

MARCH 2023

EDITION

04

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tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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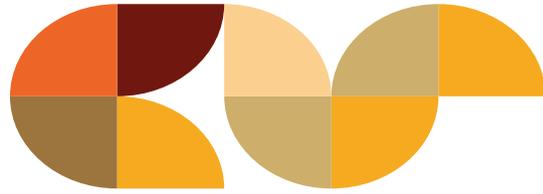
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Editorial



Let me welcome you to this edition of Bojanala. We introduce you to our newly-appointed Minister of Tourism, Ms Patricia de Lille (MP). We have no doubt that she will add great value to the Department as we continue take tourism to new heights.

Meetings Africa 2023 recently took a centre stage on our tourism calendar. The Sandton Convention Centre provided the perfect backdrop for this

annual experience, bringing experts and businesses closer together under the tourism umbrella. We are also pleased to share highlights from the Best Practice Workshop which brought together delegates from all over Africa to exchange best practices in tourism.

In this edition, amongst others, we look back at the Deputy Minister's Post-SoNA tourism engagement and information session which took place at Ray

Nkonyeni Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal province, we honour recent graduates from the Departmental Development Programmes and become "tourism tech-savvy" in the Eastern Cape province.

We trust you will enjoy this issue. The autumn holiday season is upon us. Remember to travel safe as you explore South Africa and its beauty.

- Seapei Lebele



WELCOME TO TOURISM MINISTER DE LILLE



Ms Patricia de Lille was appointed as the Minister of Tourism by President Cyril Ramaphosa in March 2023.

Minister de Lille is a seasoned politician and Public Servant having served in all three spheres of government since South Africa's first democratic election in 1994.

She has been fighting injustice for more than 45 years and was part of the team which led the constitutional negotiations and the team which drafted South Africa's Constitution.

She is the only South African female politician to start her own political parties and win seats in all three spheres of government. She achieved this feat twice, in 2003 with the Independent Democrats and in 2019 with the GOOD Movement.

Minister de Lille served as the Mayor of Cape Town for seven years between

2011 and 2018 where accountability and clean governance were the cornerstones of her term as the City of Cape Town achieved four consecutive clean audits.

She spearheaded progressive projects such as using infrastructure investment as a lever to spur economic growth, developed the transit-orientated development strategy and many other redress projects such as finalising land restitution cases to reverse the legacy of apartheid spatial planning.

In 2017, she co-authored a book with Craig Kesson titled: "View from the City Hall" Reflections on governing Cape Town.

Minister de Lille previously served as a board member of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, Chairperson of the Global Parliament of Mayors, Vice-President of the World Energy Cities Partnership

and a commissioner for the Global Commission on Economy and Climate. She is an Honorary Member of the Global Parliament of Mayors.

Prior to her appointment as Minister of Tourism, she served as the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) from June 2019 to March 2023 where her focus was to drive spatial equality, repurposing government's assets for greater socio-economic value and driving the Department's Green Buildings Policy, clamping down on corruption and ensuring that public land and public buildings were used for public good.

She also spearheaded the Infrastructure Investment Plan, approved by Cabinet in May 2020 which formed an integral part of South Africa's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

During her tenure as Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, she approved the release of thousands of parcels of land for land reform: land redistribution, land restitution and land tenure. Minister de Lille also drove the implementation of infrastructure projects by gazetting of 62 Strategic Integrated Projects in various sectors and nine Green Hydrogen Projects in terms of the Infrastructure Development Act of 2014. Under the ethos of using public land for public good, during de Lille's tenure as Minister of DPWI, she also released 14 State-owned properties to be used as shelters for victims of gender-based violence in four provinces.

Under Minister de Lille's leadership, the DPWI also reduced the number of overdue 30 days payments with the department later achieving between 95% and 99% on time payment rate to service providers.

In her role as the Minister of Tourism, she will use her vast experience as a former mayor of a major tourist destination, Cape Town, to drive destination marketing, increase air access and visitor numbers to South Africa. A key focus for the tourism portfolio will also be to increase the number of jobs created by the sector.

CONNECTIONS AND COLLABORATIONS AT MEETINGS AFRICA 2023



Meetings Africa 2023 took place from 27 February 2023 to 1 March 2023 at the Sandton Convention Centre. The 2023 edition brought together Africa's best thought leadership and tourism experts with the aim of deepening connection and collaboration to propel the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events (MICE) sector.

Festivities kicked off in high spirits during the Business Opportunity Networking Day (BONDay), where hundreds of business events role players connected. BONDay is an educational opportunity for new businesses and season campaigners in the tourism sector to share ideas, engage and collaborate. The theme for this year's BONDay was storytelling and it was perfectly illustrated by renowned storyteller and poet, Ms Gcina Mhlophe, when she set the scene for delegates with a captivating African story.

Tourism Deputy Minister, Mr Fish Mahlalela, delivered the keynote address where he emphasised the importance of collaborations to fast track development in Africa. "Meetings Africa is a trade show that brings the African continent's business events, products and offerings under a single roof, with a specific focus on SMMEs and their value chain to the entire tourism sector," said Deputy Minister Mahlalela.

The BONDay had four stages where over 30 experts tackled current industry challenges and ideating towards innovative solutions to drive the industry and the continent forward. It also saw the birth of the African chapter of the International Association of Convention Centres (AIPC), with the continent's first AIPC Summit being hosted at Meetings Africa.

The AIPC Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mr Sven Bossu, believes that Africa is the future but a lot of work needs to be done to ensure the industry grows. "We face a number of challenges around sustainability, technology and finding the right resources. By joining forces, we can tackle those challenges," said Mr Bossu.

The trade floor officially opened on 28 February 2023 with the customary ringing of the bell. Speaking at the trade floor opening, the South African Tourism Board (SATB) Chairperson, Mr Thozamile Botha, highlighted the importance of quality connections for Africa's success. "Our mission is to grow Africa's business events sector and work alongside our partners across the continent to drive the continent's growth," said Botha.

The Gauteng Provincial Government Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Economic Development, Ms Tasneem Motara, also addressed

delegates attending the trade floor opening where she reaffirmed the Province's commitment to the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan. "Gauteng Province is the economic and business hub of South Africa and the African continent. On top of business events, Gauteng Province is introducing its sprawling township venues, attractions, and accommodation establishments that are ready to support the building back together drive," said MEC Motara.

Delegates at Meetings Africa 2023 had an opportunity to be captivated by renowned Cameroonian mathematician Professor Abdou Atangana. The Professor underscored the need for Africa to accelerate its knowledge production and sharing, citing the production and sharing, as well as the positive breakthrough in the Continent's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Festivities wrapped up on 1 March 2023 in what was undoubtedly a successful event that saw the participation of over 375 buyers from 60 countries meeting 325 exhibitors from 22 African countries. Last year's edition drew 161 global buyers and 216 exhibitors from 13 African countries. If these figures are anything to go by, the tourism sector is definitely on a rise.

Meetings Africa 2023 - Development Zone

Entrepreneurs

Nomusa's Bed and Breakfast



The company runs two guesthouses in Richards Bay and Melmoth in KwaZulu-Natal Province, which are suitable for leisure and business travellers. They are a short drive from Nseleni Nature Reserve and Saint Lucia.

Daring Adventures



This Gauteng Province-based travel agency which is accredited by the Association of Southern African Travel Agents (ASATA), is 100% women-owned. It specialises in curating travel experiences in leisure travel, business travel, MSC cruise tours, adventure activities, shuttle services, digital travel stokvel, safari destinations, flight reservations accommodation.

Madeline Grove Bed and Breakfast



Madeline Grove is a bed and breakfast quality accommodation for leisure and corporate guests. It is located in Morningside, Durban and in close

proximity to the beachfront, International Convention Centre, sports stadiums, Greyville Race Course. It has easy access to roads that lead to the Durban City, Umhlanga and King Shaka International Airport.

Vhafamandi Bed and Breakfast



Vhafamandi Bed and Breakfast is a four-star graded facility located in Makwarela township, Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province. It is an ideal location for business and leisure travellers and is in close proximity to the Kruger National Park, Nandoni Dam and Phiphidi Waterfalls.

PSN Travel



PSN Travel is a travel marketing and tour operator company based in the City of uMhlatuze in Richards Bay in KwaZulu-Natal Province. They package and sell authentic Zulu cultural and indigenous community-based travel experiences in KwaZulu-Natal Province, which gives their clients a chance to personally engage with the locals during their tour and gain insight into contemporary Zulu lifestyle.

Victorious Corner Guest House



Victorious Corner Guest House is nestled in the heart of the Maluti Mountains of the eastern part of the Free State Province in Phuthaditjhaba, QwaQwa and is a stone throw away from the scenic Golden Gate Highlands National Park. The four-star graded guest house won the Booking.com Traveller Review Award in 2020 and continues to offer excellent service to both local and international guests.

Profound Travel Tours



Profound Travel Tours is a proudly South African domestic tour operator that provides leisure packaged tours, sightseeing, corporate travel arrangements, shuttle services and any travel-related services throughout South Africa.

Neo Star Rentals and Travel



Neo Star Rentals and Travel is a multi-award winning company that specialises in car rentals and air shuttle services at King Shaka International Airport, Durban. They also provide affordable travel packages for business and leisure.

ING Travel and Tours



ING Travel and Tours is a Durban-based tour company providing fully escorted tours in KwaZulu-Natal Province, Mpumalanga Province, Kruger National Park, Eswatini as well as the provinces of Western Cape and Gauteng. They also provide airport and hotel transfers.

Diemersfontein Wine and Country Estate



Diemersfontein Wine and Country Estate in Wellington, is a much-loved third-generation South African-owned wine farm. Since producing the original Coffee and Chocolate style Pinotage in 2001, Diemersfontein has become a household name. Along with seven-days-a-week wine tasting, they also have graded guest accommodation and a restaurant offering magnificent views of the valley.

Glamping Adventures



Glamping Adventures organises bespoke glamping experiences, corporate retreats and unique events around South Africa. Their team has extensive knowledge of glamping establishments, perfect retreat and team building adventure activities.

Tlhari Travel



Tlhari Travel is located in Soweto, Gauteng Province. It provides consultation services for hassle-free travelling.

Know Your Africa Adventures and Tours



Know Your Africa Adventures and Tours is a Limpopo Province-based travel agency that provides the following services: flight bookings, car hire or airport transfers, cultural guided tours as well as accommodation and venue reservations.

Mahakwe Tours



Mahakwe Tours was established in 2018 and provides the following services: airport transfers, Lion Park tours, private shuttle hire, game drives and educational tours.

So Travel Solutions



So Travel Solutions is a travel and tourism company with over 18 years' experience providing the following services: travel solutions, customised tours, shuttle service, car hire as well as team buildings and conferencing.

Durban Fever Travel and Tours



Durban Fever Travel and Tours is a Durban-based tour operator and travel services company which provides the following services: accommodation bookings, group adventure tours, big five game drives and township experience tours.

Boke Tours



Boke Tours is a Limpopo-based airport transfer and tour operating company specialising in cultural, adventure, sports and leisure tours.

Burnham House Bed and Breakfast



Burnham House Bed and Breakfast is ideally situated over the warm Indian Ocean, in the sub-tropical town of Umhlanga, KwaZulu-Natal Province. It is within close proximity to all main amenities such as King Shaka International Airport, Umhlanga Village, La Lucia Mall, Gateway Theatre of Shopping and Umhlanga Beach.



Sharing of Best Practices to Rethink Tourism

The Department of Tourism hosted the 2023 Sharing of Best Practices Workshop in Cape Town from 8 to 10 March 2023.

This was the 10th edition of the Sharing of Best Practices Workshop and it was attended by delegates from all over Africa, in particular those with whom South Africa has signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and enjoys bilateral cooperation with. The Workshop is a mechanism for the Department of Tourism to implement existing agreements with its African counterparts through information sharing on matters related to sustainable tourism growth and development.

The Workshop is aligned to the provisions of South Africa's foreign policy which supports the development of the region and the continent. It can be viewed as an initiative by South Africa towards implementing the signed bilateral agreements and building tourism capacity within the African continent as well as strengthening regional and continental integration.

The South African Government places tourism high on its agenda for sustainable growth and job creation. It is through initiatives and platforms such as the Best Practices Workshop that will make meaningful contributions in achieving the country's set targets.

The three-day Workshop facilitated

a dialogue and an exchange of best practices. It encouraged countries to utilise grading and classification systems to give consistency to the quality image of a sub-region to meet the demand of the market and to facilitate exchanges and agreements between sub-regional systems.

The focus of this year's session was on women, youth and community participation in the tourism sector, with speakers from the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), South African National Parks (SANParks) and the Department of Tourism. In addition, Western Cape Tourism, Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (WESGRO) presented on Air Access in Africa, a perspective from the Western Cape.

Some of the countries represented in

the Workshop include Algeria, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Palestine, Seychelles and Zambia.

In his keynote address, the Director-General of the Department of Tourism, Mr Victor Tharage said: "African regions each offer their own best practice. We should take pride in associating with each other instead of competing. We need to open our markets to each other."

"A lot of work has gone into the past 10 years of this workshop and it promises to be a big event in the calendar of the continent. We should create conditions whereby we train and retain the knowledge base within the region, especially amongst our youth," concluded the Director-General.





Deputy Minister Mahlalela Engages KwaZulu-Natal Community

On 2 March 2023, the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Mr Fish Mahlalela held a post-State of the Nation Address (SoNA) tourism engagement and information session with the community of Ray Nkonyeni Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal Province at the Ugu Sports and Leisure Centre. The aim of the engagement was to inform targeted groups about programmes and opportunities offered by the Department to advance themselves.

This was the first time the Department hosted a community engagement session in the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal Province. The engagement was also aimed at obtaining feedback from youth, women, people with disabilities and aspiring Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) in the tourism value chain and about the Departmental programmes and initiatives in order to identify gaps and improve on them.

“The tourism sector remains a key driver of South Africa’s national economy and contributes to economic growth and job creation. It is in this context that government will continue to create a

conducive environment for youth and women in tourism to pursue tourism careers including entrepreneurship,” said Deputy Minister Mahlalela.

During the year 2000, Cabinet of the Republic of South Africa decided to adopt Imbizo as a programme of interactive governance and communication should be adopted to promote increased dialogue between the government and people without mediation. Imbizo promotes active involvement and participation of the public in the implementation of government programmes. At this session, more than 600 people attended. Participants included tourism stakeholders as well as women, youth, people with disabilities and SMMEs with interest in the tourism value chain within the Ugu District Municipality.

The area depends on tourism for economic activity and jobs, but is also faced with many challenges which include water disruptions, load shedding and damaged roads. These have an impact on tourism development. The Ugu District Municipality as well as the

South Coast Tourism office, KwaZulu-Natal Women-in-Tourism Provincial Chapter and other relevant structures, assisted with mobilisation of attendees. Local Tourist Guides from the Provincial Registrar, were also attendance.



The following Sector stakeholders were afforded an opportunity to exhibit and present their offerings:

- National Empowerment Fund (NEF);
- National Youth Development Agency (NYDA);
- Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA);
- Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA); and
- Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA).





Department of Tourism and SANParks Collaborate to Empower Mpumalanga and Limpopo Youth With Skills

The Department of Tourism in conjunction with South African National Parks (SANParks) recently honoured 106 youth from the Mpumalanga and Limpopo Provinces who successfully completed the Tourism Monitors Training Programme.

The youth received Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) National Certificates which are accredited on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level 2 - 4 in the following categories:

- Occupationally-directed Education Training and Development Practices;
- Tourist Guiding;
- Project Management;
- Nature Conservation; and
- New Venture Creation.

The Tourism Monitors Training Programme is part of a greater objective of the National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS) to ensure an adequately skilled and professional tourism workforce that is able to deliver a world-class visitor experience. Tourism has long been

viewed as a sector that has the potential to grow the economy and create opportunities.

Speaking at the event in the Kruger National Park's Berg en Dal Rest Camp, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Mr Fish Mahlalela highlighted the significance of multi-sector partnerships in fast-tracking economic growth and in creating the much-needed opportunities for the youth.

"The Tourism Monitors you see today are an extension of the critical services that are provided by various cross-cutting sectors of our economy that contribute to tourist safety and an enhanced visitor experience."

"Our collaboration with SANParks has been impactful. Not only has it amassed benefits for the conservation community, but it has offered a lifeline to the youth in the communities that border our national parks. Multi-sector partnerships are critical and will continue to play a key role in sustaining tourism and our overall economy," said Deputy Minister Mahlalela.

In 2019, the Department entered into a three-year agreement with SANParks

to implement the Tourism Monitors Programme. Learners were placed in all the 21 national parks in South Africa, including the Kruger National Park (KNP), to gain theoretical and workplace training.

"Through this collaboration, we have invested in the youth who will safeguard our natural resources for the benefit of generations to come. Out of the 259 youth who enrolled for the Tourism Monitors Programme, SANParks has employed 130 at all its 21 national parks," said the Kruger National Park Managing Executive, Mr Oscar Mthimkhulu.

"We are extremely proud of our contribution to youth empowerment, but mostly in our efforts to usher in a new understanding on the importance of conservation and the overall functioning of our national parks," added Mr Mthimkhulu.

The Tourism Monitors Programme is one of a number of initiatives that the Department of Tourism implements and are aimed at empowering the youth in the sector. Graduates of the Tourism Monitors Programme took an opportunity to share their learnership experience with guests and thanked both entities for

initiating the Programme.

Ms Shedron Mukhumo stated: "The Tourism Monitors Programme taught me a lot about the importance of conserving and preserving our natural resources for future generations. It has also opened my eyes to a variety of opportunities that I did not know existed in tourism. I am currently a SANParks Research Assistant and I am proud of playing a critical role in conserving our natural resources."

Ms Prudence Vuyisile said: "Through the Tourism Monitors Programme, I have gained experience in conservation practices and a knowledge of Supply Chain Management practices. The Programme has given me hope and inspired me to further my studies. I am currently on a fixed-term contract with SANParks as a Debtors Clerk."

The Department of Tourism is committed to providing training and development programmes that will drive inclusive growth of the sector. The youth are encouraged to visit the website: www.tourism.gov.za to learn more about the skills programmes that are currently being advertised in the sector.





Skills Development Programme Graduation Ceremonies

The Department of Tourism recently hosted graduation ceremonies for the Food Safety Quality Assurer Programmes in Gauteng Province and the Food and Beverage Programme in the Western Cape Province. At the Gauteng Province ceremony, 108 learners graduated while the later ceremony in the Western Cape Province, 98 learners graduated. The Food Safety Quality Assurer Programme is a one-year Departmental Programme aimed to upskill unemployed individuals within the hospitality industry.

Speaking at the Gauteng Province ceremony, the Deputy Minister of Tourism Mr Fish Mahlalela highlighted the importance of an adequately skilled workforce in the tourism sector. "Through these programmes, we are introducing

young people to accredited educational programmes that not only contribute to improved service levels but will also assure an enhanced visitor experience and the sector's sustainability," said Deputy Minister Mahlalela.

At the Western Cape Province graduation ceremony, Deputy Minister Mahlalela was warmly welcomed by the new cohort of 98 graduates that will populate the talent pool of this scarce skill in the tourism value chain.

"The National Tourism Sector Strategy and the Tourism Human Resource Development Strategy empowers our Department to implement skills development programmes to support the sector's developmental objectives. The impact should be in addressing skills shortage within the Tourism Hospitality

Industry and respond to the sector's detrimental socio-economic challenges posed by COVID 19," said Deputy Minister Mahlalela.

The one-year Food and Beverage Services Programme targeted unemployed youth in the Western Cape Province and aims to upskill and ensure employability within the hospitality industry. This programme entails 30% theory and 70% workplace experiential training with graduates receiving a National Certificate in Food and Beverages accredited by the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sports Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA).

Collaborative partnerships with industry stakeholders offering in-house practical training for learners have contributed to the success of the initiative.



#TravelWise in Mzansi

Welcome to South Africa

There's so much to see, and so many uniquely South African experiences to explore.

Whether you are traveling in a group or alone, we want to ensure you have an unforgettable stay as you explore our beautiful country responsibly.

Information on our top tourism attractions and activities is available at our Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in all our airports, and on www.southafrica.net

Our tourism offerings are best explored with the aid of certified tourist guides. We have more than 10 000 certified tourist guides across the country that can easily be identified with their unique badge and identification cards. Visit www.tourism.gov.za to access information on guides near your destination.



#ResponsibleTraveller Tips



LOCATION:

- » Update the GPS App on your mobile device to accurately navigate through our country



CLIMATE: South Africa's climate can get extremely hot and dry.

- » Wear sunscreen and a hat
- » Wear the appropriate clothing and footwear for outdoor activities
- » Carry enough water to stay hydrated
- » Avoid drinking water from rivers and streams



BE WATER WISE: Most of our beaches carry a Blue Flag Status

- » Only swim in designated areas
- » Lifeguards are on call to ensure your safety

- » Read and follow the signs to ensure an enjoyable experience at the Beach
- » Take care when swimming as rip currents can pull you out to sea



PERSONAL SAFETY: We care about your safety

- » Ensure your personal possessions are with you at all times
- » Keep passports and important documents in a safe at your hotel, and carry a copy whilst out and about
- » Do not share your banking details or pin code with anyone
- » Alert your hotel before going for a walk alone or an excursion

Useful contacts: Should you require support or find yourself in distress, contact the authorities for assistance:

Police (SAPS): (T) 10111 | **Ambulance/Fire:** (T) 10177 | **Covid 19 emergency no:** 0800 029 99

Tourism Complaints: (T) 012 444 6000 or 0860686747, E-mail: complaints@tourism.gov.za



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SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM

Soweto Tourism Awards Ceremony



The Soweto Tourism Awards ceremony, held on 4 February 2023, was a resounding success with a packed audience of industry professionals, dignitaries and members of the local community. The awards ceremony was held in recognition of the outstanding contributions made by individuals, organisations and communities in promoting Soweto as a top tourist destination.

The atmosphere was electric as the nominees, dressed in their finest attire, eagerly awaited the announcement of the winners. There was a sense of anticipation and excitement in the room, with everyone eager to see who would take home the coveted awards. The audience was treated to a lively performance by local artists and a delicious selection of traditional Sowetan cuisine.

The awards ceremony was a true

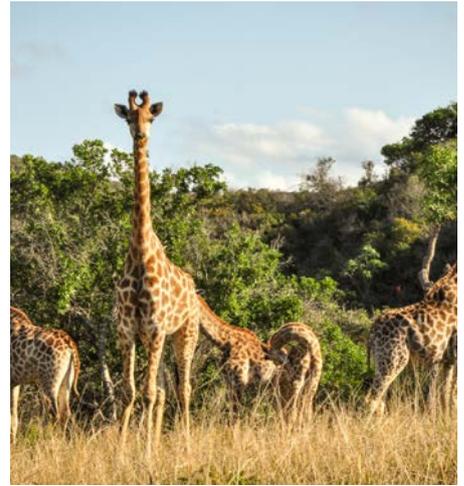
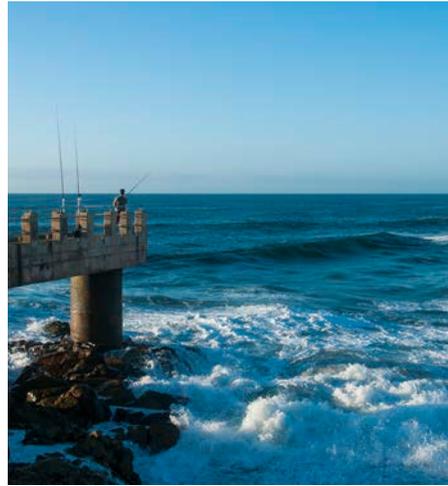
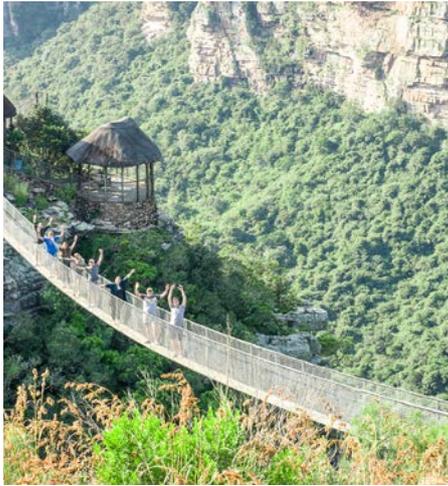
celebration of the hard work, dedication and creativity of those who have helped to put Soweto on the map as a top tourist destination. The winners, who were chosen by a panel of independent judges, were recognised for their contributions in various categories, including Best Heritage Site, Best Accommodation Provider and Best Tour Guide.

One of the highlights of the evening was the presentation of the Soweto Community Tourism Award, which was given to a local community organisation that has made a significant contribution to promoting Soweto as a tourist destination. This Award recognises the importance of community involvement in the development of sustainable tourism and highlights the role that local communities play in promoting their cultural heritage and preserving their history.

The success of the Soweto Tourism Awards is a testament to the dedication and hard work of those who have helped to build Soweto into a world-class tourist destination. The awards ceremony has also given a much-needed boost to the local tourism industry as it helped to raise awareness of the many attractions and cultural experiences that Soweto has to offer.

The Soweto Tourism Awards was a truly memorable event that celebrated the achievements of those who have helped to make Soweto one of South Africa's most popular tourist destinations. The awards ceremony provided a platform for the industry to come together, network and celebrate the success of their colleagues and peers. The Soweto Tourism Awards are an inspiration to seeing even more success in the future for Soweto and its tourism industry.

Plan Your Perfect Holiday With The Newly Revamped KZN South Coast App!



With the highest number of Blue Flag beaches in the province and a wealth of unique nature-based activities, holidaymakers are spoilt for choice along the KZN South Coast. And now, planning everything from accommodation to family-friendly outdoor activities has never been easier!

Visitors just need to download the newly revamped, 'Explore KZN South Coast' App free on the Google Play or Apple App-Store, or visit the App-Store to update the current version.

"We are so fortunate that KZN South Coast enjoys a year-round subtropical climate, boasts world-famous dive sites, Blue Flag beaches and great hiking trails, making it an incredibly popular tourism destination," commented Ms Phelisa Mangcu, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of South Coast Tourism and Investment Enterprise (SCTIE). "To better assist holidaymakers who are planning a trip to explore these once-in-a-lifetime sites and experiences, we have relaunched our innovative 'Explore KZN South Coast,'" she said.

Ms Mangcu further said, "The platform features interactive digital Visitor Information Centre (VIC), Google maps connectivity, an updated events calendar, scenic routes, extensive tour information, and not-to-be-missed outdoor adventures found along the Paradise of the Zulu Kingdom! By virtue of the fact that the App is connected to our destination website, you never miss out, no matter what device you are using. In addition, it is completely free for all users."

Explore the KZN South Coast

Visitors can simply go to the Google Play or Apple App Stores to download the newly updated 'KZN South Coast' App or load the new version. Once downloaded, visitors have access to all relevant tourism information at their fingertips, any time of day, wherever they are.

The Explore KZN South Coast App features:

- Direct access to operators by simply clicking on the contact to immediately call or email for more information.
- GPS co-ordinates to navigate to the best sites, eateries, venues and more on the KZN South Coast.
- The constantly updated events calendar featuring the best local markets, social events, festivals and shows.
- Hundreds of things to 'Sea' and Do, including Blue Flag Beach offerings, top fishing spots, charter boats, microlight tours, cultural excursions, hinterland tours, hiking and biking trails, and extreme adventures.
- Various accommodation offers throughout the KZN South Coast, from seaside campsites to 5-star resorts.
- The region's best eateries, cafés, fast food spots, restaurants, pubs and other dining options.
- A wide selection of retail and services found in the area.

- The latest local specials and tour packages offering fantastic deals.
- The best local attractions such as 11 top golf courses, two world-renowned dive sites, nature reserves, lagoons and waterfalls.

Alongside the many benefits for local residents and holidaymakers, the 'Explore KZN South Coast' App also provides tourism establishments with a far-reaching marketing platform that will drive business.

Plan the ultimate holiday on the KZN South Coast by downloading the free 'Explore KZN South Coast' App from Google Play and Apple App Stores. Follow the hashtag #kznsouthcoast #extendyourstay #endlessopportunities.

To find out more about the KZN South Coast's tourism offerings:

- Download the free 'Explore KZN South Coast' App from Google Play and Apple Stores;
- Visit the South Coast Tourism on [Facebook](#);
- South Coast Tourism and Investment Enterprise on [YouTube](#);
- @infosouthcoast on [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#);
- Info Ugu South Coast Tourism on [LinkedIn](#);
- the SCTIE [website](#) to check out the [Events Calendar](#);
- the KZN South Coast Meeting Planner Guide and more.

Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Goes Virtual



To harness the power of virtual reality technologies and capitalise on digital marketing trends, the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA) developed interactive virtual tourism platforms of unique Eastern Cape Province experiences. These interactive tours afford users the opportunity to immerse themselves in the experience through taking a virtual tour of the various attraction from the comfort of their own homes and are compatible and accessible from most digital devices. These experiences are even further enhanced when paired with virtual reality goggles and controllers, and users can experience a full 360 degree immersive and interactive tour.

These interactive virtual tourism platforms are a powerful marketing tools where users or potential visitors can now experience first-hand what is on offer in the Province in an entertaining and interactive manner. These tours can be accessed from anywhere in the world where there is internet connectivity and are an exciting tool that can also be used for educational purposes and help those with disabilities to immerse themselves in various experiences that would not be normally accessible. Potential visitors who were hesitant to travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic can now experience some of the best experiences the Eastern Cape Province has to offer in the safety of their home and from any location.

Some of the experiences and platforms developed for the tours include:

- The Segway Tour;

- A Kayak & Lilo excursion;
- Sandboarding in Sundays River;
- An Ocean Safari;
- The Donkin Reserve;
- Addo Elephant National Park;
- Giraffe Safari;
- Valley of Desolation;
- Nelson Mandela Museum;
- Steve Biko Museum;
- Hole in the Wall;
- Hluleka Provincial Nature Reserve;
- Madonna and Child Waterfall;
- Baviaanskloof World Heritage Site; and
- The Owl House.

These attractions and locations were strategically chosen to offer a mix of adventure, nature, marine and historic experiences with a wide geographical spread to be representative of most of the Eastern Cape's tourism regions.

The ECPTA is currently working on more virtual tours of various experiences of the Eastern Cape Province and will primarily focus on hidden gems and less visited or lesser known attractions.

Currently, there are 17 virtual tours from different regions of the Province featuring a variety of attractions and activities and to date over 1 800 virtual tours have been undertaken according to ECPTA's analytics data. The key driver of these platforms are not primarily to drive

bookings, but to create awareness and spark interest. A potential tourist might encounter and experience enticing tour today, but the conversion might only happen much later in the buying funnel/cycle. Some bookings are also made directly at the product or through various booking engines, so one is unable to conclude how many bookings are made as a result of experiencing an interactive virtual tourism platform.

The tours are to be showcased at trade events and marketed through various online channels including online advertising, social media marketing and other suitable and available platforms. Eastern Cape Tourism stakeholders can also use these tours as a tool to market attractions and tourism offerings within the province.

Entice people to travel more with exciting travel deals.

The ECPTA has developed a central deals platform, where Eastern Cape travel deals can be accessed by consumers throughout the year. The ECPTA encourages Eastern Cape tourism businesses to utilise this free platform to their benefit to showcase and promote their exciting Eastern Cape travel deals.

To use this free platform register your profile at <https://ectraveldeals.co.za/account/register>

The ECPTA looks forward to partnering with local tourism trade on this great initiative in its aim to reignite Eastern Cape travel.

For more information contact:

jean.theron@ecpta.co.za

#ECTravelDeals #ECYours2Explore

Link to virtual tours: <https://visiteasterncape.co.za/virtualtours/>

DEDECT Resuscitates the Provincial Tourism Sector Forum for Greater Coordination

The Tourism Directorate in the North West Province's Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT) has begun resuscitating Provincial Tourism Sector Forums (PTSF) and its terms of reference, in order to provide an open platform for communication and planning amongst the private and public tourism industry stakeholders. The Forums are currently meeting per district in order to synchronise planning, coordinate policy imperatives and gain insights into mechanisms to enhance the industry.

In implementing and maintaining this initiative, the Tourism Directorate has embarked on a province-wide campaign hosting sessions as a collaboration platform focused on addressing the challenges for the travel industry in the North West Province. The first meeting was held in the Dr Ruth Mompati District on 22 February 2023 in Vryburg and the next one was in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District on 23 February 2023 in Klerksdorp. The final sessions will be held in the Districts of Bojanala and Ngaka Modiri Molema, in Rustenburg and Zeerust respectively.

The National Tourism Sector Strategy dictates that there should be tourism forum structures at provincial levels to coordinate planning and development between government and the private sector. In addition, the Provincial Tourism Sector Strategy (PTSS) highlights the institutional environment within the North West tourism industry to be fragmented because of a lack of integrated planning and development, and also due to lack

of involvement of the private sector in the strategic development of the tourism industry. In this regard the forums will ensure coordination and synergy in the implementation of tourism project within the North West Province through the District Developmental Model (DDM).

The forums are structured per district and comprise of the Provincial Department of Tourism, National Department of Tourism, North West Tourism Board, District and Local Municipalities, Tourism Associations representing the private sector, Educational Institutions and community-based interest groups. To facilitate efficient and effective communication for integrated planning and development by all relevant stakeholders, the PTSF advocates for institutional structures that ensure participation at the local, district and provincial government levels together with private sector through tourism associations.

The sessions combine the joint efforts of government, its agencies and industry stakeholders, to achieve sustainable development models for emerging travel markets, as well as devising strategies to ensure tourism growth.

The DEDET's Chief Director for Tourism, Ms Sarah Manone, chaired the first two sessions and noted their importance in developing a well-managed and synergised tourism industry in the Province. "We hope the impact of the forums will be felt throughout the North West tourism sector as we resuscitate the PTSF and make sure our stakeholders are aware of what we as government are

doing, in order to align our plans with their objectives," said Ms Manone.

She further noted that the forums also provide a resourceful platform to gain access to opportunities which exist through government for tourism product owners. These include market access funding, tourism grading, expansion incentives, green tourism initiatives and much more.

Part of the sessions include presentations by agencies such as the Tourism Grading Council, Sho't Left campaign, Green Tourism Incentive Programme (GTIP), National Empowerment Fund (NEF), National Department of Tourism as well as provincial and local governments. The purpose of these presentations is to stimulate growth, development and transformation of the tourism sector as well as to improve the competitiveness of the North West Province as a tourism destination. Product owners were also taken through ways to unlock their market potential, access funding opportunities, go-green, upscale themselves into the tourism value chain and stimulate job creation.

It is envisioned that the Provincial Tourism Sector Forums will ultimately coordinate among the various levels of government and the private sector on policy, planning and infrastructure development and be an essential element for successful economic development. This will be done through a unified approach with the needs of the tourism market at the forefront of the programme.





The Importance of Expanding New Tourism Products in South Africa

South Africa is a diverse and dynamic country, with a rich cultural heritage and stunning natural beauty. However, in recent years, the South African tourism industry has faced numerous challenges, including economic slowdown, global competition and a decline in international visitor numbers. To overcome these challenges and maintain its position as a leading tourist destination, it is essential for South Africa to expand and diversify its tourism products.

One of the key ways to achieve this is by developing new and innovative tourism products that showcase the unique cultural and natural heritage of the country. These products can range from cultural and heritage tours, eco-tourism experiences and adventure sports to culinary and wine tourism. By providing a

wider range of options, South Africa can attract a more diverse range of visitors, including those who are looking for new and exciting experiences.

In addition to attracting new visitors, expanding the range of tourism products can also bring benefits to the local economy. By supporting local businesses, entrepreneurs, and communities, the development of new tourism products can create jobs and stimulate economic growth. This will not only benefit the tourism industry but also help to reduce poverty and improve the standard of living for local communities.

The government and private sector also have an important role to play in expanding new tourism products in South Africa. The government can provide financial and regulatory support for new and innovative tourism initiatives, while

the private sector can invest in research and development, product development as well as marketing. By working together, the government and private sector can help to create new tourism products that are sustainable, socially responsible, and culturally sensitive.

The expansion of new tourism products is vital for the long-term success and growth of the South African tourism industry. By offering a wider range of experiences and attractions, South Africa can continue to attract visitors, support local communities, and promote economic growth.

SATOVITO Membership Applications are Now Open



The South African Township and Village Tourism Organisation (SATOVITO), has announced that membership applications are now open. SATOVITO is a non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting and supporting the development of township and village tourism in South Africa.

By becoming a member of SATOVITO, individuals and organisations will have the opportunity to connect with other tourism industry professionals and gain access to a range of benefits, including:

- Networking opportunities with other members and industry leaders.
- Access to industry-specific training and professional development programmes.
- Opportunities to participate in

SATOVITO-sponsored events and promotions.

- Access to SATOVITO's resources and research on the township and village tourism sector.
- Opportunities to collaborate with other members on joint projects and initiatives.

To apply for membership, interested individuals and organisations can visit SATOVITO's website (www.satovito.org) and complete the online application form. The membership fee will be determined based on the type of organisation and the size of the business.

SATOVITO is committed to promoting and supporting the growth of township and village tourism in South Africa and

provides a platform for members to connect, collaborate and contribute to the development of this important sector.

Individuals and organisations who are passionate about township and village tourism are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity and become members of SATOVITO. By joining this organisation, members can receive help to support the growth and development of this exciting industry as well as play a key role in promoting the rich cultural heritage of South Africa's townships and villages.



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