

# Bojanala

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

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- Tourism Minister engages provincial tourism operators



**tourism**

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Tourism  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**L**indiwe Sangweni-Siddo with her partner, Dr. Salifou Siddo, receive the Minister's Award from Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom, during The Lilizela Tourism Awards 2015 ceremony.

Sangweni-Siddo is the co-owner of the Soweto Hotel, and the Divisional Director of Operations: City Lodge Hotel Group.

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The fare being served in this Bojanala consists of a veritable smorgasbord of our vibrant and multivariied tourism sector. From the launch of the Nahakwe Lodge in rural Limpopo to cosmopolitan Sandton where this year's Lilizela Tourism Awards were held, there is bound to be something that appeals to all palates.

The Community of Kolobetane in Mamaile (Limpopo) turned out for the official launch of the Nahakwe Lodge, which not only represented permanent employment for some of the local residents but opened up business opportunities for local entrepreneurs.

October saw the Free State Province hosting the National Tourism Careers Expo (NTCE) in Bloemfontein. Led by Tourism Deputy Minister Tokozile Xasa, assisted by the MEC responsible for Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environment, Sam Mashinini, the other major partner was CATHSSETA.

Domestic Tourism enhancements in the country has received a boost lately, through destination development. One of these is the N12 National Road, which was endorsed by the Minister of Tourism in 2014 as a strategic initiative for tourism transformation and development in the country.

During the endorsement, the Minister cautioned that success in a multi-stakeholder route such

as the N12 could only be realised if proper planning, sustainable business models, broader stakeholder support and community involvement are the key driving principles.

Since taking office last year Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom has traversed almost all of the least visited provinces. There was intensive engagement with provincial tourism stakeholders such as local government officials and office bearers, communities, industry role-players and members and various media entities. This time around it was the turn of the Northern Cape.

Never one to shirk a challenge, the Minister quickly immersed himself in various activities in the Northern Cape, ranging from cooking up a storm in Kimberley and joining Graffiti artists at displaying their skills. The limit was set at jumping on a skateboard with participants of the Kimberley Diamond Cup, an international event on the World Skateboarding Grand Prix circuit.

The Department of Tourism through its Tourism Incentive Programme (TIP) is currently piloting a Renewable Energy Project that will soon see some of our notable tourist attractions, including Robben Island generating some of its own power, through renewable energy sources.

The cherry on the top must be The Lilizela Tourism Awards held at the Sandton Convention

Centre. Recognising exceptional products and services, winners were chosen from a staggering total of 1 100 entries spread across various categories. This year the Minister's Award went to Lindiwe Sangweni-Siddo, co-owner of the Soweto Hotel and Divisional Director of Operations: City Lodge Hotel Group.

Congratulations to her and the rest of the winners and nominees.

On the international front, a working group of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), chaired by the Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom met at the 21st General Assembly in Madeline, Colombia.

The working group has now agreed on the terms of reference of the Tourism for Development Facility, which will support projects and activities that reduce poverty and promote responsible and sustainable development.

Finally, festive greetings and best wishes for a positive 2016.

Trevor Bloem  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

# The best of the best get rewarded

By Johannes Mokou



Thulani Nzima, South African Tourism CEO, with some of the role players within the sector.

The cream of the crop in tourism were celebrated at The Lilizela Tourism Awards ceremony held at the Sandton Convention Centre recently.

These awards recognise and reward tourism players and businesses who work passionately and with pride to deliver a world class product and service.

Speaking during the ceremony, Minister of Tourism Derek Hanekom said that despite the few setbacks experienced this year, South Africa remained a most sought after destination. "We offer memorable experiences of an incredibly diverse nature. These memorable experiences don't just happen - they are shaped by the experience you

offer in your hotel, to your backpacker, or the experience you offer as a tourist guide".

The first leg of the awards were held in the provinces, and provincial winners entered The National Lilizela Tourism Awards. A total of 1 100 entries were received from all categories.

The awards, were hosted by former Miss South Africa, Joanne Strauss and *Bongo Maffin's* Stoane Seate. The audience enjoyed performances by multi-award winning songstress, Lira; popular music band, *The Soil* together with *Brenda and the Band*.

Minister Hanekom said that the Department of Tourism has entered into a partnership with the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa to maintain Blue Flag beaches, keep them clean and safe, and create employment opportunities for people from nearby communities. This concept will be expanded to hiking trails, and other tourism sites over time.

"Working closely with the industry we will expand our training and skills development programmes. We can achieve really inclusive and sustainable growth of our tourism sector, and positively touch the lives of millions of people."

Thulani Nzima, Chief Executive Officer of South African Tourism, also congratulated the finalists and winners. "The contribution of tourism businesses nominated for The Lilizela Tourism Awards keeps the sector on an upward trend," said Nzima.

"We congratulate all the winners and hope they will continue to serve as tourism ambassadors

by showcasing the best of our country to the world."

Some of the recipients of The Lilizela Tourism Awards were:

- Winner of ETEYA 2015 - Simeliza Tours;
- Winner of Best Social Involvement Programme – Large business – Aquila Game Reserve;
- Winner of the Five-star Hotel – The Oyster Box Hotel;
- Winner of the Wildlife Encounters Award – Inyati Game Lodge;
- Tourist Guides Winners – Nelson Maphaha and Michael Keith Jones; and
- Recipient of the Minister's Awards – Lindiwe Sangweni-Siddo, Divisional Director of Operations: City Lodge Hotel Group.



Masters of Ceremony during The Lilizela Tourism Awards, Musician Stoane Seate and former Miss South Africa, Joanne Strauss.



South Africa songstress, Lira, entertains the crowd during the ceremony.

# Lilizela Tourism Awards: Announcement of Minister's Award to Lindiwe Sangweni-Siddo

*By the Ministry of Tourism*

**T**he path to the future is created by people who are willing to go where nobody has gone before. These are the innovators who do what nobody has done before.

First, they have to see the future, and this requires foresight. Then, they have to convince everyone around them, and this needs courage. And finally, they must bring their vision to life, and this takes perseverance.

The winner of this year's award has an abundance of foresight, courage and perseverance.

She has broken new ground in the hospitality industry, and she personifies true transformation in action. She is an active champion of empowerment, and has stood by the tourism industry through thick and thin.

She has become a role model for an entire generation of entrepreneurs in the hospitality industry.

This special individual is co-owner of the Soweto Hotel, and the Divisional Director of Operations: City Lodge Hotel Group, Lindiwe Sangweni-Siddo.

Lindiwe has served in government, and she has worked at some of the world's leading hotel groups. She founded the Zuka African

Tourism and Investment Corporation to seek out investment opportunities in the tourism industry.

*The path to the future is created by people who are willing to go where nobody has gone before. These are the innovators who do what nobody has done before.*

Way back in 2007, Lindiwe defied conventional thinking: she took the plunge where others had feared to invest, and built the Soweto Hotel on Freedom Square.

Today, this hotel operates as a living symbol of Lindiwe's courage and tenacity. It is a shining light that shows the way to the future for South Africans, and shows visitors from around the world what our country and our people are made of.

**Congratulations!**

Surely she will continue to play a leading role in the tourism industry, and we wish her all the



*The winner of Minister's Award, Lindiwe Sangweni-Siddo.*



# Opportunities galore for young people in the tourism sector-Bloemfontein

By Johannes Mokou



Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa, MEC for Economic Development, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environment, Sam Mashinini and Chairperson of Free State Tourism Authority, Glen Netshivhodza, take a tour of the exhibition.

The Free State Province's first leg of the three-year National Tourism Careers Expo (NTCE) started out on a high note, with some 10 000 high school learners, 750 teachers, close to 500 unemployed graduates, a sizeable number of tourism students as well as other interested parties from across the country represented during the expo.

The NTCE was held in Bloemfontein (Free State) on 01 – 03 October 2015, having previously been held in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal respectively.

In her address, Deputy Minister Xasa said, "Before this, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape have already helped us to mainstream tourism as a career of choice amongst the youth of South Africa by hosting successful expos for the past six years" Xasa said, "With each expo that passes, we make greater strides in this regard because the future of our sector depends on a skilled workforce that is passionate about service excellence. The youth market is our key to unlocking the unlimited opportunities that exist in Tourism."

"The tourism industry is a major player in the economy of South Africa, contributing significantly to both employment and economic growth. The country compares favourably with other travel destinations in variables such as price competitiveness, policies, regulations and

cultural and natural resources are concerned." However, she cautioned that in terms of human resources, the South African tourism sector still faces challenges, not least of which revolves around transformation and inclusivity.

This huge potential in the sector is severely hampered by the limited understanding that the general public has of the broader tourism dynamics. Some misperceptions about the sector include:

- Lack of recognition of tourism at high school and tertiary level as a career of choice;
- Lower status of tourism job offerings when compared to other subjects like mathematics and science; and
- Skewed distribution of internships, bursaries, learnerships and other learner support interventions compared to other sectors.

She added that these observations are further confirmed by research around the decline of tourism enrollment at tertiary level conducted by the then Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and the Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa (FEDHASA) in 2008, which reflects that:

- The industry is perceived to provide menial and low paying jobs with long working hours and no career progression;
- Tourism is a subject perceived to be chosen by the less intelligent and those who have been rejected in other courses because of their poor academic performance – this in essence has an adverse effect on the calibre of graduates that are produced; and
- Tourism is an easy subject that is mostly taught by educators who do not have professional qualifications.

She said, the National Tourism Careers Expo is strategically positioned to tackle exactly these misperceptions, adding that, it also aims to bridge the information gap between the industry, government, learners and educators. Deputy Minister Xasa further said, "This expo is a powerful platform to unleash the tourism

potential through investment in human capital development, to elevate tourism as a vibrant profession that attracts people of high calibre."

The expo was aimed at positioning tourism as a valuable and vibrant career of choice and drive South Africa's national Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS) goals of creating 225 000 job opportunities by 2020. It was held under the theme - Tourism: Alive with opportunities.

Free State Member of Executive Council (MEC) for Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environment, Sam Mashinini, said that there is a theory that tourism is for those who want to relax and it is not a real career, with some saying it should be done away with.

On an angle of tourism in the Province, Mashinini said that the plans are underway to popularise the concept of Kasi Tourism, adding that no one has said that tourists cannot visit the townships; that is why there is a plan to revive the townships to easily attract the tourists. "We anticipate that NTCE will revive tourism in the province, so that when one tourist leaves, the other one must come," Mashinini said.

Prominent institutions represented during the expo included the Free State Tourism Authority, Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality, Sports, Education, Training Authority (CATHSSETA) and FEDHASA amongst others.



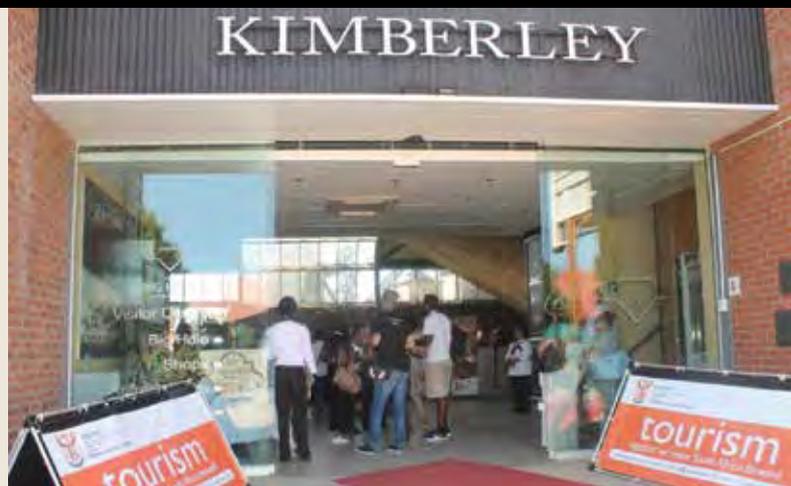
Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa and MEC for Economic Development, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environment, Sam Mashinini hands over prizes to Refilwe Letsapa from New Vision Secondary School, Klerksdorp.

# Tourism Minister engages provincial tourism operators

By Praveen Naidoo



Minister of Tourism and his delegation on a game drive during the Mpumalanga Ministerial Outreach Programme.



Tourism stakeholders enter the hall for the Ministerial Outreach Programme in Kimberley.

Owners and operators of tourism businesses must join hands with the three spheres of government to grow tourism in the provinces.

This was the message carried by the Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom, during the provincial outreach programme which began in Limpopo in June, with the latest visit taking place in the Northern Cape in September.

The provincial outreaches are being undertaken by the Minister to interact with private and public sector tourism stakeholders on the ground.

In the Northern Cape, Minister Hanekom praised the efforts by the tourism stakeholders. "The value of these outreach engagements lies in finding out first-hand what challenges and opportunities the industry faces," said Minister Hanekom.

"This helps us in government to direct the limited resources we have wisely, and to create inclusive growth for the tourism industry.

"The Northern Cape has unique attributes which sets it apart from other regions as a

tourist destination, and has special offerings which enhances the region's competitiveness."

Earlier in the year, the Minister's visit to Mpumalanga was characterised by frank discussions with provincial and municipal officials, tourism product owners and operators, and other stakeholders in the tourism value chain.

Challenges raised by stakeholders included the safety and security of tourists, incidents of traffic officials soliciting bribes from tourists and local service delivery protests, which are said to scare the tourists away. Stakeholders also raised questions about the status of the new visa regulations and its impact on tourism arrivals.

In his response, the Minister said that crime affected the whole country and posed a big challenge to the sector. He encouraged local government and the sector to engage with the South African Police Services in combating crime.

"We also encourage establishments to actively participate in campaigns like neighbourhood watches and community policing forums.

With regards to the service delivery protests, we need to acknowledge that we have made inroads as a government where service delivery is concerned, but the inequalities in society remain a challenge that needs to be addressed collaboratively," said the Minister.

The Minister also held similar engagements in Limpopo and the North West.



Minister of Tourism learns few tricks in cooking during the Ministerial Outreach Programme in Kimberley.

# Community benefits from Nahakwe Lodge

By Johannes Mokou



Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom, at the launch of Nahake Logde.

The community of Kolobetona in Mamaila (Limpopo) and other surroundings are set to benefit immensely, after the recent launch of Nahakwe Lodge in the area.

Nahakwe Lodge, which was officially launched on 26 September 2015, as part of the Department of Tourism's Social Responsibility Investment project (SRI) will see 19 young people permanently employed at the lodge, while simultaneously opening business opportunities for local entrepreneurs, amongst the many opportunities.

The launch was attended by delegates from the Mamaila Royal Council, local government as well as the national assembly.

Speaking during the launch, Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom encouraged the lodge management to take extra care of the lodge, saying, "For us, this is a celebration, but for the management of this lodge, it is a beginning of the new chapter. It should not happen that when we come back after five years this place does not look good.

This place must be more beautiful and even employing more people than it is now come the next five years. When one wants to go to the Kruger National Park, this place should be a shot left for that person. It should also be host to various wedding ceremonies for couples and their stay should be memorable, so that they cherish the moments forever."

The Minister added that the local municipality has a greater job to do, in support and sustainability of the lodge through regular supply of water, electricity and road infrastructure development.

"Little things can go wrong in a project like this, but if all those involved can work together, their efforts will go a long way in making this place special," he said.

Nahakwe Lodge was funded by the then Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT). In 2009, DEAT was declared a standalone department, thus establishing the National Department of Tourism (NDT) effective from the 01st April 2010. All projects

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that were tourism related were then handed over to NDT.

The Chief Directorate: Social Responsibility Implementation (SRI) within NDT continued with implementation of EPWP projects focusing on tourism projects funded through SRI. Nahakwe Lodge, was one of these projects.

Implementation and construction commenced in September 2010, with Thobela Projects as the implementer. Nahakwe Lodge was funded for R28,5 million. A total of 90 local beneficiaries were employed through the construction of this project. R4 million was spent on wages and training of beneficiaries, with a total of R14,5 million spent on materials and equipment and R325 000 was spent on community facilitation.

Throughout the construction of the lodge, beneficiaries received accredited and non-accredited training to provide them with skills that would allow the beneficiaries to support themselves post implementation.

MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo, Seaparo Sekoati, also took time to express his appreciation to those involved in making "this dream a success".

He also cautioned the community members against unwarranted protests, saying, "As the community you should take good care of what you have, while following proper procedures to ask for another. There is no need for you to burn a library, while you are asking for water supply or an improved road infrastructure."

One employee at the lodge, whose name is Lefa Mogale, said that the project brought about change to the people of Mamaila as it created 19 permanent employment, while having created 15 temporary jobs before its launch.

Mogale said that during the construction, about 60 people were employed at the lodge and have in the process received skills and experience which have benefited them for



*Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom and MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo, Seaparo Sekoati, during the Nahake lodge launch.*

a lifetime. "Out of the 60 people who were employed here during the construction phase, 90 percent of them have gotten employed somewhere. This goes to show that the skills they have were of high quality and value."

He added that the lodge also handsomely benefited the local entrepreneurs, as some of their sculptures, beads, crafts and other locally produced products were bought by the lodge, to be sold to the visitors.

*"Out of the 60 people who were employed here during the construction phase, 90 percent of them have gotten employed somewhere. This goes to show that the skills they have were of high quality and value"*



*Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom and MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo, Seaparo Sekoati, prepare to cut the ribbon during the Nahake lodge launch.*

# Tourism boost between South Africa and Mozambique

By Johannes Mokou



Presidents Zuma and Nyusi are guided.



Matola Raid Memorial Pillars.

Tourism relations between South Africa and Mozambique are set for greater heights due to several cohesions shared by these two countries. Some of these key commonalities between the countries include an unbroken celebration of a variety of cultures and heritage.

This was witnessed during the unveiling ceremony for the Matola Raid Memorial Monument and Interpretive Centre held in the town of Matola, in Mozambique on 11 September 2015.

The unveiling was done by President Jacob Zuma and his counterpart, President Filipe Nyusi of the Republic of Mozambique.



Presidents Zuma and Nyusi lay wreaths.

This was aimed at honoring the fallen heroes of the Matola Raid as part of the Heritage Month programme and also to pay homage to the sacrifices and contributions made by the Mozambicans towards a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

It also recognises the people, communities, events and places, which had significant impact on the struggle for liberation.

The launch and unveiling of Matola Raid Memorial Monument will be a contribution to the transformation of the heritage landscape in the country and the region. Participating at this event enhances the bilateral relation between the two countries and promote liberation heritage. The two countries will continue to interact on sharing of best practices and learning from each other on how to promote tourism heritage sites.

The two countries share healthy bilateral relations, which are cemented with the signing of agreements. The Department of Tourism has been working closely with the Maputo City Tourism Board regarding the signed tourism agreement on 28 February 1995.

The key areas of cooperation as outlined in the agreement include:

- Investment enterprises;



Memorial Inscription.

- Joint marketing programmes;
- Capacity building initiatives; and
- Information sharing.

As part of fulfilling the agreement, the Department of Tourism hosted a tourism delegation from Mozambique in November 2014. They visited Gauteng Tourism Authority and the City of Tshwane, where best practices in tourism development, promotion and marketing were shared.

Mozambique is also a regular exhibitor at South Africa's annual Tourism Indaba Trade Show and other significant industry trade exhibitions held in South Africa.



*Minister of Tourism  
Derek Hanekom,  
during the Business  
Breakfast session in  
Limpopo (Polokwane).*

## How tourism can promote inclusive development and social transformation

*By the Ministry of Tourism*

A United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) working group chaired by Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom led to the UN establishing a new facility to grow tourism in developing countries.

The working group met at the 21st General Assembly of the UNWTO, which took place in Medellin, Colombia, recently. The theme of the General Assembly centred around how tourism can promote inclusive development and social transformation.

More than 900 delegates from 120 countries - including over 70 Ministers of Tourism and Secretaries of State - attended the General Assembly, which was opened by Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon.

The working group was established by the UNWTO Executive Council in 2013 and chaired by South Africa. It includes representatives from Egypt, Flanders, France, Jamaica, Kenya, Mauritania, Mexico, the Republic of Korea and Spain.

"The working group has now agreed on the terms of reference of the Tourism for Development Facility," said Minister Hanekom during the General Assembly.

"The facility will support projects and activities that reduce poverty and promote responsible and sustainable development".

"Tourism is a powerful catalyst for economic and social development. More than one billion tourists travel to destinations around the world every year. The economic activity they generate supports jobs, reduces poverty and creates mutual understanding among people from different cultures," he said.

A variety of separate mechanisms are currently in place to receive and disburse funds for the development of tourism. The Tourism for Development Facility (TDF) will be a single mechanism that oversees funds received by the UNWTO from donors and distributes them to member states who are listed as Official Development Aid recipients. UNWTO Secretary-General Dr. Taleb Rifai praised South Africa for its leadership in bringing the new facility to life.

Dr. Rifai said the TDF will help to raise awareness and address the gross underfunding of tourism development.

The working group will continue to oversee the implementation of the TDF. It will develop guidelines and policy recommendations for governments to establish mechanisms to provide loans and loan guarantees to support the tourism sector.

The TDF aims to strengthen the developmental role of the UNWTO and mobilise contributions from donors to address the challenges faced by developing countries through sustainable, responsible and accessible development related to tourism.

Contributions to the TDF can be made by UNWTO member states, other members of the United Nations, non-government organisations, developmental financial institutions and private sources.

The TDF will be administered by the UNWTO Secretariat and will become operational in January 2016.



# Three new hikes to support community tourism

By Claire Allison

*Drakensberg hiking trail*



Photographs by Open Africa

Three new community-owned hiking trails have been developed by a group of young people involved in a project that aims to develop social entrepreneurship skills for youth and rural enterprises.

Non-profit organisation Open Africa worked with local communities in the poverty nodes of KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo on the project, funded by the Finnish Embassy's Local Cooperation Fund and Barclays Africa. The project is a good example of a public-private partnership since the Northern Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism also provided their support for the project.

Open Africa exists to help people see what is unique and valuable in places outside of cities, and to work together to revitalise rural communities. Its model is based on using tourism as an economic platform for rural entrepreneurs, given the tourism potential of rural areas. To date Open Africa has established 64 tourism routes, which support 2 400 rural enterprises and 27 000 jobs. Some of these rural tourism routes were used

as platforms for local youth to gain a broad understanding of the tourism industry while giving them hands-on business experience.

During the course of the project, each route employed up to five youth interns between the ages of 18 and 35 and route members offered them a variety of opportunities to gain experience. This included everything from office administration to guiding and guest relations, while the route association involved them in route management, business planning and product development.

Open Africa also helped set up management structures for these routes and its route management programme built the management capacity of the association's members, while enabling them to implement local development projects through what is known as a Challenge Fund.

Three of Open Africa's tourism routes have seen great success in their identified projects in KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo, all of which will add to the tourism potential of the areas



*uMngeni Group.*

and promise to offer travellers a completely new experience.

## Howick Falls Gorge Walk, KwaZulu-Natal

A popular tourist attraction for many years, the Howick Falls Gorge Walk has not been in operation for more than a year. The Howick-Umngeni Community Tourism Organisation (HUCTO) saw an opportunity to give the business a fresh start. The municipality granted the association permission to use the area as it would benefit local tourism.

Three local youth that graduated from the internship programme have been trained as

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guides and now take visitors on a guided walk to the foot of the falls. The income generated from the project will be used by the association to further their objectives and develop other attractions in the area.

### Community-based hiking trail in the Drakensberg

Interns along the Drakensberg Experience Route identified the community-based hiking trail and homestay as a new and innovative tourism product. The homestays offer an opportunity for the community to be involved in tourism while also helping to improve the tourism potential of the area. The business plan for the project was drawn up with assistance from Open Africa and is being implemented with funds provided from the route's Challenge Fund.

Included in the two- to three-kilometre hike, which lies in the area between Weenen and Colenso is a night at a traditional homestay in the village of Mankandane, where the hikers are treated to a traditional meal and local hospitality in a rural village. The hiking trail was initially being piloted by the interns

to test the demand for such a tourism product and due to the interest from overseas travellers from England and the United States of America (USA) the venture became a viable product. The Drakensberg is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is one of South Africa's most popular and well-known tourist attractions.

For more information about the hiking trail and homestay contact Mark and Linda Calverley at The Zingela Safari and River Company on +27 (0)36 354 7005 or [zingela@futurenet.co.za](mailto:zingela@futurenet.co.za).

### Hiking trail and overnight camp at Limpopo's Blouberg Mountain

The new community-based hiking trail has been opened in the Blouberg in Limpopo, bordering the beautiful Blouberg Nature Reserve. The trail was developed by four interns who were appointed on Open Africa's Seraki Blouberg Route, and will give travellers the opportunity to explore this mountain in a new way.

A short, day hike up to the rock pools is on offer, while those keen on spending more time exploring the mountain can hike three



*Hikers on the community hiking trail*

kilometres to the community-owned cultural camp on top of the mountain, where they can spend either one or two nights camping or in rustic, self-catering chalets.

Currently the camp at the foot of the Blouberg Mountain is being managed by Transfrontier Parks Destinations (TFPD), who work towards creating a viable and sustainable tourism industry that balances the needs of the local community with the surrounding natural environment. Three young business-minded youth currently work as guides and take visitors around the mountaintop. A guided tour to the local BaHananwa village is also on offer, adding a cultural flavour to any traveller's experience in the Blouberg. The trails are also suitable for mountain bike enthusiasts.

For more information on the trails and booking information, please contact the African Ivory Route on +27 (0)82 886 0989 or +27 (0)15 781 1823 or [www.africanivoryroute.co.za](http://www.africanivoryroute.co.za).

*Claire Allison is the marketing manager of Open Africa, a social enterprise that establishes tourism routes that offer travellers authentic experiences while generating income for local businesses in rural Africa. [www.openafrica.org](http://www.openafrica.org).*



*Hikers and their hosts for the night in Mankandane*

# Tourism routes enhance destination development efforts

By Soza Simango



The N12 National Road

The South African tourism and hospitality industry is relatively a new economic sector considering that only 3.7 million international tourists visited our shores in 1993, a minute percentage of the over 500 million world arrivals at the time. It is perhaps not surprising that only until 2009 did the democratic South African government establish a standalone Ministry of tourism with the mandate to drive the development of inclusive tourism for the country. Often described as a missed opportunity, tourism in South Africa pre 1994 was exclusive to few citizens in terms of access to tourist attractions and economic participation in the travel trade. Prohibitive civil legislation such as the Group Areas Act excluded the largest domestic market from participating and international economic sanctions against the Apartheid regime negatively impacted on growth in international visitor numbers.

The isolated nature of tourism in South Africa resulted in spatial disparities in terms of tourism destination development, which resulted in a mixture of well-developed areas in coastal and economic hubs and underdevelopment in rural tourism destinations. The post Democracy State recognised the value tourism has in economic development, job creation and poverty alleviation and began processes to prepare the sector to enable government to realise value from it. The process started with

the drafting of the 1996 White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa, which identified government as the leader, communities as active participants and the private sector as drivers of the industry. The white paper set out to develop tourism in South Africa based on "Responsible Tourism", a three legged concept, which encourages the protection of the environment; meaningful community involvement and local economic beneficiation in the development of tourism.

Through the vision statement set out in the National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS), South Africa is currently working towards becoming a top 20 tourism destination in the world by the year 2020. Ambitious targets in terms of contribution of tourism to the economy, domestic and international visitor numbers and number of jobs created have been set. The NTSS recommended a shift in focus away from reliance on international arrivals towards building a robust domestic tourism market, the development of tourism products in viable rural destinations and the need to capture the heritage and cultural tourism market. The new focus sought to ensure the dispersal of tourists to less visited and mostly rural impoverished areas as a way of driving local economic development to such spaces.

Beside the NTSS recommended shift in focus, market dynamics play a key influencing role

given the emergence of the new traveller who is well-informed and prefers more specialised, interactive and experience-based tours. A greater awareness of the potential impact of tourism on the environment, conservation, social development and poverty alleviation amongst travellers is transforming consumer behaviour. All these variables require a fresh approach away from enclave tourism typology to a more customer focussed product development, which enhances experiences and optimise value for money to the traveller.

Given the historical marginalisation of mainly rural areas of the country in the tourism sector and the current imperative to build an inclusive tourism economy, tourism routes could provide lasting solutions to the reversal of this unfortunate legacy. But it is important for all to understand what tourism routes are, how they operate, their advantages and disadvantages and evidence of what other destinations have gained from operating routes. Answers to these key questions will entice dialogue and build a common understanding, which will facilitate a way forward in terms of streamlining implementation.

Tourism routes are commonly described as a variety of activities and attractions brought together under a unified theme/brand to

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enhance the appeal of a destination and to stimulate entrepreneurial opportunity through the development of ancillary products and services. Routes as a tourism development approach offer several benefits to participating stakeholders. Firstly, routes offer product development opportunities, include less developed areas with high cultural resources in tourism. They ensure the dispersal of demand/tourists all year round and to the entire territory and they are designed to address new market trends emerging from travellers that seek enriched experiences achieved through flexible tours, self-discovery and interaction with local people and their traditions.

In addition, tourism routes create opportunities for trans-boundary cooperation, collaborative destination marketing, product development, public-private partnerships, and safeguarding of natural and cultural heritage.

Other tourism sustaining features routes offer to tourism development include:

- Spread tourism demand and income all year round and over the territory which supports regional distribution of wealth, reduce pressure on key attractions, and contribute to lowering seasonality;
- Create new and innovative products and add value to existing ones, therefore increasing visitors' satisfaction, length of stay and spending;
- Open new destinations and/or revitalise declining destination;
- Attract new market segments as well as repeat visitors, particularly special-interest segments and individual travellers, which often have higher-yield spending;
- Foster public-private partnerships and stimulate entrepreneurship;
- Promote coordination between local, regional and national authorities;
- Protect and promote natural and cultural heritage, not only tangible but also intangible heritage, by generating income for preservation and providing economic viability to activities, which otherwise may be "lost", particularly those related to more traditional sectors such as agriculture or handicraft;
- Generate funding and more attractive conditions for private sector investment;

- Enhance social cohesion and strengthens the cultural links between people at the local, regional, national or/and international levels;
- To provide tourism products and communities with a platform to participate in the tourism economy;
- To increase the overall appeal of a destination; and
- To increase the sustainability of the local economies through community tourism.

Finally tourism routes have for the past two decades or more mushroomed in southern Africa and all over the world. Some of the routes found in other countries are the 11.6 mile all-season Mineral Belt National Recreation Trail, a biking/walking trail that loops around the historic mining district Leadville, Colorado in the USA; Silk Roads Heritage Corridors, which is a collaborative route between China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to mention just a few. In Africa there is the wildlife based CAMPFIRE route in Zimbabwe, the famous wine and garden routes of the Western Cape, the Midlands Meander and several heritage, birding and community tourism routes developed through partnerships between tourism operators supported by government and private sector grant funding.

As a first in the Department of Tourism, Minister Hanekom officially endorsed (in a letter) the N12 Treasure Route (N12 TR) in 2014 as a strategic initiative for tourism transformation and development in the country. However, he cautioned that success in a multi-stakeholder route such as the N12 TR could only be realised if "proper planning, sustainable business models, broader stakeholder support and community involvement are the key driving principles. Following the endorsement, the Department and the N12 Treasure Route Association, which is the owner, management and implementing agent formalised their partnership by signing a three year memorandum of agreement starting in the 2015 financial year.

Apart from all the treasures and a magnet that the N12 TR is to visitors, it is a major boost to an otherwise tourist starved national road network and will enhance it in a number of ways. It will provide effective place marketing opportunities to travel promoters,

it will consolidate the destination's offering by combining various components into a single and commonly branded product, facilitate shared solutions to tourism infrastructure development along the N12 TR. Furthermore existing tourism operators along the route will achieve significant economies of scale in procurement of goods and services and through shared visitor information services.

The N12 TR presents to the Department of Tourism and the five provinces involved in the route an opportunity for them to collaborate within their constitutionally mandated dual competence on tourism development and promotion within the Intergovernmental Framework. The route similarly enables the industry at large to realise the boundless nature of tourism within South Africa and encourage cooperation amongst operators. Specifically, the Department of Tourism will further use the route structure as a conduit through which national policy programmes in skills and capacity development, responsible tourism standards, service excellence campaigns, enterprise development support, research and knowledge sharing are rolled out to all private and public stakeholders and their constituencies. This relationship could also be easily used to facilitate destination marketing and grading services offered by South African Tourism, the Department's agency mandated to promote South Africa as a tourist destination locally and internationally.



The Big Hole, Kimberley, Northern Cape

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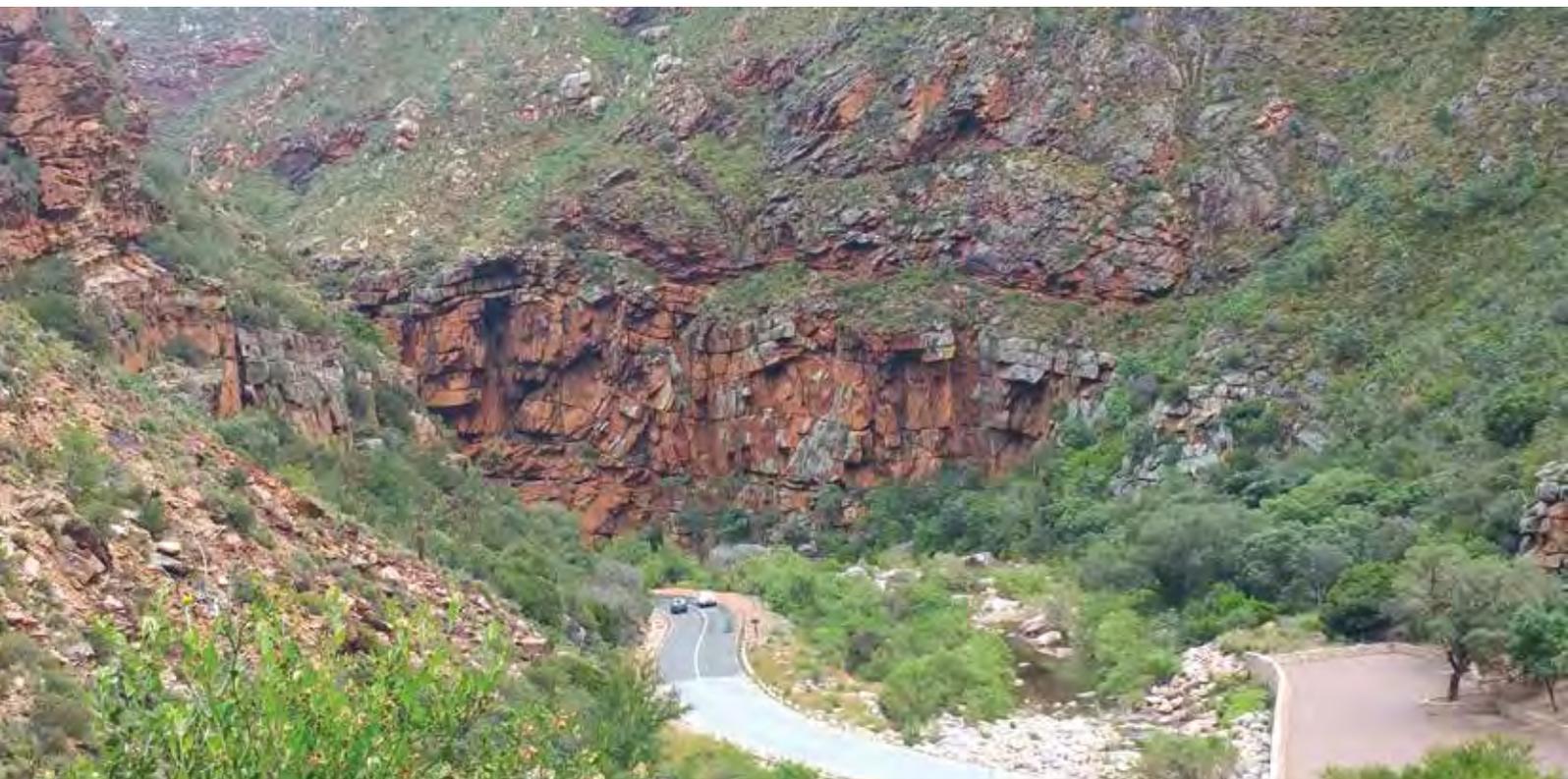
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The N12 Treasure Route, which forms part of the N12 National Road, stretches from Emalahleni (Witbank) in Mpumalanga past Delmas into Gauteng, Johannesburg onto Carletonville passing Soweto and into the North West Province via Potchefstroom, close to the Vredefort Dome World Heritage Site. From there it enters the City of Matlosane/ KOSH (Klerksdorp, Orkney, Stilfontein and Hartbeesfontein) through Wolmaransstad, Bloemhof and Christiana into Kimberley in the Northern Cape Province. From Kimberley it stretches through Hopetown, Strybenburg and Britstown to the historical town of Victoria West. Just South of Victoria West at Three Sisters, the route joins the N1 National Route to Beaufort West. From there, it runs south through De Rust and Dysseldorp onto Oudtshoorn and ultimately over the Outeniqua Pass where it ends. As evident in this description, the N12 National Road network gets into contact at various points with the N1; N2; N3 and N4 National Roads, which increases access points to its various destination areas and enables travellers to hop on and off the destination depending on their interests.

Tourism experience along the N12 TR is based on an abundance of resources. From anthropology to geology, birding and biking, the route has a number of features to interest many, from adventure seekers to fun lovers, nature enthusiasts to visitors in pursuit of cultural experiences and those who seek tranquillity from road travel along a serene low volume national road. The route's iconic tourism magnets range from coal fields in Mpumalanga, Gauteng's goldfields, the North West meteorite impact crater of the Vredefort Dome World Heritage Site, historic towns and cities and significant archaeological heritage sites. The route provides opportunities like seeing gold being poured through gold mine tours, natural encounters at places such as Bloemhof Nature Reserve and chances of exciting bird sighting at Faan Meintjies Nature Reserve to mention just a few activities along the route. It runs for 1 250 km from Emalahleni in Mpumalanga through Gauteng, North West, Northern Cape and ends in an area around George in the Western Cape. According to reports from stakeholder engagements by the route managers, the entire route represents

4.7 million people, approximately 3000 accommodation businesses predominantly small, medium and micro-enterprises in the travel, hospitality, trade, agriculture and primary sectors, 38 towns and 44 municipalities.

The highlight in the Northern Cape part of the route is the historic diamond mining town of Kimberley, which is host to the biggest hand excavated hole in the world, The Big Hole. Kimberley and surrounds offer exciting wildlife and birding experiences on the Diamond Route farms surrounding the town. Just before entering Kimberley from Johannesburg is the largest colony of Lesser Flamingos that breed in Kamfers Dam. One of the most prominent features along the N12 road is the unmistakable widespread of windmills on the farms. The route is not just dotted with over 300 windmills but has several farm holders involved in various types of farming including strawberry, Ostrich, Outeniqua, livestock and other farmers most of whom allow daily visitors on the fields, on their retail farm stores and invite the community and visitors alike to attend their cultural events.



A view of Meiringspoort Pass near the town of De Rust in the Western Cape.

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The town of George is the first expansive urban port of call on the Western Cape part of the route. The town boasts museums and a national airline and great mountainous scenery. A few kilometres south east of George leads into the Redberry Farm which grows strawberries and has the largest shrub maze in the southern hemisphere according to the farm owner. On this farm tourists can have fun walks in the maze, do farm rides on a miniature self-made train, pick strawberries and have light meals and coffee at the farm's café.

To top it all, between the towns of George, Oudtshoorn and Beaufort West, is one of the most scenic and memorable driving experiences along the route. It starts with an uphill meander over the Outeniqua Mountain Pass out of George down to the small town of De Rust into the eye catching Meiringspoort Pass, which concludes with the picturesque mountain tables of the Karoo National Park at the entrance of the town of Beaufort West. The Meiringspoort meander, which deserves a multi helicopter, bicycle, hot air balloon, car and walking video footage for online virtual tour promotion of the route is arguably one of the highlights for the N12 TR in terms of quality, natural scenic experience. Along this passage is a parallel procession of the N12 road and the Oliphants riverine at least until De Rust, which makes for plush and refreshing scenery teemed with exciting geological formations of the Outeniqua Mountains.

Alternatively, visitors on route from George to Oudtshoorn can take a detour to the world famous and picturesque Cango Valley where the spectacular underground wonder of the Cango Caves. Situated in a limestone ridge parallel to the well-known Swartberg Mountains, you will find the finest dripstone caverns, with their vast halls and towering formations. Cango Caves is the only show cave in Africa which offers a choice of heritage (easy) or adventure tours. All tours are available in English, Xhosa, Afrikaans, German and French and other local languages and are led by experienced, knowledgeable and accredited site guides.

In partnership with the N12 Treasure Route Association, Provincial Departments of Tourism, district and local municipalities, the Department

of Tourism is currently conducting regional tourism needs assessments along the route and making efforts to recover stakeholder support for initiatives amongst local tourism associations, business chambers and tourism business operators. Initial needs identified include the need to engage the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL) on issues pertaining to road maintenance, directional and tourism signage along the route, common branding of the route, membership drive and database development, retraining staff at Visitor Information Centres (VICs) around the packaging of the products, development of new marketing collateral for VICs and trade shows, partnership development for new event launches at strategic locations along the route and the involvement of the travel trade media and social media in promoting the N12.

According to the signed agreement, the Department will contribute financially towards the development of the route. Immediate work required to re-launch the product include:

- The redevelopment and refreshment of the route website;
- Vetting of its existing business directory,
- Re-establishment of local tourism associations;
- Involvement of tour operators in packaging the various tourism products along the route,
- Brand awareness campaign; and
- Route media launch and promotion of the destination at local and international trade shows.

The implementing agent is also in discussion with a number of partners to launch cycling and hot air balloon events and to introduce sustainable energy solutions to operators along the route in 2017.

It is critical to note that the principle of strategic partnerships and collaboration is highlighted as one of the guiding values required to grow and develop tourism in the Department's mission statement. The historical origins of existing tourism routes in and outside South Africa mainly point to private sector operators as initiators and operational drivers. This clearly demonstrates the nature of routes as a nerve centre or constellation comprising of industry operators and their strategic ability to

bring like-minded operators together around a common and mutually beneficial vision.

Routes facilitate the inclusion of rural communities into the tourism economy, ignite niche tourism market development, and provide a variety of attractions and experiences within proximity for domestic travellers. Clearly, the route approach to tourism destination development is a dynamic and catalytic mechanism that facilitates a number of the Department's strategic focus areas around the vision of growing inclusive tourism, increasing domestic trips and the contribution of tourism to Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

In living up to the Department's mission of growing tourism through partnerships and collaboration, as endorsed by the Minister mentioned earlier in September 2014, what is now left is the implementation of the priority areas so that the N12 TR can take flight, boost tourist numbers leading into greater economic development, job creation and reduction in poverty.

For more information on the route contact Ms Niki Glen; Acting CEO: N12 Treasure Route; on email: niki@sttp.co.za or call her on 079 8723160.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

1. The N12 Treasure Route is the longest tourist route (1 250 km) and cuts across five provinces in South Africa.
2. Although disputed, The Big Hole (Kimberley, Northern Cape) is the largest hole excavated by hand in the world.
3. EMalaheni (previously Witbank) is the centre of the local coal mining industry.
4. The Cango Caves are the only show caves in Africa which offers a choice of heritage (easy) or adventure tours.
5. The Vredefort crater is the largest verified impact crater on Earth and has a diameter of 300 km.
6. The town of Westonaria, 45 kms west of Johannesburg and 18 kms south of Randfontein was formed in 1948 by the amalgamation of the townships Venterspost, proclaimed in 1937, and Westonaria, proclaimed in 1938.
7. Kamfers Dam in Kimberley Northern Cape is one of only four breeding sites for Lesser Flamingos in Africa.

# State-owned attractions go green

By Bernhard Meyer



*During his budget vote speech in May this year, Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom said, “Our Tourism Incentive Programme focuses on competitiveness and destination enhancement, adding that this includes an exciting retrofitting component, which will start with energy efficiency.”*

Some of South Africa's most famous tourist attractions will soon generate some of its own power through renewable energy sources. This initiative forms part of the pilot implementation phase of Department of Tourism's broader Tourism Incentive Programme (TIP) and includes Robben Island, selected camps in the Kruger National Park and some of the National Botanical Gardens.

The project is driven by the Department of Tourism in collaboration with the respective Management Authorities of the pilot sites and aims to ensure more energy efficient operations that will not only reduce the carbon footprint of the attractions, but also reduce input costs over the medium- to long-term.

During his budget vote speech in May this year, Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom said, “Our Tourism Incentive Programme

focuses on competitiveness and destination enhancement, adding that this includes an exciting retrofitting component, which will start with energy efficiency”.

*“Although sites such as Robben Island is not on the national electricity grid, it currently generates power through large diesel generators. Not only is this very expensive, but also constitutes a number of environmental risks for the island.”*

Bernhard Meyer, Chief Director for TIP in the department, said the renewable

energy project is one of a number of programme components and that the broader TIP also focus on market access and tourism grading support as well as initiatives to enhance iconic destinations and attractions.

The renewable energy pilot project at the mentioned state owned sites is set to be completed by April 2016 and will inform the development of a support programme to encourage private sector tourism establishments to retrofit their facilities with renewable energy sources.

In referring to the pilot phase, Meyer said “Although sites such as Robben Island is not on the national electricity grid, it currently generates power through large diesel generators. Not only is this very expensive, but also constitutes a number of environmental risks for the island.”

# Water saving tips

By Mmakgomo Masote

The shortage of water is becoming a major problem in most provinces of South Africa. This is because of the scarcity of rainfall which resulted in some parts being stricken by drought.

The Department of Water and Sanitation has identified Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Mpumalanga and North West as provinces affected by drought. The Gauteng province is also mentioned as one of the provinces affected by the shortage of water. The Interministerial task team led by Cooperative Governance Minister, Pravin Gordhan, has been assigned to handle the water shortage crisis in the country and he has called on South Africans to save water. The municipalities have also issued water restrictions in the affected provinces.

Even though this has become a nightmare to everyone affected, the tourism sector is hard hit, especially the hospitality industry where water consumption is a necessity. Thus far everything is still under control as services are mostly operating normally and water shortages in affected establishments are being managed accordingly.

However, simple yet resourceful plans such as education on awareness should be introduced and applied as crucial measurements for using water wisely. Those measures should ensure that businesses don't compromise quality, or the health and safety of guests in the tourism sector.

The following tips can be helpful to save water in the hospitality industry as well as in households:

## LEAKING TAPS

- Taps must be regularly checked for leakage and be maintained.
- Installation of infrared sensors on taps to detect a user curb and regulate the flow of water.
- Check regularly for leaking dump valves, ensure that all water inlet valves close properly and check that level controls on water reuse tanks work properly and maintenance is adhered to.

## BATHROOMS

- Install dual flush toilets so guests can opt for a shorter flush. If it is not feasible to change all toilets, you can reduce the water used in flushing by placing a brick in the cistern.
- Use the shower instead of a bath as it reduces the consumption of water. Shower flow should be not more than 10 litres and this can simply be measured with a bucket and stopwatch.
- Inspection and maintenance of leaking toilets must done regularly.

## LAUNDRY

- When buying washing machines, look out for a good water consumption rating.
- Wash small quantities in a 5kg machine and always ensure machines are fully loaded.
- Minimise the rinse cycle as much as possible without reducing quality.
- Consider the reuse of water from previous rinse cycles for the first wash of the next cycle by installing temporary holding tanks.
- 500-room-plus hotels should consider installing a continuous batch washer (CBW), which uses all the rinse water for pre-washing and main suds operation.
- Consider using ozone laundry systems. These inject ozone into the water, which works in conjunction with the laundry chemicals to provide a more efficient wash.
- Where outsourced, ask your supplier what procedures they have in place to reduce water and energy use.
- Ensure that the water flow rates on tunnel washers and continuous batch washers (CBWs) are adjusted to the manufacturer's recommended setting.

## SWIMMING POOLS

- Conduct regular maintenance to prevent leaks and this can be done by reading water meters last thing at night and first thing in the morning.
- Backwash the swimming pool every two to three days rather than daily. It is also best to opt for a backwash system where water can be recaptured and used for irrigation (green).
- Always cover swimming pools when not in use to prevent evaporation and to reduce the need to empty and refill.
- Installing push-button showers in the pool will reduce water use.

## GROUNDS

- Do not water grounds in the heat of the day, especially in hot climate, rather do it in the evening.
- It is best to avoid using automated watering systems however, if they do have to be used water can be saved by fitting timers on sprinklers to control water use. Moisture sensors in gardens and grounds can also be used to avoid over-watering.
- Put a procedure in place for manual watering and train gardening staff to reduce water usage when necessary.

## KITCHENS

- Only use dishwashers on full load.
- Pre-soak utensils and dishes.
- Avoid thawing food under running water and wash vegetables and fruits in a sink of water rather than a running water rinse.
- Avoid using running water to melt ice in sink strainers and minimise the use of ice machines and adjust settings to dispense less ice.

## HOUSEKEEPING

- Conduct housekeeping training on procedures such as how many times to flush toilets when cleaning, not to leave taps running or use excessive water and using a mop rather than hose when cleaning floors.
- Implement a linen reuse programme.

## GOING GREEN

The green economy focuses on recycling non-renewable resources, and is also regarded as a useful method to save water:

- Use rainwater harvesting techniques to divert and capture rainwater from roofs and gutters. Water can be diverted into underground storage tanks or into water butts. Plants actually prefer rainwater to treated water from a tap.
- If possible, use grey water from baths and sinks for irrigation. Consider installing a treatment system that will enable you to use treated black water from toilets in the gardens.
- Establishments such as guesthouses can opt for a solar pump for pumping borehole water to store sufficient water in the storage tanks.

# Upcoming tourism events

## FEBRUARY 2016

DATE	EVENT	VENUE / REGION
20 February	Umthayi Marula Festival	Kwangwanase District, KwaZulu-Natal
18 - 19 February	International Tourist Guide Day	Skhukhuza, Mpumalanga
20 - 27 February	Marula Festival	Phalaborwa, Limpopo Province

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