commemorates the 1956 march of approximately 20 000 women to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to petition against the country's pass laws. National Women's Day has been celebrated since 9 August 1994



Heritage Day: 24 September 2021

Heritage Day recognises and celebrates the cultural wealth of our nation. South Africans celebrate the day by remembering the cultural heritage of the many cultures that make up the population of South Africa.



World Tourism Day: 27 September 2021

To cultivate and create awareness among the society globally on the significance of tourism, and it's social, political, financial and also cultural worth and value.



SAM NZIMA LECTURE – AN ICON REMEMBERED

Staff Reporter

Sam Nzima will forever be remembered for his haunting photograph of the dying Hector Pietersen during the 1976 Soweto uprising. This image was seen around the world and exposed the blatant atrocity of apartheid.

In the iconic image, the dying Peterson is carried by Mbuyisa Makhubu away from the rioting crowds with the boy's sister, Antoinette Sithole, running alongside.

This renowned photographer was honoured during the inaugural Sam Nzima Memorial Lecture. Mandla Langa, a South African poet and cultural activist delivered the keynote address which he introduced with a poignant quote: "Remember to remember the unremembered."

The family of Nzima has announced that they are working on building the Sam Nzima Legacy Centre in Mpumalanga which will comprise, among others, a museum and a school of journalism. Nzima died in 2018 aged 83

"I remember the image, its impact and

the fact that it lends itself to reproduction as it soon made appearances almost everywhere in various incarnations, as a poster, a banner, a t-shirt or featuring in innumerable publications, acting as a graphic shorthand that took the abstract struggle against Apartheid onto recognisable, almost visceral levels," says Langa.

Nzima's family says the legendary photographer's work continues to receive honour and recognition. Thulani Nzima is chairperson of the Sam Nzima Foundation established in 2015.

The Tshwane University of Technology posthumously bestowed him with an honorary doctoral degree last November. Now his legacy is going to be immortalised with the construction of a museum and a school of journalism in honour of his contribution to the country.

"So what is going to happen at the Sam Nzima Legacy Centre, we are going to build an interpretive centre which will house the indigenous knowledge of the

people of Mpumalanga. We as Africans are stories and knowledge of our people resides with the elders. So, we want to make sure that we harvest that knowledge and make it available through the centre. The museum will be used to tell the story of the people of Mpumalanga, not just Sam Nzima's life. Sam Nzima comes from a journalism background so we going to build the school of journalism, media training. We are at an advanced stage," says Nzima.

Nzima was able to gain full copyright of the photograph after not being able to do so previously and also benefit financially from those who continued to use it.

An Intellectual Property and Copyrights specialist says the photographer has the moral rights to be reflected when the photo they took is used and get some form of royalty from it. Darren Olivier from Adams and Adams Attorneys says the copyright on Nzima's image has been extended. The image has now been incorporated into the logo of the Sam Nzima Foundation.



COVID19 TOURISM RELIEF FUND (TRF) DEMAND CONTINUES

Staff Reporter

The Department of Tourism has continued to receive enquiries since the closure of the Tourism Relief Fund about the prospects of new funding to continue to support enterprises who are facing renewed challenges due to the impact of COVID19.

These enquiries are in most instances from hundreds of enterprises whose applications were unsuccessful either due to not meeting the criteria requirements or limitation in the availability of resources on the part of the Department.

The Fund was dedicated to support Exempted Micro Enterprises in line with the Tourism Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Codes of Good Practice. To this end, only enterprises with an annual turnover not exceeding R5 million could qualify.

These enterprises also had to provide valid proof in relation to the nature of the business, status of operations, COVID19 impact, financials, tax clearance status, amongst others as per

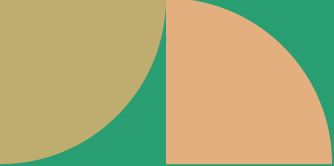
the criteria that was set and published by the Department. Another important element of the considerations was to ensure that there was geographic spread across and within the provinces. It is also important to note that within the tourism value chain, the fund did not cater for business categories such as franchises in the food and beverages, restaurants and conference facilities attached to hotels, Shebeens and Tavern, craft centres amongst others.

The Fund, which also benefited from industry support was rather limited at only R200 million mainly through the redirection of funds to respond to the impact of COVID19 on small tourism enterprises whose cashflows are largely dependent on daily activities.

The funds were meant assist with expenses towards fixed costs, operational costs, supplies and other pressure costs items. It aimed to provide support at R50 000 per entity. Of the 7284 valid applications submitted, only 4,000 businesses in categories such as accommodation establishments, conferencing facilities and venues,

safari and car rentals in the tourism and hospitality sector received the funds, with 3284 enterprises unsuccessful, hence the large volume of enquiries about possibilities of a second phase of the TRF.

"The Department took it a step further and published the names of all the beneficiaries on its website to ensure that there was maximum transparency in the administration of public funds." Said Victor Tharage, the Director General of Tourism. This was followed by a media statement to alert the public to the publication. This approach was also followed in relation to all the department's expenditure related to COVID19. Tharage also indicated that "It is regrettable that while there is still a lot of demand for the funds, the Department is not in a position to reinstate the Tourism Relief Fund owing to the unavailability of financial resources". It is for this reason that the focus of the Department is on the implementation of the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan (TSRP) to ensure sustained return to business activities as the mainstay of the recovery efforts.



DEPUTY MINISTER OF TOURISM FISH MAHLALELA ATTENDS UN WORLD TOURISM MEETING FOR AFRICA IN NAMIBIA

Staff Reporter

Deputy Minister of Tourism, Mr. Fish Mahlalela, took a two-day visit to Namibia where he participated in the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Regional Conference for Africa, taking place in Windhoek from 14 to 16 June 2021.

Addressing the high-Level Ministerial Panel under the theme "Strengthening Brand Africa for the swift recovery of the tourism sector" the Deputy Minister highlighted the importance of rebuilding the continental brand through actions that dispel negative perceptions about the business environment on the continent.

"We need to understand the current perceptions about Africa's ability and what informs such perceptions, and as we do that we need to answer as to what we as African governments are doing to eliminate those negative perceptions about 'being African', and not over time, but urgently."

The Deputy Minister called for the development partners to drive initiatives to change the narrative about Africa - "This is Africa's moment to reclaim its positioning globally. As the world reopens Africa has the youngest youth population of all continents in the world. If Africa is to become the economic and social superpower that it is

meant to be, then Brand Africa must leverage the youth mindset, creativity and innovation in whatever positioning it adopts," he added. "To position Africa – we need to show the best of who we are – position us as an active and sustainable continent, we need to highlight our best features and tourism adventures, and in addition we need to further position Africa within the minds of consumers and travellers, we need to listen and see what they want." The Deputy Minister also acknowledged that air connectivity was a key driver for outbound travel for business tourism within Africa, as he reassured partners of commitments to support intra-Africa travel.

"As we discuss Brand Africa, we need to answer as governments on how we are contributing to making the continent more attractive to established professionals and business leaders in the diaspora, those who are ready to contribute in developing and re-positioning our continent as a prime destination for investment, work and leisure." "Collectively we must create a conducive environment to drive growth in our tourism markets, by providing policy that will drive collaboration in the areas of Product development, Regional Routes, Air Access and Data Sharing," said Mahlalela. The Deputy Minister will utilize the occasion of the working visit to explore further collaboration with other African delegations attending the meeting as well bilateral discussions with his Namibian counterpart - Deputy Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism Hon. Heather Sibungu.

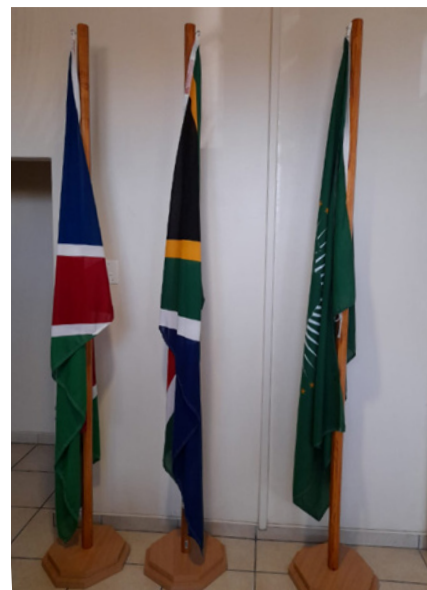
South Africa and Namibia have close economic cooperation ties with a bilateral agreement in the field of tourism currently under consideration.

1. CONTINENTAL CONTEXT FOR TOURISM RECOVERY African Union (AU) At its meeting on 21 April 2020, the AU Bureau of the Subcommittee on Tourism of the Specialized Technical Committee on Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism (STC-TTIIET) decided to set up a High-Level Task Force, with a view to developing and implementing a comprehensive Post-COVID-19 Continental Tourism Recovery Strategy. The Bureau of the Subcommittee on Tourism also called on the African Union Commission (AUC), Regional Economic Communities, the African Civil Aviation Commission, the African Development Bank, UNWTO, and international development partners, to provide technical expertise and support for the Continental Tourism Recovery Strategy.

The First Extra Ordinary Session of the AU STC-TTIIET held virtually on 12 January 2021 directed the AUC to fully and expeditiously

implement the decision of the Bureau of the Subcommittee on Tourism to ensure that the process of developing a Continental Tourism Recovery Strategy is expedited with a view to have the recovery strategy finalised in 2021. This is ongoing work for the AUC.

Southern African Development Community (SADC) Early in 2020, the SADC Member States requested that, in cognizance of the impact of COVID-19 pandemic in the SADC region, the Costed Action Plan for the SADC Tourism Programme must include an overview of the impact of the pandemic on tourism in the SADC region and recommended responses at a global and regional level. The SADC Secretariat commissioned a consultancy to assess the impact of COVID-19 pandemic at SADC level.





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