

bojanala

broadening horizons

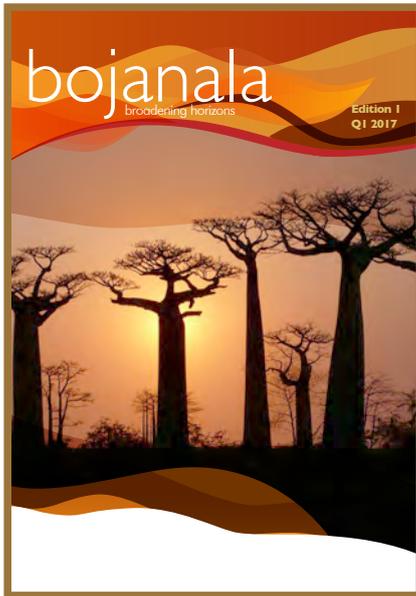
Edition I
Q1 2017



tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Contents



About the cover

The iconic baobab tree is found in over 30 African countries and is used as a remedy and folklore by many. It is a prehistoric species which precedes both mankind and the splitting of the continents years ago.

The baobab tree is inborn to the African savannah where the climate is tremendously dry and arid. The tree symbolises life and positivity in an environment where only the few can thrive. In South Africa, the tree can mostly be located in Musina, towards the Beitbridge border between South African and Zimbabwe

Whereas some know about it, only few know that it has a fruit - and even less known is that its fruit has the most nutrients as compared to many in the world.



Inside

- 01 Letter from the Editor-In-Chief
- 02 Indaba Ministerial Session
- 04 Deputy Minister congratulates Tourism Buddies Graduates in the Free State
- 05 Business Travel on the Rise
- 06 Bilateral bears fruits in strengthening relations
- 07 Constitution Hill just made navigating SA's history a lot easier
- 08 Minister of Tourism hosts Ambassadors working dinner
- 09 The youth must grab opportunities and make them count
- 10 Visa openness an important key to unlocking economic growth
- 11 Department of Tourism hosts Tshwane learners at the Career Expo in Sandton
- 12 Mpumalanga presents a tourism co-operation agreement with the Russian federation
- 13 Conservation, diversification and sustainability
- 14 Seychelles chefs placement farewell breakfast
- 16 Department of Tourism visits EU-funded community tourism development programme

CREDITS

PUBLISHER

Department of Tourism

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Seapei Lebele

EDITOR

Johannes Mokou

SUB-EDITOR

Charles Mnisi

EDITORIAL SUPPORT

Annah Mashile

DESIGN & LAYOUT

Shereno Printers

CONTRIBUTORS

Annah Mashile

Otto de Vries

Enver Duminy

Charles Mnisi

Thapelo Mohale

Claire Allison

Flow Communications

Kholofelo Nkambule

Phatisa Ntlonze

Disclaimer

While every reasonable effort is made to maintain current and accurate information in this publication, the Department of Tourism accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions in this magazine. The use of the content of this magazine is at the user's own risk. The user assumes full responsibility and risk of loss resulting from the use of the content of this magazine. The Department of Tourism or any of the legal entities in respect of which information are contained in this publication, or employees of the Department of Tourism or such entity, will not be liable for any special, indirect, incidental, consequential, or punitive damages or any other damages whatsoever, whether in an action of contract, statute, tort (including, without limitation, negligence), or otherwise, relating to the use of this magazine or information.

LETTER FROM EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

I am honored to offer you another edition of the captivating Bojanala Stakeholder Magazine; a first for this financial year. As always, this platform features voices from all corners of the sector, while also aiming to create an opportunity for dialogue.

The edition takes you through a journey of various contributions by the Department of Tourism and other sectoral stakeholders. These contributions include amongst others, the 2017 Tourism Indaba, a visit by the department to one of the EU-funded community tourism development programmes as well as the announcement by Mpumalanga Province to sign the co-operation agreement with the Ural Association of Tourism in the Sverdlovsk region of Russia.

Read about Minister of Tourism Tokozile Xasa hosting the 4th Indaba Ministerial Session on 15 May 2017 at the International Convention Centre (ICC). This was done under the theme: "The Role of Technology in the Changing Face of Travel in Africa".

Furthermore, you will be exposed to the Association of Southern African Travel Agents's observation on Visa openness as an important key to unlocking economic growth. The Association suggests that when business travellers can move more easily across the continent, they can bring higher levels of investment, fresh skills and expand the range of goods and services on offer. Free movement of people drives integration and investment.

You will also read about the department's community interface programmes through Izimbizo's, with a Youth Imbizo taking place in Potchefstroom and Tourism Buddies graduation ceremony in Welkom.

Advancing the department's relations with other countries, Minister Tokozile Xasa met with Mr Wang Xiaofeng, Vice minister of the Chinese National Tourism Administration (CNTA) to strengthen the bilateral relations between South Africa and China in the area of tourism.

Catch a view from Cape Town Tourism on conservation, diversification and sustainability. They explain that Tourism is reliant on the environment in which it exists and its dynamics require that destination management organisations, and tourism professionals be able to anticipate changing needs and to adapt accordingly.



Flight Centre Business Travel also indicates the interesting statistics that show that South African cities occupy six of the top 10 business destinations for South Africans in 2017.

Enjoy the read and I invite you on the next edition, as we continue to uncover some of the best offerings and good work done by sector players within tourism.

Enjoy!

Seapei Lebele

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Indaba Ministerial Session

- by Annah Mashile



Minister of Tourism Ms Tokozile Xasa together with the Tourism role players



Minister of Tourism, Ms Tokozile Xasa gives a warm welcome to guests at Indaba 2017



Minister of Tourism, Ms Tokozile Xasa addresses the guests during Indaba 2017

The Minister of Tourism Ms Tokozile Xasa hosted the 4th Indaba Ministerial Session on 15 May 2017 at the International Convention Centre (ICC). This was done under the theme: "The Role of Technology in the Changing Face of Travel in Africa". The event was to afford African Ministers, key industry players and other stakeholders an opportunity to deliberate on emerging trends, opportunities and challenges facing the tourism sector in Africa.

The speed and pace of the way technology is changing brought the South African government to keep changing and merging with other countries, while also looking at innovative ways to grow the economy. As with others, tourism is also targeted for job creation in South Africa and other African countries and as a result, better use of technology would be an added advantage in this regard.

The session comprised of a panel discussion, which included industry experts such as Mr Stephen Ekberg from Travelstar, Ms Yolisa Kani from Uber, Ms Stephanie Hodges from Airbnb, Ms Angelica Mkok from Amadeus IT group, Mr McLean Sibanda from the Innovation Hub, Mr Tshifiwa Tshivhengwa from FEDHASA and Mr Victor Tharage from Department of Tourism. The discussion focused on amongst other things, communicating the importance of technology and embracing change.

"Technology afforded us an opportunity to use our cellphones to call a car and be where we want to be at any time, unlike waiting for a bus or taxi", Yolisa Kani said. However according to Victor Tharage, government is catching-up to all the various technology that keep on emerging in because technology waits for no one. "It is an absolute necessity. We are not going back, we have to move with the times and this has bought about speed in doing businesses but most importantly, there has to be sustainability," Tharage added.

Minister Xasa said that Africa needs to promote the branding of the continent "Brand Africa". Africa needs to be effectively promoted outside of the continent, as perception is still largely negative and uninformed, and such affects tourism flows, as was the case during the Ebola outbreak. "It is important that tourism should be placed as a tool for inclusive and sustainable economic growth as well as a sustainable consumption and production. It is also critical that the policies in African Union space should make emphasis on sustainable use of resources and that the tourism sector should develop policies to be reflected within the African Union Agenda 2063," she added.

"If we work together in the continent as the tourism fraternity, it will improve and strengthen the important decisions made at the

United Nations World Tourism Organization General Assemblies. Executive Council level by Tourism Ministers will also find policy expression at the continental level. Thus, the sector is likely to grow if it is effectively channeled into the African Union Agenda 2063," Xasa said further.

The Indaba provides Africa with interaction and looking at strategic synergistic opportunities on how we can grow this sector and address the challenges - in the continent and beyond. "I look forward to engaging with my counterparts in the various departments, focusing on the tourism value chain, and how we can collaborate to create employment opportunities for women and youth, in particular, reduce poverty and inequality," concluded Xasa.



Minister of Tourism Ms Tokozile Xasa together with the Tourism role players during Indaba 2017



Director-General for Department of Tourism, Victor Tharage, during the panel discussion with sectoral stakeholders

Deputy Minister congratulates Tourism Buddies Graduates in the Free State

- by Charles Mnisi



Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms Elizabeth Thabethe, addresses the graduates at the ceremony

The Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms Elizabeth Thabethe was in the Free State to recognise and congratulate Tourism Buddies at a graduation ceremony held in Motse Thabong, Welkom on 6 June 2017.

The Tourism Buddies Programme is a Hospitality Training Programme targeting the unemployed youth of South Africa as part of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) of the Department of Tourism.

Over 80 trainees were awarded certificates after completing a 12 month learnership programme. Learners applied to be considered for either a National Certificate on Food and Beverages, which carries an NQF level 4, or a National Certificate on Accommodation Services of NQF level 2 - all fully accredited by the Culture, Art Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA).

The department is committed to addressing youth unemployment through the Working for Tourism programme which is intended to create over 3000 full time equivalent jobs in both infrastructure and skills development programmes in this financial year.

Key objectives of the training programme include the training of unemployed youth in order to enable them to acquire necessary skills in the area of hospitality, assisting the youth to gain work experience to enhance employability in the hospitality and tourism sector as well as contributing towards decreasing the unemployment rate in the country.

"As you celebrate your achievement, you must prepare and brace yourselves for future challenges. Tourism has opened the door for you to new opportunities. Well done and congratulations," concluded the Deputy Minister.

The three phase programme was preceded by a stakeholder engagement in which the Deputy Minister interacted with tourism stakeholders in the province. During this session, Deputy Minister Thabethe also recognised host employers by awarding them with certificates. These host employers were responsible for providing the learners with a platform for their practicals as part of their training.

Speaking on behalf of the host employer, Mr Thulani Mdlalose representing the South African National Parks, emphasised the importance of giving young people an opportunity to develop skills that help to contribute to the GDP of the country.

In his address, Executive Mayor of Lejweleputswa Municipality, Councillor Sebenzile Ngangelizwe, acknowledged the efforts of the Department of Tourism to assist the Free State Province with empowering the youth in the Free State province with skills in the hospitality industry in order to curb the scourge of unemployment. "To the beneficiaries of this programme, you have to ensure that you make us proud because the industry is yours. As a country we have developed values to make sure that the integrity of the country is polished. As you serve people visiting our country, it is important to display values such as respect," said the Executive Mayor.

The last leg of the programme was an imbizo, where an engagement with the community of Welkom took place. The objectives of the Imbizo were to promote initiatives of the Department as well as mobilise and strengthen partnerships with stakeholders and communities so that the implementation of the National Development Plan, including the Nine Point Plan to grow South Africa, becomes a national effort aimed at promoting inclusive growth.



Deputy Minister of Tourism, with the graduates

Business travel on the rise

-Article prepared by Flow Communications on behalf of Flight Centre Travel Group

Statistics from Flight Centre Business Travel (FCBT), the corporate travel division of Flight Centre Travel Group which caters to SMMEs, show that South African cities occupy six of the top 10 business destinations for South Africans in 2017.

Johannesburg is the top destination for South African business travellers, with one in five travelling to South Africa's economic capital.

Cape Town is the second most popular business destination with 15% of business travellers flying to the Mother City, with just over one in 10 travelling to Durban. Port Elizabeth comes in a steady fourth. Together these four destinations account for almost half of all SA's business travellers.

According to FCBT's statistics, London is the top international business destination for South Africans.

Windhoek, Algiers and Nairobi round out the top 10 cities that SMME businesses are travelling to. The statistics also show that business traffic to Johannesburg (through OR Tambo and Lanseria) grew by 27% over the past year. But the surprise was Durban, which increased by a whopping 37% year-on-year.

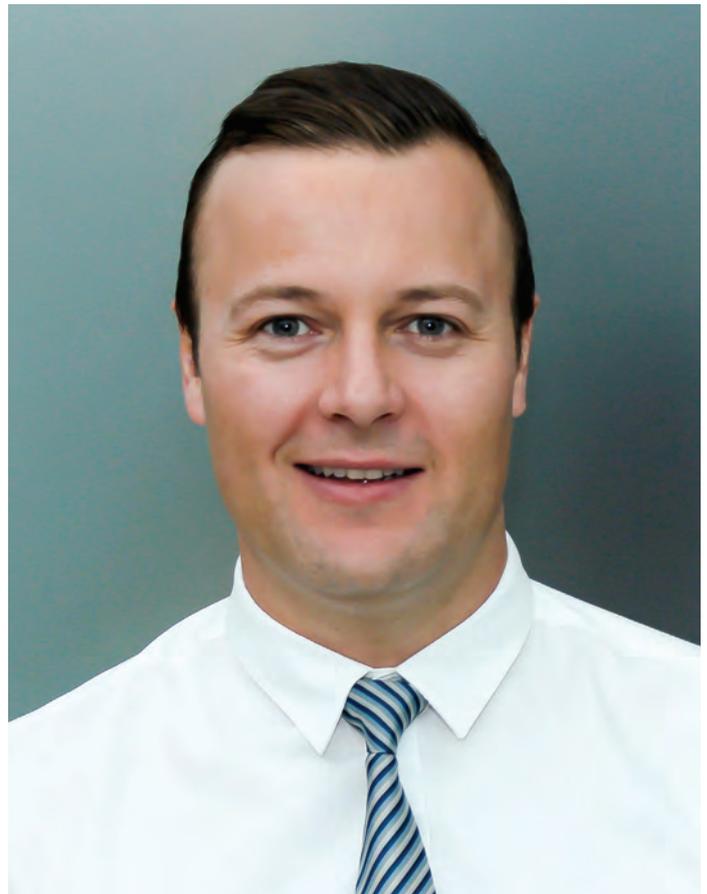
FCBT have identified other fast-growing business hubs: Polokwane, where arrivals grew 134%; Umtata which saw business traffic rise by 69%; and Nelspruit and Hoedspruit, which both registered increases of 39%.

Ryan Potgieter, General Manager of FCBT, said, "While the top cities are not a surprise as most people who travel for business do so locally, what is interesting is the increase in South Africans travelling for business locally and into Africa."

Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa recorded the biggest increase in traffic with a 142% increase in business travellers. And this trend is on the rise for Zimbabwe and Zambia. Victoria Falls saw SA business traveller arrivals increase 131% while Livingstone, just across the border in Zambia, registered an increase of 122%.

"Many experts argue that rather than cut business travel in these tough economic times, companies should be investing more in business travel to source more business. Our data shows that companies are doing just that," added Potgieter.

FLIGHT CENTRE
TRAVEL GROUP



Flight Centre Travel Group Managing Director Andrew Stark

For more information, contact Michelle Jolley at michelle.jolley@flightcentre.co.za, on 011 778 8903 on 083 552 4754.

Flight Centre Business Travel (FCBT) is a division of the Flight Centre Travel Group, dedicated to saving SMMEs across Southern Africa time and money.

Flight Centre Business Travel has the benefit of being part of the world's third-largest travel retailer, leveraging its global negotiating strength. It has access to over 100 of the world's leading airlines and deals with more than 100 000 hotels around the world to guarantee savings for clients.

Flight Centre Business Travel customers benefit from dedicated travel management, free after-hours assistance, a choice of payment options and guaranteed cost savings.





Bilateral bears fruits in strengthening relations

- by Charles Mnisi

The high level bilateral meeting between Minister Tokozile Xasa and Mr Wang Xiaofeng, Vice minister of the Chinese National Tourism Administration (CNTA) took place on 24 April 2017 at Premier Hotel, Pretoria. The purpose of this meeting was to strengthen the bilateral relations between South Africa and China in the area of tourism as China is one of the strategic and fastest growing source market for South Africa.

The Minister highlighted the importance of the bilateral co-operation agreement in the field of tourism between the two countries signed in 2013. The areas of co-operation identified in the agreement includes: information sharing, tourism investment, marketing and promotion, skills development and training, and tourism safety and service standards.

The South African government hold tourism in high regard as an important sector of its economy and believes the tourism agreement with China will boost international tourism and much needed economic growth in South Africa. China remained the leading growth market, with year-on-year growth recorded at 38% in 2016.

Over 10 million international tourist arrivals were recorded in South Africa in 2016, according to the latest South African statistical release, representing an additional 1.1 million international tourists. As indicated above, the Chinese inbound tourism arrivals in South Africa contributed a lot to this figure as it surpassed all countries in 2016, "we look forward to more of Chinese visitors coming to South Africa in the coming years," said the Minister.

She also revealed that the growth in tourist arrivals from China has been consistent last year, following improvements in the visa application processes. "We can build on this and attract even more tourists from your country in the future. In this regard, South Africa will intensify its promotional activities through the South African Tourism offices in Beijing and Hong Kong to promote South Africa as a top destination of choice," she added.

Last year the Department of Home Affairs opened five additional visa facilitation centres in China. This brings the total number of visa facilitation centres in China to nine. These new visa application centres will help South Africa to cater to the growing demand while making application processes easier for Chinese tourists. This shows that South Africa attaches the greatest importance to China as an important source market.

Minister Xasa expressed South Africa's gratitude to the Chinese Culture and International Education Exchange Centre and Yangzhou University for the opportunity provided to 20 South African tour guides and frontline staff in tourism establishments to learn Mandarin and Chinese culture. South Africa recognises the importance of teaching Mandarin and Chinese culture to South African tourism practitioners as a vehicle to improve the country's competitiveness as a destination of choice in China.

Officials of the Department of Tourism will work with officials of the CNTA to develop an Implementation Plan which will be used in the execution of other areas of collaboration identified in the signed bilateral agreement in the field of tourism. The Minister presented to the Vice Minister a proposal to train South African tourism practitioners in line with the agreed bilateral agreement on Skills Development and Training. She also proposed to the Vice Minister of China to extend an invitation to South Africa to undertake a visit to China in 2018 and to sign the Implementation Plan that will be developed by the officials of the Department and CNTA. She also extended her gratitude for the cordial relations between the Department and CNTA and to call for the growth of the partnership between the two parties for mutual benefits.

In conclusion, the Minister wished the Vice Minister and the entire Chinese delegation to further enjoy the hospitality and warmth of the South African people and the scenic beauty and the tourism attractions.

Constitution Hill just made navigating South Africa's history a lot easier

CONSTITUTION HILL

- by Flow Communications

Constitution Hill, one of South Africa's most important heritage sites, has become even more accessible, with the launch of an innovative app called the Constitution Hill Guide that allows visitors to tour its sprawling precinct with a virtual guide.

The bluetooth-enabled app, the first of its kind to be deployed at a tourism and heritage site in South Africa, was developed for Constitution Hill by Flow Communications. The app, available on iOS and Google App stores, allows visitors to take a tour of the precinct outside of normal tour hours and also provides augmented information about spaces at the living museum, which is right next to the Constitutional Court.

The app is also conveniently accessible offsite, allowing for potential visitors to familiarise themselves and navigate the precinct prior to their visit. The app also includes a prompt upon opening that allows new visitors to get directions to the precinct.

Constitution Hill Development Agency Chief Executive Officer, Dawn Robertson said, it is exciting to be able to officially launch the app during the Basha Uhuru Freedom Fest, with the precinct currently thumping with energy with a range of concerts, film festivals, bicycle tours and dialogues.

"The timing couldn't be better and we are delighted with the innovation that we have, together with our partners at Flow Communications, been able to bring to this most important site in South Africa," Robertson says.

"We really needed something like this app because our precinct covers 27 acres, which can make it difficult to navigate. We needed to be able to expand the narrative of the history into new places and into different spaces," says Robertson.

Flow has been a long-time partner of Constitution Hill, developing communications and innovative digital solutions with the museum for the past couple of years.

Flow Chief Executive Officer, Ms Tara Turkington, said that the project was an exciting challenge for the company's content, design, and web and app development teams.

"This is just a fantastic project and our digital team did amazing work, work that we are all proud of. This is new, cutting-edge technology being applied in a really smart way," she said.

To solve some of the challenges presented by the project, Flow had to look beyond South Africa to find some of the technology required for the app to work. This included the specially imported bluetooth-enabled beacons which together with the user's device GPS can tell a visitor's smartphone exactly where he or she is in the complex, so that the app can act as a virtual guide.

Robertson added that the Constitution Hill is "an important place of memory, and we should not forget that it is also a place about South Africa's future".

"The Constitution is approaching its 21st year and, as it comes of age, it also plays a more central role every day in the lives of the millions of South Africans whose freedoms it protects. More than ever we rely on our Constitution to protect our future, and that is what attracts so many millennials and young people here. This is a place of past history, but it is also a place of history making."

"Being part of a project that touches so much history and that will enhance the experience for so many visitors is something Flow is proud to be a part of.

Our motto at Flow is to do work we love, for clients we love. This inspires us to be part of these types of projects, where we are able to push innovation into new spaces and provide new experiences for people," Turkington says.

Robertson said, "Flow has been a fantastic, committed partner in this project. We have worked really well together, and we have achieved so much."

Note:

Constitution Hill is a living heritage precinct that tells the story of South Africa's journey to democracy. The site is a former prison and military fort that bears testament to South Africa's turbulent past and, today, is home to the country's Constitutional Court, which endorses the rights of all citizens.

The site is also where many of South Africa's great historical figures were imprisoned over time, including Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, Joe Slovo, Albertina Sisulu, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Fatima Meer and others. But the precinct also confined tens of thousands of ordinary people during its 100-year history: men and women of all races, creeds, ages and political agendas; children too; the everyman and the elite.

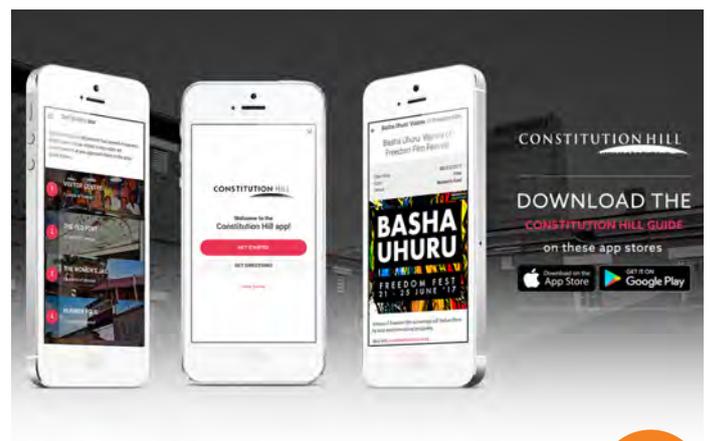
In this way, the history of every South African lives there.

Flow Communications has won multiple awards for its digital work, including several New Generation awards for app development. In 2015, Flow won two app awards for the acclaimed Madiba's Journey tourism app, and in 2016, gold for the best app developed by an agency for the City Sightseeing bus company.

To download the App see the links below:

iOS link: <https://itunes.apple.com/za/app/constitution-hill-guide/id1182813697?mt=8>

Google Play Store link: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.conhill.app571045&hl=en>



Minister of Tourism hosts Ambassadors working dinner

- by Annah Mashile

Minister of Tourism, Ms Tokozile Xasa hosted the Ambassadors Working Dinner in honour of Zimbabwean Minister of Tourism and Hospitality Industry, Dr Walter Mzembi. The event took place in April 2017 at Sheraton hotel, Pretoria.

Minister Mzembi is AU-endorsed candidate for the post of Secretary General of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), He is currently on a campaign trail with a strategy of visiting each of the 33 member countries of the Executive Council to explain in person his vision for the future development of global tourism.

"I am an African, I carry the unanimous endorsement of all 15 SADC member states as well as that of 54 member state of the African Union. So, in seeking leadership of the UNWTO I bear first and foremost the hopes and aspirations of the entire African continent: a burden I am proud and very honoured to bear," said Mzembi.

He oversaw the successful hosting of the 20th session of the UNWTO General Assembly co-hosted in Victoria Falls in 2013 by Zimbabwe and Zambia. He is a recipient of many awards and titles including President of the New York Based Africa Travel Association (ATA) and International Board Member of the Institute of Cultural Diplomacy (ICD), also voted as best Minister in 2013 by his own country.

He further said, "Zimbabwe was once a 'to be avoided' destination. It is now a very much 'must see' destination as confirmed by the 2015 New York Times in its 52 must visit report".

Minister of Tourism, Ms Tokozile Xasa, used the opportunity to introduce the 2017 Tourism Indaba, hosted in Durban from 16

to 18 May. The objectives of the Tourism Indaba are to create a platform for African tourism products for market access and market growth. It is also to leverage existing relationships with key local and international stakeholders. Exhibitors are at the core of Indaba's success and it aims to facilitate exhibitors' growth to sustain tourism in Africa. In essence, Indaba will lead in the African competitive travel trade show space.

Minister Xasa said that in celebrating Africa month, it is also imperative to build on a united Africa. The AU Agenda 2063 is a roadmap for continental development. To build a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth. It espouses an integrated continent, politically united, and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance.

"Tourism in Africa is seen largely as a leisure activity rather than an economic industry, therefore, is often placed at the bottom of the priority lists within African countries' national budgets," said Xasa.

The continent needs to realise that tourism for Africa is closely linked to biodiversity and aviation, and therefore there is a need to invest in these sectors in order to preserve and grow Africa's tourism and improve its market share currently at +/-5%, especially by controlling poaching, developing aviation infrastructure and having less restrictive visa regimes.

She emphasised that it is important that tourism be placed as a tool for inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production.

Minister Xasa congratulated Minister Mzembi for his nomination for the post of Secretary General of the UNWTO and also invited him to the Tourism Indaba.



Minister of Tourism, Ms Tokozile Xasa together with Minister of Tourism & Hospitality Industry from Zimbabwe, Dr Walter Mzembi

The youth must grab opportunities and make them count

- by Phatisa Ntlonze



Some of the young people who attended the Youth Imbizo in Potchefstroom

More than five hundred (500) youth from the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District gathered at the Ikageng stadium in Potchefstroom to participate in an Imbizo hosted by the Department of Tourism, North West Department of Tourism and the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA).

Themed 'Youth in Tourism', the Imbizo provided a platform for the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms Elizabeth Thabethe; Deputy Minister in the Presidency, Mr Buti Manamela; North West Tourism MEC, Ms Desbo Mohono, and representatives from the NYDA - to interact with the youth and the greater community on how they could empower themselves through the opportunities in the sector.

According to the 2016 Stats SA quarterly labour force survey released in 1 June 2017, unemployed youth (aged 15-34) account for 38,6% of the national overall unemployment rate. Despite these findings, Deputy Minister Elizabeth Thabethe is optimistic that tourism has the potential to create opportunities that will contribute to alleviating youth unemployment, poverty and inequality.

"Our government advocates for the advancement of youth economic empowerment. As a Department we have prioritised the advancement of youth in our plans for growing tourism. We will ensure that young people are actively participating and benefiting from the initiatives and opportunities provided by the sector," said Deputy Minister Thabethe.

More than 2 654 youth graduated from the skills development programmes run by the Department of Tourism in the 2016/17 financial year, of which 1 837 were women.

"The Department will be implementing its Hospitality Youth Training programme in this financial year. The programme will provide an opportunity for 200 unemployed youth from the North West province to participate in this programme. This is just one of the many opportunities that the youth can participate in, and I encourage you all to look out for such opportunities to empower yourselves," added Thabethe.

During the Imbizo, the community noted the need for government to ensure effective information flow so that youth are better able to access opportunities provided by government entities.

In her response, North West Department of Tourism MEC Ms Desbo Mohono acknowledged that government would work with communities to improve information flow. She also added that her Department had also hosted a Tourism Career Expo on the 13th June to share information with the youth information about employment and skill training opportunities that exist in the industry. "We will host similar information sharing events in the future to ensure that we disseminate information to the right people at the right time," said Mohono.

Deputy Minister in the Presidency, Mr Buti Manamela encouraged the youth to start thinking broadly, and look into opportunities that promote entrepreneurship.

"Government can only do so much, and young people need to pro-actively seize opportunities and make them work. You need to start businesses where you can employ each other, and build your communities. Organisations such as the NYDA can assist with funding and business proposals," said Manamela.



Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms Elizabeth Thabethe with the delegates at the Youth Imbizo in Potchefstroom

Visa openness an important key to unlocking economic growth



- by Otto de Vries: CEO ASATA



Otto de Vries CEO ASATA

When business travellers can move more easily across the continent, they bring higher levels of investment, fresh skills and expand the range of goods and services on offer. Free movement of people drives integration and investment.

Despite this proven fact, visa openness on the continent continues to restrict mobility, and South Africa's visa policies are among the most restrictive on the continent, according to the African Development Bank Group's Visa Openness Report.

Out of 54 African states, South Africa scores 35th in terms of its visa openness, with tourism-focused countries like Seychelles, Mauritius and even Mozambique leading the way in introducing more liberal visa policies to drive tourism growth.

This could change, however, with the Department of Home Affairs' announcement this year that it would scrap visas for other Africans travelling to South Africa – in particular, "trusted travellers" like diplomats, officials, academics, business people and students.

According to Home Affairs, the average African needs a visa to travel to 55% of African countries. Only 25% of the rest allow for a visa on arrival and 20% of countries allow Africans to travel without a visa.

The global picture is even more liberal. According to UNWTO's latest Visa Openness Report, the share of tourists that require a visa prior to travelling continues to decline and is at its lowest level ever.

In 2015, 39% of the world population could travel for tourism without obtaining a traditional visa prior to departure as compared to only 23% in 2008. On average, 18% of the world's population could travel to a destination without a visa in 2015, while another 15% could receive a visa on arrival and 6% was able to obtain eVisas.

Over the last year, the visa openness debate has been given more prominence in Africa, with over a third of African countries having more liberal visa policies than in 2015 and four countries moving up into the top 20 most visa-open countries.

The African Union, says Thomas Kwesi Quartey, its Deputy Chairperson, has agreed for Member States to grant a 30-day visa-on-arrival to all African passport holders. "This is being implemented by leading reformers such as Ghana, who this year have joined Rwanda, Mauritius and Seychelles to implement this system."

The organisation has also launched its first African Passport which could be rolled out for all African citizens in the future. The visa-free passport has the lofty aims of uniting the continent, facilitating free movement of people and promoting open visa policies and procedures for African travellers.

As the Association of Southern African Travel Agents (ASATA), we believe in and support greater freedom of movement throughout Africa. This is essential if we are going to integrate Africa, create jobs and achieve greater economic growth.

We need to remove as many of the challenges and procedures facing people when they travel for business, and the actions taken by African states to promote visa openness should be rewarded not only with reciprocity, but as UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai states, "unilateral measures" that focus on visa openness and regional integration.

With that in mind, ASATA is encouraged by Home Affairs' standpoint that South Africa needs to adopt a more open approach to its visa regime and support a vision of Africa where "citizens can move more freely across national borders", intra-Africa trade is "encouraged" and there is "greater integration and development of the African continent".

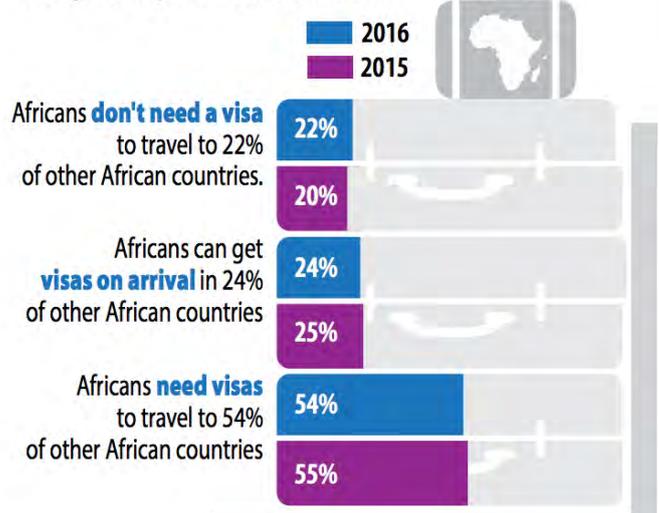
Corporate travel from South Africa into Africa continues to grow exponentially, as the country has emerged as a platform for investment into Africa. South African companies are also increasingly expanding their businesses into Africa and other countries, and this of course means a greater need for South African business travellers to travel across the continent.

At a time when commodity prices have fallen and international tourism arrivals in Africa are declining, South Africa and its African counterparts should embrace visa openness and facilitate visa procedures, cutting the time, document and costs involved, and making air travel cheaper and more accessible.

More open visa policies are one of the keys to re-energising the tourism and travel sectors, promoting business travel and trade, and fostering regional economic growth.

Average Visa Openness in Africa

Average visa openness, %, 2015-2016



Source: African Visa Openness Report 2017

Department of Tourism hosts Tshwane learners at the Career Expo in Sandton

- by Thapelo Mohale

The Department of Tourism took part in the “Take a Girl Child to Work Day” campaign by hosting 28 learners who are under the care of Tshwane Child Welfare at a Careers Expo in Sandton.

The theme for this year’s campaign was ‘Dream, Believe and Achieve’.

The “Take a Girl Child to Work” campaign is a Cell C initiative that was launched in 2003. The collaboration between Cell C and the Department of Women seeks to advance the empowerment of a girl-child. The campaign is in line with the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals to promote gender equality and empowerment of women.

The department partnered with the Hilton Hotel’s Annual Career Expo to showcase tourism and hospitality careers and opportunities. This initiative gives girl learners an opportunity to experience the corporate world of work at first hand, with the hope that this will inspire them to make informed decisions on their future career choices. It also aims to remind girl learners that they have the power to make their dreams come true by believing in themselves.

In his welcoming address, Hilton Hotel General Manager, Mr Gert Venter said that the aim of the expo is to equip young people with information about the industry and also showcase available opportunities.

“We have a mandate to create employment for young people and women with the right attitude to ensure a successful career in the tourism industry,” he said.

The Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms Elizabeth Thabethe, welcomed the department’s partnership with Hilton Hotel to expose young people to the hospitality industry.

“There are different roles which ensure that the tourism sector is alive, and having a positive attitude is one of the attributes young people should aim for to ensure a great career in the sector,” the Deputy Minister said.

Deputy Minister Thabethe spoke to the youth about the importance of believing in themselves, explaining that the most important contribution they can make to building a healthy society is to build positive values.

“If you continue to take good care of yourselves and work hard at school, then the future of the hospitality sector is in good hands,” she said.

The Deputy Minister introduced two learners who shadowed her for the day. The chosen learners had an opportunity to attend meetings with senior officials in the department, amongst other things.

The excited learners took a tour through the exhibition stalls where they met officials from the department’s training programmes. They received information on a range of training programmes such as the Hospitality Youth Initiative, the Chefs Training Programme, Food Safety Quality Assurers, Wine Service Training (Sommelier) and tourist guiding. They learnt that the department’s training programmes are aimed at giving learners industry accredited qualifications which expose them to the work environment, and prepare them for a career in tourism.

The day ended with a panel discussion in which the learners gave an assessment of the day, and asked pertinent questions relating to career choices and challenges at the workplace. Learners said that they benefited greatly from the day and received information that will be valuable when it comes to choosing careers and subjects for their studies.



Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms Elizabeth Thabethe together with Hilton Hotel General Manager, Mr Gert Venter.

Mpumalanga presents a tourism co-operation agreement with the Russian federation



- by Kholofelo Nkambule

The MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Mr Sikhumbuzo Kholwane announced the co-operation agreement signed between Mpumalanga Province and the Ural Association of Tourism in the Sverdlovsk region of Russia. The announcement was made at the Tourism Indaba, held in Durban recently.

The co-operation agreement seeks to strengthen relations between the two provinces and further promote tourism attraction in each other's region. MEC Kholwane made the announcement at the presence of the media, tour operators from the Russian Federation as well as those from Mozambique and Swaziland.

"The Mpumalanga Provincial Government has decided to prioritise tourism development and promotion by exploring opportunities for collaboration and partnerships. We are therefore excited to have partnered with the Ural Association of Tourism in the Sverdlovsk Region with the aim of exploring opportunities that will assist in positioning Mpumalanga as a preferred tourism destination. The co-operation seeks to leverage on growing the number of tourists coming into South Africa", said Mr Sikhumbuzo Kholwane.

The scope of the agreement will focus on:

- Interaction between tourism and tour operators, tour related organisation and associations as well as the youth operating in the tourism sector;
- Exchange of tourism delegations to promote each other's regions;

- Exchange of tourism research and statistics on product development; and
- Study visits of researchers and experts in the tourism and hospitality sector.

This agreement will further focus on exchange programmes, joint marketing initiatives, investment and environmental issues.

"As part of showcasing some of the tourism offerings and the Triland route, the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA) will be hosting the tour operators from the Russian Federation on a 9 days familiarisation tour of Mpumalanga, Swaziland and Mozambique. This will afford them an opportunity to learn more about the diverse tourism offerings," said Mr Thulani Nzima, Chairperson of the MTPA Board.

The agreement will be in force for a period of five years with an option for renewal by both parties. A joint commission will be established to discuss issues that might arise from the implementation of the agreement.

"We are delighted that we are already implementing some of the areas highlighted in the co-operation agreement through participation at this year's Tourism Indaba. Indaba is one of the essential marketing platforms we use in promoting and positioning destination Mpumalanga," concluded Nzima.



Mr Thulani Nzima, MTPA Chairperson, Mr Sikhumbuzo Kholwane, MEC for Finance Economic Development & Tourism and Mr Maltsev Mikhaili, Executive Director for Ural Tourism Association

Conservation, diversification and sustainability

Tourism is reliant on the environment in which it exists – it is dynamic and evolving, and, for that reason, requires that destination management organisations and tourism professionals are agile, able to anticipate changing needs and to adapt accordingly. From visitor expectations and travel trends to changes in the physical environment, we must be prepared

Water shortages and other geographical adaptations

2017 has been labelled the year of Sustainable Tourism – that in itself is a misnomer; sustainability must be our ever-present focus, a feature at the heart of everything we do. South Africa has noted with dismay the Cape's driest period in over a hundred years, a crisis that has seen the region declared a disaster area. Apart from the wider economic impact we have experienced (and, no doubt, will continue to do so as the price of local agricultural products rises), we have been approached from interested parties the world over and asked what the impact is on tourism. The answer? We are not certain. There has been no significant change in visitor numbers, both present or forecast, so the impact is one that affects various aspects related to tourism businesses.

Some hotels have closed their swimming pools, some have posted informational notices in rooms to notify guests. Landscapers have shifted to hardy indigenous plants rather than water-hungry lawns and exotics at B&Bs and guest houses. Many have implemented storage tanks to capture rain or sunk boreholes to tap into what is still a fairly bountiful supply underground. Everything from toilet flushing to shorter showers – the impact is there.

"We should have acted sooner", is the common regret being expressed, and put measures in place to ensure that we would not be caught off guard. It is too late to be rendered immobile by regrets, however, action, and swift action at that, is required. All means possible must be executed that allow us to conserve this precious resource.

Countrywide, many tourism destinations have such measures in place where water availability and rainfall are not predictable. Many parts of our country are desert and semi-desert, and that feature on its own is often a tourist attraction: the immensity of the Karoo, for example, attracts visitors who love the peace it offers. In a city destination, however, water shortages can generate problems.

This is a visible demonstration of the importance of sustainability in tourism.

Adaptation and diversification

We cannot just shrug it off. In order to offer the world-class experiences visitors expect we must adapt what we have on offer, diversify our products and services. There are many ways we can add value without compromising on sustainability. In fact, diversification is essential, even outside of a crisis situation – it keeps businesses ahead in a competitive environment by differentiating what they provide. If we cannot offer a crystal-clear swimming pool at a hotel or lodge, we can add some other innovative feature that fills the gap.

Visitors are surprisingly understanding. That the environment has changed and that it is not something we can be blamed for is clear, but we must still ensure that they return home fulfilled.



- by Enver Duminy, CEO Cape Town Tourism

The ongoing challenge

While we wrestle with this challenge in the Cape, I would like to challenge my colleagues in tourism to examine this concept of sustainability in depth. It is far more than water conservation, it involves the preservation of communities and cultures and places that reflect our heritage; the conservation of natural resources including our flora and fauna. The haunting knowledge that our fynbos environment experiences the fastest extinction rate on the planet should spur us to action in the same way that we are fighting to keep our majestic animal life going. Visitors are aware that rhinos and elephants are now rarities, but entire ecosystems require our due care and diligent efforts at maintaining them. We are the curators of the present environment for future generations of visitors.

Make no mistake, though, our tourism sector remains full of opportunity for the people of South Africa. We will not allow it to be squandered, we will continue to seek fresh approaches to entice visitors, making it easier for them to explore everything we have on offer. There is a responsibility to ensure that the economy continues to grow as a result of our efforts, that all South Africans can access employment opportunities and enjoy the benefits.

This is our future in tourism: words such as "conservation", "preservation" and "sustainability" are no longer abstract concepts to be argued about by academics. They are our reality, from positions of leadership down to grass roots, all must embrace the challenge of ensuring that what we have to offer grows in worth, and that what we do now will inspire future generations of tourism professionals and visitors to adopt the same approach, one that adapts according to demand.

Seychelles chefs placement farewell breakfast

- by Charles Mnisi



Minister of Tourism Ms Tokozile Xasa, applauding during the farewell breakfast

The Department of Tourism took the culinary arts profession to another level by bidding farewell to local chefs on their way to Seychelles. This took place during a farewell breakfast, held at Premier Hotel, Kempton Park in April 2017; where Minister Tokozile Xasa hosted 20 young South African chefs participating in the placement programme in Seychelles.

South Africa and Seychelles signed a Tourism Cooperation Agreement in August 2013. The relationship between the two countries has been progressive; with the display of support for strategic tourism events, hosted in each country, and a shared vision for regional tourism development and integration. This cooperation agreement has also facilitated institutional agreements between South African and Seychellois tourism institutions adding depth to this country-to-country commitment.

The tourism cooperation agreement emphasises focus on capacity building initiatives towards the development of the tourism sectors in both countries. In response to this, numerous engagements have taken place between South African and Seychellois tourism and hospitality institutions.

In pursuit of the above objective, the Department of Tourism facilitated and co-hosted a delegation from the Seychelles Tourism Board for a familiarisation trip to various South African tourism institutions in Pretoria, Johannesburg and Cape Town. Issues of mutual interest such as potential training and exchange programmes between South African and Seychellois tourism and hospitality institutions were discussed.

During their visit, the Seychelles delegation extended an invitation to South Africa to undertake a reciprocal visit; with a delegation consisting of all the institutions that graciously hosted them. This familiarisation trip was in line with the provisions of the signed tourism cooperation agreement; with an objective to expose South African institutions to the Seychelles tourism landscape and progress on initial discussions around institutional cooperation. Indeed, a South African delegation visited Seychelles and from that visit, additional areas of collaboration were identified.



Minister's farewell breakfast function

As a result of the familiarisation visits, an Institutional Cooperation Agreement was signed between Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and the Seychelles Tourism Academy (STA) on 14 September 2015. This agreement entails placement of young chefs in both countries and promoting the exchange of lecturers and learners.

It is for this reason that the department entered into a partnership with the South African Chefs Association (SACA) to establish the National Youth Chefs Training Programme (NYCTP) primarily to address the urgent need for cooks and chefs in South Africa's growing hospitality industry. This programme forms part of the National Government's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as an initiative to fund skills development projects to create employment.

The programme enlisted 800 students in all the nine provinces from 26 SACA-accredited schools providing a platform designed to provide learners with both theoretical and practical training, and in addition, the students – in the first, second and third year – gained valuable practical experience in restaurant, hotel and resort kitchens across the country.

As a return on investment and with the objective of job creation, the department chose to select graduate chefs from NYCTP. After a rigorous interview process, twenty chefs were selected to participate in a one-year placement programme at 9 hotels in Seychelles.

The following graduates have been given the opportunity to represent South Africa at various islands in the Seychelles:

- Melusi Daniel Nkabinde and Ntando Praise God Nombela – from KwaZulu-Natal.
- Tshepiso Tryphina Mosiane, Leepile Tshiamo Shebe and Thedea Evelyn Nomali Dlamini – from North- West.
- Zukile Randoyi and Zikhona Tela – from Eastern Cape
- Shanka Bronwyn McGuire – from Free State
- Katlego Cheslin Molefi – from Northern Cape
- Bathabile Shaun Kontyo – from Western Cape
- Fulufhedzani Dolly Khomola and Ntshengedzani Confidence Mudau – from Limpopo

- Khululeka Nosipho Buthelezi, Nompumelelo Topi Simelane, Funeka Nkwayana, Audrey Phindile Mathonsi, Bongani Lloyd Mahlangu, Bongani Floyed Mahlangu, Percy Nomlala and Phumzile Hleziphi Moyo – from Gauteng.

The candidates were given a royal send-off to Seychelles by Minister Tokozile Xasa and her Department of Tourism team, The South African Chefs Association's General Manager – Mr Thomas Overbeck, National Youth Chefs Training Programme Project Manager – Mr Hudson Masondo and his team, as well as Ms Murla Gabrielle from the Seychelles Tourism Academy, with her team.

The candidates have been placed on four (4) different Islands in Seychelles namely:

- Praslin Island
- Mahe Island
- Silhouette Island
- Ste Anne Island

The candidates will be performing their internships at nine different hotels and could be rotating throughout the year. The following hotels in Seychelles have been selected to participate in this initiative:

- Raffles Hotel – Praslin Island
- Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay – Mahe Island
- ISPC – Mahe Island
- Kempinski Hotel – Mahe Island
- Coral Strand Hotel – Mahe Island
- Hilton Larbiz – Mahe Island
- Hilton Double Tree – Mahe Island
- Silhouette Island – Hilton Larbiz
- Ste Anne Island – Ste Anne Beach Comber

All the Hotels will be catering for the candidates while they are in Seychelles and will be paying all graduates a standard salary.



Local musicians came to the party in Pniel on the Dwars River Escape Route for the EU and NDT's visit

Department of Tourism visits EU-funded community tourism development programme

– by Claire Allison, Marketing Manager for Open Africa

Members of the Department of Tourism recently paid a visit to the Dwars River Escape Route in the Cape Winelands, to see a European Union-funded Sustainable Enterprise Development Programme. The department was joined by the Head of the EU Delegation to South Africa, Ambassador Marcus Cornaro, to find out more about the community tourism project that is being implemented in the picturesque Dwars River valley between Stellenbosch and Franschhoek.

The Dwars River Escape Route, located in the Cape Winelands District Municipality, is one of eight tourism routes supported through a European Union Grant with co-funding by Barclays Africa and the Finnish Embassy's Local Corporation Fund. The objective of the project is to assist local tourism routes to become more sustainable and help communities unlock the tourism opportunities in their vicinity. The enterprise development component of the project is also implemented by Open Africa with support from Fetola, a local enterprise development specialist. The project is developing skills and creating jobs in the rural tourism sector through capacity building, youth development and market access for emerging tourism entrepreneurs.

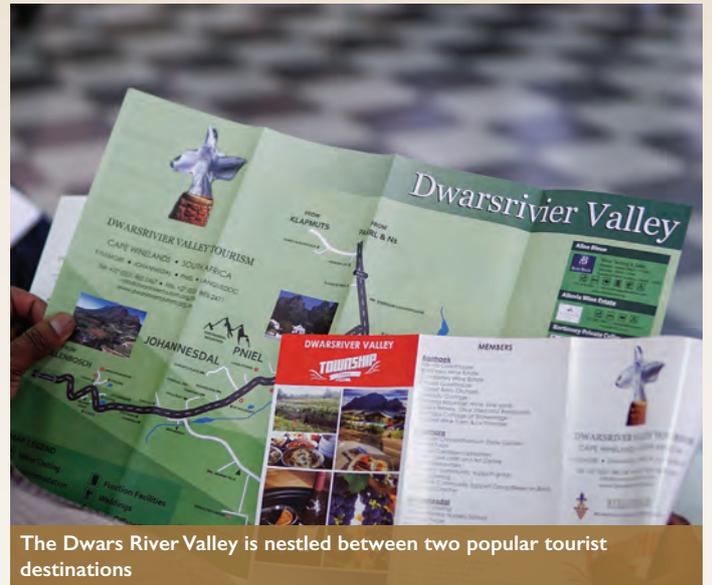
The group conducted a site visit of Pniel, Lanquedoc and Kylemore to learn more about the route's 2020 vision that includes an exciting Street Art project. The street art project will be funded through an innovative challenge fund facility that encourages routes to come up with business ideas that can contribute to their financial sustainability while enhancing the appeal of the destination. Local guides will also be trained to take visitors on a heritage tour of these towns, using street art to visualise the rich culture and heritage of the towns and its people. The site visit ended with a traditional meal and wine pairing at Sienna Charles's Beker en Bord Tea Garden in Kylemore, where local wines from the valley were paired with local delicacies such as green bean stew.

The department thanked the EU for the funding that made this development possible and the valuable contribution it is making to tourism both in the region as well as throughout South Africa. Routes such as the Dwars River Escape Route are fantastic for local communities because they provide them with a wide range of avenues to become involved in tourism and to gain the economic benefits.



Open Africa MD Francois Viljoen discusses the EU funded Sustainable Tourism Enterprise Programme in Pniel

The local people of the valley are a central part of any experience on the route and their rich history is portrayed in a number of historic buildings and churches. The valley is at the centre of the winelands and the project is re-positioning the Dwars River as a must-stop destination for locals and international visitors alike. Apart from being extraordinarily scenic, the mountains in the region also offer great opportunities for hiking and mountain biking.



The Dwars River Valley is nestled between two popular tourist destinations

EU Ambassador, Mr Marcus Cornaro said, "I am very pleased to interact with the department around the challenge to link sustainable tourism with sustainable local job creation. The Open Africa project has clearly identified a range of promising avenues, bringing together a good blend of business initiatives. Coupled with the beautiful landscape and the hospitality of the local community, all elements for success are there. The EU is proud to partner with Open Africa and the entrepreneurs of the Dwars River Route in this initiative."

Media and local businesses enjoyed walking around Pniel and exploring the historic sites





Physical address

17 Trevenna Street
Tourism House
Sunnyside
Pretoria, 0002

Postal address

Private Bag X424
Pretoria, 0001

Contact information

Call centre: +27 (0) 860 121 929
Call centre e-mail: callcentre@tourism.gov.za
Switchboard number: +27 (0) 12 444 6000
Switchboard fax: +27 (0) 12 444 7000

www.tourism.gov.za



@Tourism_gov_za



Department of Tourism