

Bojanala

Collectively and Broadly Promoting Responsible and Sustainable Tourism for Benefit of All

EDITION

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Welcome to
INDABA
Africa's Top Travel Show

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tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Cover photograph by
Indaba Daily News

Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom outside Durban's Inkosi Albert International Convention Centre where Indaba 2015 was held from 9-11 May. Minister Hanekom experienced his first tourism Indaba this year. Hanekom said, “I look forward to meeting with exhibitors, hearing about their plans, their challenges and successes.

Indaba, now hailed as the biggest Pan-African exhibition on the continent has been staged in Durban for more than two decades. Durban has once again been confirmed as the host city for Indaba 2016.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Welcome to yet another edition of Bojanala.

In this edition we focus on South Africa's competitiveness as a tourism destination in sub-Saharan Africa.

South Africa has topped the rankings of the world's most tourist-friendly countries in sub-Saharan Africa. South Africa is ranked 48 out of 141 countries on the World Economic Forum's (WEF's) Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) 2015 released in Geneva, Switzerland, on 6 May.

We draw attention to the 2nd *Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Tourism Experts Meeting*, which took place in Durban on 9 May 2015. Of the 20 member states that participated at the meeting were South Africa; Australia; Seychelles; Malaysia; Mauritius; Mozambique; Kenya; Indonesia; India and one dialogue partner, that is, China.

We turn our focus to a success story emerging from the Kalahari of Barbara Raats who developed an idea to build grass huts (similar to those of the San traditional homes) and offer homestays to tourists. Her idea received a boost when Open Africa launched a programme along the Kalahari Red Dune Route in 2013. Open Africa is a non-profit organisation working in rural economic development using tourism as a platform. Open Africa creates self-drive tourism routes

that promote authentic experiences while developing rural economies. It helps rural people see what is unique and valuable about what they have and encourages them to work together to grow their livelihoods as a community.

An initiative by the Department of Tourism – **Social Tourism** – is aimed at addressing the gaps identified in the Domestic Tourism Growth Strategy, which are seasonality, uneven geographic spread and inculcating the culture of travel amongst South Africans. The targeted groups for social tourism are the youth, elderly people, and people living with disabilities, people with modest income and stokvels/ societies. Stokvels/ societies were targeted because there are huge amounts of money involved in stokvels/ societies however, most of the money is used for consumables and rarely used for travel purposes. We focus on this initiative.

We focus on responsible, sustainable and "thrivable" tourism development geared not only towards an ethical and environmentally-friendly synergy, but also towards a truly comfortable and memorable experience in our article on the Verde Hotels.

We focus on responsible, sustainable and "thrivable" tourism development...

Indaba 2015 took place at Durban's Inkosi Albert International Convention Centre in KwaZulu-Natal from 9-11 May. The theme for Indaba 2015 was 'Driving Africa forward'. According to Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom, this year the theme recognised the vital importance of the tourism industry and of exhibitors on the trade show floor in helping to drive the continent forward.

We also turn our attention on **two Social Responsibility Implementation (SRI)** projects that were launched recently namely, Stony Point Eco-Centre in the Western Cape and Ndlambe in the Eastern Cape.

We also turn our attention to the department's participation in the spectacular Square Kilometre Array project, popularly known as the SKA. The department is engaged in establishing partnerships with the SKA Project on to support tourism product development along the Karoo Hoogland and investigating the potential growth of Astro Tourism in the respective areas, Sutherland to Carnarvon; and proposal for the establishment of the SKA Science Visitor Centre (Interpretive Centre).

Happy reading until the next time!

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The SKA Project: Taking tourism to the people and unlocking opportunities

By Laetitia van Wyk



Newly launched Dr. Bernie Fanaroff dish

Nestled in the arid landscape and deep rural Karoo node of the Northern Cape Province is the spectacular Square Kilometre Array Project, popularly known as the SKA. This rare scientifically constructed gem does not only attest to the advancement of cutting-edge astronomical science but it epitomise the inherent innovations in Astro Tourism that define South Africa a global competitive destination.

Recently in February 2015, the Department of Tourism was invited by the National Department of Science and Technology (DST) on an SKA core site visit with the Deputy President, Cyril Ramaphosa. The site visit presented yet another opportunity to ordinary South Africans to experience this iconic flagship radio astronomy telescope initiative, which is positioning South Africa as a high technological investment destination.

The Department of Tourism established partnerships with the SKA Project on the following areas:

- Tourism industry presentation along with the Northern Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT) on the SKA/ MeerKAT Steering Committee;
- To support tourism product development along the Karoo Hoogland and investigating the potential growth of Astro Tourism in the respective areas, Sutherland to Carnarvon; and
- Proposal for the establishment of the SKA Science Visitor Centre (Interpretive Centre).

The South African Government has adopted a National Infrastructure Plan in 2012 that intends to transform our economic landscape while simultaneously creating a significant number of new jobs, and to strengthen basic service delivery. Eighteen Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs) have been adopted and approved to support economic development and address service delivery in the poorest provinces. The SKA and MeerKAT is one of the 18 SIPs.

The core of the telescope is in the Karoo, in close proximity to the rural town of Carnarvon where the National Research Foundation (NRF) and the Department of Science and Technology has established a green field site for the telescope, which is now fully functional with roads, power lines and specially constructed buildings and accommodation.

The precursor of the SKA project, namely the MeerKAT, is named after the MeerKAT which is a type of mongoose commonly found in the Karoo. The Karoo Array Telescope or "MeerKAT" as it is affectionately known is a pathfinder for the SKA telescope project. Based on the latest specification, when completed, MeerKAT will feature 64 dishes

each measuring 13.5 metres in diameter and is expected to be completed at the end of 2016. It is important to note that until the SKA in 2024 becomes operational, the MeerKAT will be the most powerful telescope in the world. The SKA will operate for 50 years and will make South Africa a world-centre for astronomy.

KAT-7, is the seven-dish Karoo Array Telescope, which was originally built as a precursor to the 64-dish MeerKAT radio telescope and to demonstrate that South Africa has the ability to host the SKA. In its own right, it has proved to be a pioneer scientific instrument.

During the SKA site visit by Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, the Executive Mayor of Kareeberg Municipality, Councillor Nico Titus applauded that this Corbelled region is the heartland of sheep farming in the country. The region is grateful that world class science and technology is brought to the door step of their community. Hopefully this will address the issues of poverty, unemployment and the shortage of water and housing he said. Development should be sustainable to ensure that this project assists to create job



Deputy President and delegation at the SKA core site

Continued from page 2

opportunities and grow the local economy. Councillor Nico Titus further added that the SKA project is anticipated to contribute to education, skills development and positive change to the local community, youth and the country.

Northern Cape Premier, Ms Sylvia Lucas added that the SKA project is the most interesting and fulfilling mega-science project that the Province has ever partnered with. The infrastructure upgrade is anticipated and this means that accessibility to the SKA site will be so much easier.

Dr. Bernie Fanaroff, SKA project director indicated that the SKA Project consists of 11 countries partnering to build the world's largest telescope and telescopes will be set up in South Africa, Australia and eight other African countries. The SKA will enable us to see the universe before the first stars and galaxies were formed. It will enable us to observe 14 billion years back into the past and provide scientific data on how galaxies are formed and provide in-depth information about dark energy and dark matter. The MeerKAT project is a front-runner in growing a community of leading scientists and engineers from South Africa.

Socio-economic development around SKA is firstly the improved infrastructure, such as roads, power lines, FET colleges to provide

training and grow the overall businesses in the local community. Focus is mostly on the young people and bursaries have been provided to scholars and learners in various skills applicable to SKA.

The SKA Project, an international initiative, to build the world's largest telescope will attract a very special and sophisticated niche tourism market. For this very reason, the Department of Tourism was invited by the National Department of Science and Technology on an SKA core site visit with the Deputy President, Cyril Ramaphosa. The site visit in February provided an opportunity for stakeholders to experience the home of this iconic flagship radio astronomy telescope that is positioning South Africa as a high technological investment destination.

The hospitality industry is experiencing an influx of visitors and increased bed nights in Carnarvon. This project is especially appealing to 'save' Scientific, Academic, Volunteer and Educational Tourism as well as Astro Tourism in the Karoo where visitors can visit the Southern Africa Large Telescope (SALT) in Sutherland and the SKA in Carnarvon along with experiencing the unique tourism offerings in the Karoo.

Sutherland, which is the home of SALT receives approximately 13 500 tourists a year and the economic spin-off is already

happening as people are embarking on self-drives from Sutherland to Carnarvon. The SKA core site is receiving about 500-600 visitors per month and this is statistics similar to SALT at its initiation phase. The two towns offer very different and unique tourism offerings and visitors are staying longer in the small rural towns between the two main attractions, SALT and SKA.

Carnarvon has great potential to grow in their tourism products and offerings. The area is known for having the oldest sheep breed in the country, which has an important role in the history of the town as it provides the best wool in the country and is also part of the Red Meat District with great Karoo lamb production. Also, the town has a high historical value on brick making and this provides an opportunity for agricultural tourism tours.

The SKA is a global project and a great opportunity for Africa to drive human capital development, harness science and technology and advance African's technology growth goal the Deputy President, Cyril Ramaphosa said. This will lead to new innovations, creativity and advance infrastructure. The project will lead to the creation of jobs for the next 50 years and will do much more in the fight against poverty. Technological progress helps to create and improve the way of life, and is both a product and an enabler of technological advancement he concluded.

Two SRI projects launched: Stony Point Eco-Centre and Ndlambe

By Mmapula Makgamatha

Visitors at the Stony Point Eco-Centre can now end a tour with a good meal at On The Edge Restaurant which, as the name suggested, is located on the edge of the to the Eco-Centre. The restaurant formed part of the construction that was made possible through the department's Social Responsibility Implementation (SRI) programme.

The main attraction to the Stony Point Eco-Centre is the penguin colony situated in Betty's Bay on the Cape's Overberg coastline where large numbers of the African penguins breed attracting over hundred thousand visitors a year. Developments that took place include the conversion of a building to a forty seat restaurant and eco interpretive centre, construction of ablution facilities, parking area, support office and the erection of perimeter fencing and interpretive signage.

The project which commenced in 2012 benefitted the community economically, socially and environmentally by creating jobs during the construction phase and by supporting SMME's for the procurement of goods and services. The project is situated and falls under the Overstrand Municipality. A Mooiuitsig Community Trust was established to operate the restaurant.

Launching the project on 10 April 2015, Minister Derek Hanekom said the Stony Point Eco-Centre is a perfect example of how social, economic, and environmental responsibility comes together to create a workable and sustainable solution. The conservation of buildings used for the unsustainable practice of whaling in the past to an Eco-Centre would help to spread the message of sustainability and the conservation of natural resources for the future.



Deputy Minister Xasa officially opening the Ndlambe SRI project

Continued from page 4

Jobs and skills training were provided to 70 workers from the Mooiuitsig community during the construction phase, and all the trained workers were able to find work after the completion of the project. The Stony Point colony is the only population of African penguins that is increasing in population numbers.

In the Eastern Cape a world class accommodation and conference facility was handed over to the community of Cannon Rocks in Ndlambe Municipality. Three existing houses were renovated and refurbished into accommodation facilities, and two new units were built. Each of these units can accommodate six people. Another existing house has been converted into a conferencing venue for 40 people. The project started in 2011 and created jobs for 96 people during the refurbishment and building phase of the Ndlambe SRI Project.

“The project which commenced in 2012 benefitted the community economically, socially and environmentally by creating jobs...”

Addressing the community members during the launch on 08 April 2015, Deputy Minister Tokozile Xasa said the upgraded accommodation and conferencing facilities form part of the drive by the Department of Tourism to leverage off South Africa’s potential as a prime tourism destination, by creating sustainable tourism related projects in rural areas of the country.

A total of nine SRI initiatives are earmarked to be launched in the 2015/16 financial year.



Minister Hanekom with stakeholders from the Western Cape Province



On the Edge Restaurant



Stony Point Eco-Centre



African penguins - the main attraction to the Stony Point Eco-Centre

Department hosts second IORA Tourism Experts Meeting

By Busiswa Bam



Deputy Minister Xasa and Ms Malan, Deputy Director-General: International Tourism Management with tourism administrators from member states



Tourism administrators during the 2nd IORA Tourism Experts Meeting

The 2nd Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Tourism Experts Meeting took place on 9 May 2015 at the Southern Sun Hotel Elangeni in Durban, following the 1st IORA Tourism Experts Meeting hosted by Seychelles in November 2014. The 2nd IORA Tourism Experts Meeting was co-chaired by Mr Dahlan, Director at the IORA Secretariat, and chaired by Ms Malan, Deputy Director-General: International Tourism Management from the Department of Tourism. IORA comprises 20 member states including Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. In addition, the IORA has six Dialogue Partners namely: China; France; the United Kingdom; Egypt; Japan and the United States of America. Member states that participated at the 2nd IORA Tourism Experts Meeting include South Africa; Australia; Seychelles; Malaysia; Mauritius; Mozambique; Kenya; Indonesia; India and one dialogue partner, that is, China.

The Secretariat is headed by a Secretary-General, who is assisted by two Directors and Experts, on voluntary secondment from member states. The Secretariat is supported by a total of eight locally engaged staff (locally recruited personnel). The Secretariat is hosted by the Government of Mauritius.

Tourism was identified by IORA as a Unique Selling Proposition (USP) for the Indian Ocean region. IORA recognises that substantial benefits could be accrued by member states through the enhancement of tourist linkages and marketing within the region. IORA recommends that member states strive towards regional cooperation in tourism, especially to achieve sustainable tourism growth in the region. In order to address tourism development in the Indian Ocean region a need was identified to strengthen regional tourism cooperation among member countries.

The 2nd IORA Tourism Experts Meeting was important as it served as a platform where tourism administrators from member states came together to identify tourism priorities, encourage synergies, share information, exchange views and develop areas of cooperation on tourism, especially to promote trade liberalisation and to balance tourism development in the Indian Ocean region through the creation of a shared vision of the future.

Discussions and outcomes of the 2nd IORA Tourism Experts Meeting

- **Establishment of the IORA Tourism Core Group** - All participating member states supported the establishment of the IORA Tourism Core Group.

- **IORA Travel and Tourism Fairs** - IORA member states agreed on supporting each other's tourism fairs.
- **Development of IORA Tourism Capacity Building Programmes** - All participating member states agreed on the need to strengthen Capacity Building Programmes in tourism across the Indian Ocean Rim.
- **Establishing an IORA Sustainable Tourism Accreditation Programme** - The meeting highlighted the importance of having a better understanding on the different regulations on the Sustainable Tourism Accreditation Programme in member states and it also proposed on creating a common criteria for the IORA Tourism Certification.
- **Improving air connectivity between the IORA member states** - The meeting requested the IORA member states to consider the best practices of air connectivity among member states and to draw from their experience.
- **Developing Cruise Tourism in the Indian Ocean** - A general agreement was made to explore the socio-economic benefits cruise tourism has in the Indian Ocean Rim.
- **Establishing an IORA Resource Centre** - The meeting recommended exploring the funding implications of the Tourism Resource Centre prior to its establishment.

Barbara Raats: A Kalahari success story

By Claire Allison

Photograph by Yann Macheraz

In the financial year 2014/15 the Department of Tourism signed a partnership agreement with Open Africa (www.openafrica.org), to unlock tourism potential through route development in rural areas in various identified poverty nodes in South Africa. Key to route development has been to provide support to emerging rural tourism enterprises in business development, access to funding and market access, amongst others.

A few years ago Barbara Raats developed an idea to build grass huts (similar to those of the San traditional homes) and offer homestays to tourists. Her idea received a boost when Open Africa launched a programme along the Kalahari Red Dune Route in 2013. In less than two years, Barbara was able to open her business and she now offers accommodation for up to eight people and has plans to build another two units to further increase her capacity.

With funding from the Finnish Embassy, Barbara became one of four female mentees along the route. Each mentee was assigned a mentor with the aim of gaining skills in business management, learning more about the tourism industry and further developing their small business. This support allowed Barbara the opportunity to gain the confidence needed to approach business and other NGOs to secure growth funding for her business.

She launched *Boesmansrus Grass Huts* in May 2014 and in June 2014, Barbara

welcomed her first clients and generated over R5 000 in profit in the first five months of operation. Originally she used her own capital to start her business, but received additional funding from the Northern Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism to build two larger huts and an ablution facility as well as a washing machine, generator and a laptop. Barbara was also able to develop a logo, signage and a marketing plan to make herself more visible, thanks to funding from the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) and she now employs four extra people.

Over the course of 2014 she received basic computer literacy training and business management training. The Kalahari Red Dune Route will continue to provide support to Barbara while she expands and develops her business further during the course of 2015. She plans to build another large hut that will sleep four guests as well as a Honeymoon suite, which will provide en-suite facilities.

In April 2015 the Northern Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism provided funding for four of Open Africa's Northern Cape Routes to be represented at Indaba 2015. Barbara was selected to represent the Kalahari Red Dune Route on the Northern Cape Tourism Association's stand.

Open Africa is a non-profit organisation working in rural economic development using tourism as a platform. Open Africa creates self-drive tourism routes that promote



Barbara Raats at Boesmansrus Grass Huts



Photographs by Open Africa

authentic experiences while developing rural economies. It helps rural people see what is unique and valuable about what they have and encourages them to work together to grow their livelihoods as a community.

For more information about Open Africa and its projects visit www.openafrica.org

Article sponsored through a partnership between the Department of Tourism and Open Africa.



Minister Hanekom and Deputy Minister Xasa with African Tourism Ministers at the African Tourism Minister's Summit

African Tourism Ministers work together to boost tourism growth

At the second annual African Tourism Minister's Summit, hosted by South African Tourism Minister Hanekom, ahead of the opening of the Tourism Indaba 2015 in Durban, matters pertaining to the growth and development of tourism on the continent featured on the agenda.

Themed 'Africa: Open for Tourism Business', 13 African Ministers and key industry players discussed and debated the current state of tourism in Africa with collectively formulating solutions to grow and develop tourism on the continent.

Speaking during the Ministerial roundtable Minister Hanekom said the African market was undergoing unprecedented growth in tourist arrivals, adding that global interest in the continent, and a growing middle class with disposal income, is driving economic growth. "Today's meeting was not only a testimony of our commitment to strengthening relationships with our African counterparts, but a positive step towards finding workable solutions to advance tourism within the continent," Hanekom said.

"Although the continent is overwhelmed by social and economic challenges, challenges such as the outbreak of Ebola and the recent attacks on foreign nationals have the potential to impact negatively on tourism on the continent. We have to rise against these challenges, and commit to work together to address them for the future of tourism," said Minister Hanekom.

The ministerial discussion focused on the state of Africa's readiness for tourism investment and constraints to investment promotion; the importance of the tourism sector towards building the economies of various regional economic communities; collaboration between public and private sector in growing tourism; visa and travel facilitation and ways of improving intra-African travel.

A number of solutions were presented, with a call made from Algiers for the African Union to include tourism on its agenda, in order to elevate tourism as the economic driver in the continent. It was proposed that the next African Ministerial session should consider putting systems in place to advance uni-visas on the continent. It was also suggested that

Africa should strive to harness its cultural and historical resources to market and present Africa as a truly unique and authentic destination for the world to visit.

Speaking on the state of tourism in the African continent, Elcia Grandcourt, Regional Director for Africa at the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) reasserted the UNWTO's commitment to supporting Africa in growing tourism. She said, "Africa must work with Africa to advance tourism in the continent. Cultural and historical resources in Africa are not being adequately harnessed to lure tourists to Africa. To show our commitment, we will host our first image and branding conference in Accra, Ghana with the view to impart skills within the continent, so it can better profile itself," added Grandcourt.

But while Africa is fast establishing itself as one of the most promising regions for tourism, expecting to receive 85 million international tourist arrivals by 2020, and 134 million in 2030, challenges to infrastructure development, visa facilitation and connectivity, and the financing of tourism development have the potential to offset that growth.

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Deputy Minister Tokozile Xasa with Minister Hanekom at the the roundtable discussions



Minister Hanekom conversing with Zimbabwe's Tourism Minister, Walter Mzembi



Elcia Grandcourt, Regional Director for Africa at the UNWTO

Photographs by Mashikara Rachuene

Tourism Indaba 2015 gets the thumbs-up

Prior to Indaba 2015 Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SA Tourism, Thulani Nzima said: "The organisation's objective of growing the Tourism Indaba to a Pan-African show is gradually being realised. The Tourism Indaba is poised, now more than ever, to give buyers from around the world access to the widest diversity of African leisure travel products and experiences." Nzima said 24 destinations across Africa will be represented on the trade show floor and he extended his gratitude to the African Tourism Industry for their support.

The tourism Indaba remains the largest tourism marketing event for Africa and showcases the widest variety of southern Africa's best tourism products. It attracts international buyers and media from across the world.

Indaba 2015 took place at Durban's Inkosi Albert International Convention Centre in KwaZulu-Natal from 9-11 May. The theme for Indaba 2015 is 'Driving Africa forward'. According to Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom, this year the theme recognises the vital importance of the tourism industry and of exhibitors on the trade show floor as they are the team that is helping to drive the continent forward.

With new and improved features the trade show was planned with delegate feedback from previous years to enhance the overall experience. There were just over 1000 exhibitors from 20 African countries, about 2000 buyers from the world's tourism source markets and around 750 members of the media at this year's Indaba.

Over 90% of Indaba exhibiting floor space was assigned to exhibitors. Exhibitors included provincial authorities and provincial products. Exhibiting destinations included Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, the Comoros,

the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria and Niger State, Reunion, Rwanda, Senegal, the Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Exhibitor categories included, tour operators, accommodation, game lodges, online travel, media publications and industry associations, transport, camping and safari companies.

One of the new features of the trade show was the Calabash, which provided a typically African social environment for informal meetings and networking. Another was an online diary system, which allowed delegates to digitally locate and meet appropriate contacts for their businesses.

Indaba 2015 saw the return of the Business Buyers Lounge, a direct response to interest from exhibitors and SA Tourism's determination to put exhibitors first by offering optimised business opportunities. The Business Buyers Lounge gave exhibitors an exclusive area to accommodate deal-making meetings with buyers. There were two categories of Business Buyers Lounge - exhibitors and non-exhibitors. Non-exhibitors had a choice of conducting their Indaba appointments from their custom-built Business Buyers Lounge hub.

The speed marketing sessions also featured at this year's Indaba, where 24 destinations across Africa were represented during two days of speed marketing sessions. The speed marketing sessions connected local trade and international hosted buyers in a fast paced environment, giving buyers easy access to the already established South African SMME's. This year, the sessions were moved from the usual 12h30 time slot to 08h30, giving buyers the opportunity to schedule additional meetings with exhibitors.



Minister Hanekom even had time for a spot of dancing during his visit to the Benin exhibition stand



Deputy Minister Xasa and Minister Hanekom during their walkabout at Indaba 2015

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The Mpumalanga exhibition stand at Indaba 2015



Minister Hanekom being received on stage by SA Tourism CEO Thulani Nzima during the opening ceremony of Indaba 2015



Minister Hanekom with exhibitors from Uganda during his walkabout at Indaba 2015

Instead of the annual Global Media Face Off, there were four media briefings at this year's Indaba that examined tourism's contribution to the South African economy. The sessions looked at the importance of small tourism businesses, the growing importance of inter-continental collaboration for the growth of overall African tourism, and an Indaba bid party media briefing that took a look at the successes and highlights of Indaba 2015.

The Indaba show is technology driven and delegates were able to attend a number of talks in the TechZone, aimed at improving online presence; social media; online travel and tourism trends. There were also many new innovative examples of marketing apps through mobile phones.

At the opening ceremony of Indaba 2015 delegates were entertained by the best of African talent with music and dance that celebrated a continent and its flourishing tourism industry.

Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom, experienced his first tourism Indaba this year. Speaking at the opening ceremony Hanekom said that he saw the Indaba as an opportunity to engage the widest cross section of the tourism industry in one place. He went on to say that tourism is a crucial component of South Africa's national development, now contributing more than nine percent of South Africa's gross domestic product and supporting more than 1.5 million job opportunities nationwide.

"South Africa will always be open to welcome people from around the world," said Hanekom. He said international arrivals in Africa increased to 56 million tourists in 2014, and were expected to grow by between three and

five percent in 2015. This will probably exceed the projected growth in global arrivals, which is between three and four percent.

"From its early beginnings as a South African trade platform, Indaba has evolved into Africa's largest and most successful tourism trade platform. It is now a truly Pan-African trade show, and its brand strength continues to grow year after year," said Hanekom. He said in the next few months, SA Tourism will be announcing measures to make Indaba even more competitive. "We will be issuing a call for proposals from prospective partners with a global reach to work with us, and to expand this ship's sailing routes."

During a media interaction SA Tourism's CEO, also clarified the point that the agency wanted to bring in an experienced third party into the environment to help with technology, management, and international marketing capabilities. Nzima said that although they have done well so far, it is not their core business to organise events like this and through this partnership they want to take Indaba to a different level.

Minister Hanekom was a hit at his first Indaba show. On his walkabout at Indaba 2015 delegates could not wait to shake his hands and hug him. Everyone wanted pictures and selfies with the Minister. He also enjoyed interacting with them and even had time for a spot of dancing with exhibitors.

SA Tourism CEO, Thulani Nzima, has given Indaba 2015 a successful nine out of 10 rating. He said in spite of the number of buyers this year dropping by 20%, the travel show is well on its way to being recognised as a truly Pan-African trade event.

In spite of a decline in the number of buyers, Durban Tourism CEO, Philip Sithole, says the income generated by the event is significant for the city. He said the direct-spend by everyone who was at the Indaba was estimated to more than R50 million over a period of four days. The medium to long-term impact was more than R180 million into an event in which close to R30 million was invested.

According to Lindiwe Rakharebe, CEO of Durban International Convention Centre (ICC) meetings scheduled by delegates prior to the show increased from about 2 400 to more than 8 700 meetings compared to Indaba 2014 and there was also an increase in the amount of floor space sold.

Also, there was a decline in almost 10% in the number of exhibitors at this year's show compared to last year, with 1 013 exhibitors as against 1 198 last year. However, Nzima said that they are okay with this drop, as they are focusing more on quality rather than quantity.

During the Indaba Minister Hanekom commented: "Above all I would hope that Indaba 2015 succeeds in creating a platform for both buyers and exhibitors to do good business, and thereby advance Africa's economic development". Indaba is definitely a valuable marketing tool for the continent, and it did not disappoint this year because valuable contacts were made and successful business deals were concluded.

Indaba, now hailed as the biggest Pan-African exhibition on the continent has been staged in Durban for more than two decades. Durban has once again been confirmed as the host city for the Indaba 2016. This was confirmed when Indaba 2015 wrapped up.

Responsible, sustainable and “thrivable” tourism development

Responsible Tourism (RT) is about making “better places for people to live, and better places for people to visit” – the order of these two aspirations is critical. The characteristics of RT as defined in the Cape Town Declaration are very generic; it is for destinations and enterprises to determine their priorities in the light of the environmental and socio-cultural characteristics of the destination. Diversity, transparency and respect are core values.

Building green from below the ground up is the smartest, most effective way to ensure that every aspect of your building design, construction and operation will be as sustainable as possible. Some of the many aspects considered, by Verde Hotels (Africa’s first Sustainable Hotel Management Company) in a new construction include: sustainable sites, refrigerant management, quality and fine-tuning, preventative maintenance,

responsible choice of materials and resources, energy efficiency, water efficiency, mechanical systems performance, ongoing indoor environmental quality, alternative transportation programmes, ongoing responsible purchasing practices, waste avoidance, reuse and recycling programmes, management of toxic substances, whole-building cleaning and maintenance.

And with this in mind André Harms, a sustainability engineer from Ecolution Consulting, was asked to be the virtual green guide and explain what it takes to ensure “thrivability” of Africa’s Greenest Hotel, Hotel Verde.

While many hotels worldwide pay mere lip service to environmentally conscious trends, to genuinely ‘go green’ developers must put not only their money, but also their thinking where their mouths are.

Hotel Verde is geared not only towards an ethical and environmentally-friendly synergy, but also towards a truly comfortable and memorable experience, which is all achieved with both panache and sincerity. The hotel was designed from the ground up to be a pioneer in sustainable and responsible tourism and to prove that ‘luxury and sustainability are not mutually exclusive’.

André started the journey with one of the most precious resources - water and how it is managed at the hotel. Different kinds of water sources and water uses were identified and matched. Potable water only for internal uses and as efficiently as possible, non-potable water for toilet flushing, irrigation, car washing and rinsing down hardscapes.

Grey water recycling plant

Used bath and shower water from the hotel is channelled to the grey water plant, where



André Harms, Sustainability Engineer from Ecolution Consulting



Hotel Verde's eco-pool

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it is biologically filtered and sterilised so it can be used again to flush toilets. The water proceeds through various stages of cleansing. Natural bacteria break down particles in the water, such as soap, hair or skin cells. UV light is then used to sterilise the water. No harmful chemicals are used during the process. The result is water that's colourless and odourless, and perfectly suited for toilet flushing or car washing.

Filter

Rain gutters feed water into the hotel's filter. The rain water enters the cylindrical filter at an angle, encouraging a swirling flow. The filter is self-cleaning. It removes debris such as leaves from the water, and then only about 10% of the swirling rain water rinses the debris from the filter.

Water tank

In line with the drive to use less water, of the 145 rooms in the hotel there are only eight rooms with bathtubs. Rain water is collected in a 40 000 litre tank, located in the basement. Due to the low amounts of summer rainfall in the Western Cape, the water collection is boosted through the use of subsoil drainage water. Building areas that are underground, such as the basement, usually pump water away to ensure they don't flood. The same function is performed but the water is collected in a water tank and reused around the property to meet external water requirements.



Hotel Verde observing earth hour - serving dinner by candlelight and switching off electric lights

Eco-pool

Unlike a conventional pool, an eco-pool functions as a living eco-system. The pool's outer perimeter serves as a filtering system, consisting of carefully selected living plants and organisms. The plants and organisms consume all the nutrients in the water, thereby cleaning it and preventing the growth of algae.

Green roof

The flat concrete roof over the reception and lobby area is covered by a vegetated roof garden. In addition to being aesthetically pleasing, the vegetation creates a habitat for birdlife, encourages biodiversity and insulates, keeping the reception area below cooler in summer and warmer in winter.

Construction

Cobiax void formers, plastic spheres made from 100% recycled polypropylene were utilised wherever possible in the building design, saving almost 1 300 tonnes of concrete, a major environmental plus point. The resulting reduced weight and benefit on structural elements and foundations, span distances as well as the avoided impact of less transport to site are further plus points.

Living wall

The living wall is a striking and beautiful feature of Hotel Verde. It's also functional in that it helps clean the interior air. Water for the plants in the living wall is provided by drip irrigation. The water then runs into a drain aesthetically covered by natural stones. The wall receives sunlight from skylights on one side and light from LED grow lamps on the other side. Unlike conventional grow lamps, the LED lamps provide all of the needed light frequencies without losing much energy through heat. The lamps are on a timer to mimic daytime hours.

Advanced energy modelling

Advanced energy modelling was used to establish which rooms are most energy efficient in each season, based on their

locations. The most energy efficient rooms are booked first to ensure optimal energy use.

Wind turbines

At the entrance of the hotel there are three wind turbines, which produce renewable energy for the hotel. Although the payback period on the turbines is quite long, they are a landmark feature for the hotel and a statement towards the belief that wind power is one solution to the world's energy problems.

Photovoltaic panels

Photovoltaic (PV) panels are located on the north façade of the building and on the roof. At maximum output, the PV panels produce 52.8 kW. This energy is used first to supply the UPS (critical loads like PC, server room, POS, critical pumps, etc) loads and to keep the batteries at full charge – this is a joined first step. The excess is consumed in the building, to offset power from the grid.

The 220 PV panels collectively provide about 78 000 kWh/year. The panels are cleverly positioned to assist with shading the windows, while also being in the optimum positions to receive maximum sunlight. The inverter for the PV panel array show how much energy is received and where the generated electricity is being allocated.

Plant room

The plant room is the heart of the hotel, facilitating many further green building features. The hot and cold water system features extremely effective insulation, to ensure that minimal energy is lost. Hot water is circulated throughout the hotel constantly to ensure that guests have hot water as soon as they open their taps. This isn't only a convenience feature, but a water saving feature too. It means that no running water is wasted while guests wait for the water to heat up.

A geothermal field coupled to ground-source heat pumps has been installed to obviate the need for standard cooling, heating and hot water generation systems, which traditionally

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Hotel Verde's entrance at night



Hotel Verde gym



Lounge area

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are one of the biggest energy consumers in a building. The geothermal field was made by drilling 100 holes, each about 65 metres deep, into the ground. A complex network of piping, 13 kilometres in length, along with equipment specially designed for Hotel Verde, uses the earth as a heat source in winter and a "heat sink" in summer, boosting efficiency and dramatically reducing operational costs.

Lighting

Mostly energy-efficient LEDs, a few CFL or T5 fluorescent lamps are used for lighting throughout the hotel, and a number of controls help reduce the energy they consume. All public areas have motion sensors that activate the lights. If there's no further motion, the lights switch off after a timed period of about 15 minutes. The hotel also uses light level sensors, which measure the amount of light that's available – including natural light from windows and skylights – and dims or brightens the output of the lights to ensure that only the required amount of light is given out at any time.

The streetlamps outside the hotel also use sensors effectively. Once it gets dark, the lights automatically come on at 50% of their strength, providing security and safety lighting around the hotel's perimeter. The lights brighten to their full potential only when a motion sensor detects movement nearby.

Regenerative drive elevators

The building has three energy-efficient elevators. These elevators are fitted with regenerative drives, allowing for about 30% of the input energy to be recaptured and fed back into the building. Whenever an elevator travels in the "light" direction – that is, when a full cart is going down or an empty cart is going up – the motor acts as a generator and produces power.

Energy-efficient equipment

The building has the following water and energy efficient equipment:

- Guestroom mini bar fridges, with energy savings of approximately 27 000 kWh per annum;
- Washing machines – the virtually uncontaminated water from the final rinse cycle is captured and reused for the pre-wash of the next load;
- Energy Star rated office equipment, including monitors, computers, printers, copiers, etc.;
- Energy and water efficient dishwashers;
- A main power cut-off switch in each guest's room; when the room key card is removed from its designated slot, power to that room is cut (with the exception of plugs for charging and the bar fridge);
- Water-saving taps, shower heads and toilets;
- A drip irrigation system; and
- Carbon monoxide sensors, which switch on the basement ventilation system only when required but usually the specifically designed natural ventilation effect suffices.

Retention pond

A wetland has been created adjacent to the building to offer guests a scenic outside area for their enjoyment and relaxation. Features added include a 240-metre jogging trail around a retention pond, an outside gym area and a pathway leading through a specially created garden of indigenous plants. Plants were carefully selected to encourage rehabilitation of the area and to attract birdlife and amphibians. The retention pond has flourished since the opening.

Urban beehives

The hotel's wetland area is home to urban beehives, which house around 60 000 Cape honey bees. The bees help the indigenous garden to bloom and flourish. Soon the bees will provide honey to the hotel restaurant and deli.

Herb garden

Vertical aquaponic systems has been installed to optimise space use while maximising the production of vegetables and herbs. This is a cyclical system involving the use of fish and plants. Fish waste is broken down into nitrates, which feed the plants. In turn, the plants clean the water for the fish. The system is controlled by a timed pump system to ensure that the plants get regular and sufficient water, without wasting unnecessary energy. This system is also much more water wise than conventional planting because there is little opportunity for infiltration or seepage and evaporation.

Depending on the season and demand, small edible plants such as celery, tomatoes, peppers, coriander, pansies, spinach, chives, watercress, basil, butter sage, lettuce, mint and parsley are grown.

Locally sourced drinks and its own bottled water

The hotel's bar serves locally sourced, micro-brewed draught beers and Cape wines as an extension of its responsible procurement programme. In addition, it serves most beer on tap to reduce the carbon impact of transportation.

It also purifies and bottles its own still and sparkling water. A complimentary bottle is included in each room.



Hotel Verde's wind turbines, which produce renewable energy for the hotel



Hotel Verde reception

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To the right of the bar is a beautiful glass case that showcases a selection of red wines. The display cabinet temperature is regulated by the hotel's energy-efficient cooling system, which provides tempered fresh air to all areas.

Gym

A first for a hotel in Africa, Hotel Verde offers guests the use of energy-generating gym equipment. Guests will feed energy into the building when they use the bicycles and elliptical machines. The power generated might be a negligible amount, but the focus is on the learning and potential behaviour change attached to the experience. Posters in the gym explain just how much power guests can generate in comparison to how much power they use, demonstrating how difficult it is to produce a useable amount of power and how easy it is to squander it.

Water and energy-efficient room features

Access to each guest room is controlled with an electronic microchip card. All lights and electrical equipment are activated when the card is inserted and they automatically deactivate on departure. Rooms also include low-flow shower fittings, dual-flush toilets, two bins for self-sorting of waste and a small kettle sufficient for only two cups of tea or coffee at a time, to help reduce negative environmental impact. Inside the rooms, guests will receive complimentary water from the hotel's own on-site bottlers and a small bottle of fresh milk of their choice, to eliminate the use of wasteful packaging.

The bathroom amenities have been specially created by a company, which ensures that its ingredients are in no way harmful to people or the environment. With the freshest, natural fragrance, the shower gel and conditioning shampoo will appeal to everyone.

The guests

Wherever guests go, they are subtly encouraged to 'do their bit'. The hotel's environmentally friendly ethos and staff's genuine enthusiasm for it are infectious, especially because it's all achieved so stylishly. Staff members are warm, welcoming and consummately professional. The hotel encourages visitors towards more eco-friendly habits through a novel incentives system. Recycle waste, reuse towels, refrain from using air conditioners, or utilise power-generating gym equipment and you'll be awarded 'Verdino' coins - to be redeemed at the 24 hour deli or hotel bar. Every Wednesday evening, the hotel observes earth hour, serving dinner by candlelight and switching off electric lights.

Perhaps the hotel's greatest achievement is that there is no sacrifice of either comfort or style at this sophisticated four-star establishment. It boasts with spacious, contemporary designed rooms and suites, perfect for both leisure and executive travellers. It is extremely family friendly yet simultaneously geared towards business travel. Chic, modern and boasting an eclectic and impressive collection local art, Hotel Verde has seven full-service conferencing venues (accommodating 4 to 120 delegates), a VIP lounge and business centre, free wifi, a shuttle service which transports guests to major tourism attractions, and a 24 hour freshening up facility.

"No one in Africa has taken the green model and philosophy and applied it as comprehensively as we have," observes Mario Delicio, owner of Hotel Verde. "The long term benefits and sustainability are far more important to us than any immediate gains. We have a responsibility towards our planet and future generations. We're delighted to be

setting such a high precedent and hope to encourage others to follow suit."

Within the notion of betterment resides the acknowledgement that conflicting interests need to be balanced. However, the objective is to create better places for people to live in and to visit. Importantly, there is no blueprint for responsible tourism: what is deemed responsible may differ depending on places and cultures. Responsible Tourism is an aspiration that can be realised in different ways in different originating markets and in the diverse destinations of the world (Goodwin, 2002).

All forms of tourism can be more responsible. Progress relies on "all stakeholders taking responsibility for creating better forms of tourism and realising these aspirations." Responsible Tourism relishes "the diversity of our world's cultures, habitats and species and the wealth of our cultural and natural heritage" and therefore accepts "that responsible and sustainable tourism will be achieved in different ways in different places." One policy or set of criteria will not apply everywhere – nor should they. The Cape Town Declaration emphasises that it is only at the local level, where tourists and locals interact, that tourism can be sustainably maintained.

In the next edition we ask André to discuss the aspects of retrofitting a current establishment or building as part of Responsible or Sustainable Tourism Development.

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Social Tourism: Department's drive to increase visitor numbers, geographic spread and inculcate the culture of travelling

By Ntombenhle Dlamini

Social Tourism is an initiative by the Department of Tourism to address the gaps identified in the Domestic Tourism Growth Strategy, which are seasonality, uneven geographic spread and inculcating the culture of travel amongst South Africans. The targeted groups for social tourism are the youth, elderly people, and people living with disabilities, people with modest income and stokvels/ societies. Stokvels/ societies were targeted because there are huge amounts of money involved in stokvels/ societies however, most of the money is used for consumables and rarely used for travel purposes.

This initiative commenced in 2013 with a Social Tourism Workshop, aimed at developing a concept document. In that first workshop stakeholders made valuable inputs, which saw the wheels of this project moving forward with the development of a concept. The team responsible for social tourism started embarking on bilateral meetings with critical stakeholders bearing in mind the demand and the supply concept. They approached the Departments of Social Development, Basic Education and South African Disability Alliance to establish if there is a demand for social tourism. It was clear that the demand was there however, there are no packages that cater for these groupings.

The department in partnership with the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) has done an audit of government owned resorts in South Africa, which they plan to refurbish and use as budget resorts for social tourism. Also, the department saw a need to engage stakeholders such as South African National Parks (SANParks), Msinsi Resorts and Game Reserves, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and the Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa (FEDHASA) to negotiate packages for these groupings.

Stakeholders have committed to compiling packages for social tourism, which will be available during off-peak times and at reduced costs. Stakeholders have also committed to providing the department with databases of the groupings as well as bringing in multiple stakeholders.

A second workshop was held on 25 March 2015 to establish partnerships and common understanding amongst the critical stakeholders. During the workshop the Department of Basic Education clarified that it is bringing to the table 12 000 million learners, 600 000 teachers and a captivated audience with resources and that it will mobilise multiple partnerships that will become part of the initiative. Msinsi Resorts and Game Reserves committed to a 50% discount during off-peak

times, FEDHASA pledged "one million beds" and SANParks also had a lot of educational programmes for the youth at discounted rates as well as free entry for South African citizens during 'SANParks Week', which is the second week of September.

Apart from the above achievements the department still has a long way to go before it can achieve the social tourism goal, to have full support from all its provincial stakeholders hence, engagements continue. The department is currently collating the information gathered from the two workshops and bilateral agreements to form a social tourism directory, which will be distributed to the partners.

The department through social tourism has supported "Gogo on Tour", an elderly group of travellers that the department signed a memorandum of understanding with in 2013. It has also supported the tour for the visually impaired. It targeted the visually impaired officials in the department. The tour offered braille routes, wine tasting and elephant whispering. These tours were used as a pilot for social tourism. The next Social Tourism Workshop will be held in Mpumalanga – the department is optimistic about the outcomes of the engagement.



The Gogo on Tour members at Pretoria Zoo during the ceremonial signing of the MoU with the Department of Tourism



Visually impaired officials of the department and their assistants during the tour



Stakeholders at the 2013 Social Tourism Workshop held at Birchwood Hotel

WEF tourism ranking puts SA at the helm of sub-Saharan Africa

South Africa has topped the rankings of the world's most tourist-friendly countries. South Africa is ranked 48 out of 141 countries on the World Economic Forum's (WEF's) Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) 2015 released in Geneva, Switzerland, on 6 May.

The WEF ranking places South Africa at the helm of the sub-Saharan Africa, ahead of Seychelles and Mauritius, with the forum alluding to SA's rich natural and cultural resources and its positive business environment as compared with neighbouring countries.

Seychelles topped the regional rankings in the 2013 report and was at 38 globally, when South Africa held positions 3 and 64. Mauritius is placed third in the rankings this year, followed by Namibia, Kenya, Cape Verde, Botswana, Tanzania, Rwanda and Zambia as the sub-Saharan top 10 of this year. On the global front Spain is ranked first, followed by France and Germany. The US, UK, Switzerland, Australia, Italy, Japan and Canada make up the rest of the global top 10. Compared with other Brics countries South Africa is rated better only to New Delhi. China is ranked 17 on the global front, followed by Brazil at 28, Russia 45 and India at 52.

Despite SA's top ranking the WEF has warned that the tightening of visa policy and immigration laws "could certainly harm SA's travel and

tourism competitiveness". The visa issue is key to SA's poor ranking of 102 for international openness. SA also has poor rankings on issues of safety and security (119), health and hygiene (114), labour (105) and it must increase efforts to protect coast lines and biodiversity. The WEF has warned South Africa to address these issues.

Published under the theme "Growing through Shocks", the report contains detailed country profiles for the 141 economies featured in the study. A summary of their overall positions in the index and the prominent travel and tourism advantages and disadvantages of each are included. The 2015 report features three additional chapters. These chapters are written by leading experts and practitioners in the hospitality and tourism sectors. Among other significant findings, the report shows that the tourism industry continues to grow more quickly than the global economy as a whole. The report ranks the 141 countries across separate dimensions, revealing how well they could deliver sustainable economic and societal benefits through their travel and tourism sectors. The report which is produced by the WEF in collaboration with Deloitte, Strategy and Bloom Consulting, the International Air Transport Association, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the UN World Tourism Organization and the World Travel and Tourism Council can be obtained online at <http://www.weforum.org/reports/travel-tourism-competitiveness-report-2015>.

Upcoming tourism events

DATE	EVENT	PROVINCE/ LOCATION
08-09 July 2015	Minister's Outreach	North West
15-16 July 2015	Minister's Outreach	Eastern Cape
27-28 July 2015	Minister's Outreach	Northern Cape
01-03 October 2015	National Tourism Careers Expo (NTCE)	Sand Du Plessis, Bloemfontein

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