



tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Budget Vote Speech delivered by Tokozile Xasa, Deputy Minister of Tourism, at the NCOP

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Chairperson

One of the few global Heads of State, an Ambassador of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, President Jacob Zuma announced our 2012 tourism statistics – which on its own is a signal of inspiration and leadership that boosts confidence of the industry and that of communities and global view of South Africa as a destination of choice.

It is indeed a privilege to stand before this house amid South Africa's growing tourism success story. Our business - like and modern tourism Indaba 2013 was very successful in pursuing SA tourism business, strengthening partnerships and establishing new ones.

As a blueprint for South African development, The National Development Plan (NDP) recognises Tourism as one of the main drivers of the country's economy and employment. We need to align the National Growth Path, NTSS and NDP to meet the targets and timelines – of creating 11 million jobs by 2030. The NDT is to create a favourable environment for the private sector to invest into the economy.

As tourism is a people-intensive industry, education and training should be put in the forefront of tourism development. Investment in the youth will result in a much more sustainable and flexible workforce. A number of initiatives are being rolled out by the Department strictly focusing on skills development and training for the youth and women.

Building on NTCE developments over the years, the NDT, UMALUSI and CATHSSETA entered into a partnership to conduct analysis and evaluation of the existing curriculum for Tourism, Hospitality and Consumer Studies subjects from NQF levels 2, 3 and 4 of the National Certificate Vocational (NCV offered at FET Colleges) and National Senior Certificate (NSC offered at high schools). This is aimed at establishing the value and quality standing of the intended curriculum for these subjects in the overall education and training terrain as well as a determination whether the existing curriculum is in line with industry skills needs.

Chairperson, alignment of our tourism strategies and activities as government is a must. It gives me great pleasure to inform this house that my Department launched a tourism capacity programme at the Local Government Tourism Conference we hosted in February this year. This will ensure that tourism policies filter to all government levels seamlessly. We expect to see tourism as one of the key economic growth pillars for local municipalities.

We worked closely with the National Treasury and Provincial Departments to develop an improved budget structure for tourism to ensure more appropriate budget allocations across all levels of government.

In this financial year, we will continue to expand the number and range of knowledge and information tools available on the Tourism Knowledge Portal with specific focus on local government tourism capacity building.

The tourism base needs to be expanded and diversified so as to create a distinct and unique image of the country's heritage, cultural resources and infrastructural development.

I am pleased to announce the following tourism infrastructure projects under planning in terms of the EPWP:

1. Mahlati tourism project in Limpopo
2. Tisane Cultural Village in Limpopo
3. The Oaks Information Centre in Mpumalanga
4. Mukumbani Waterfall project in Limpopo
5. Upgrading of Manyane Lodge in North West
6. Middleburg Information Centre in Mpumalanga
7. Final completion of Platfontein Lodge in Northern Cape
8. Six day hiking trail from Port St Johns to Coffee Bay in Eastern Cape
9. Mthonsi Lodge in Eastern Cape
10. Muzi Pan Canoeing project in KwaZulu-Natal
11. Lilani Hotsprings upgrade in KwaZulu-Natal
12. Empereni Hospitality Training Centre in Free State
13. Kai Garib Caravan Park in Northern Cape

We are implementing the rural tourism strategy as a panacea for increasing economic viability of marginalised areas, stimulating social regeneration and improving the living conditions of communities. An example that goes to the heart of rural nodes is the Maloti Drakensberg Route. This project demonstrates the importance of regional integration as we partner with our neighbour - Lesotho. This also talks to the government's Outcome of creating a better Africa in a better world.

We are encouraged by the G20s recent recognition of Tourism as a vehicle for job creation, economic growth and development, and its commitment to work towards developing travel facilitation initiatives in support of job creation, quality work and poverty reduction. In the Africa Leg of the UNWTO – CAF, we have managed to influence the start of a debate on a tourism agenda for Africa. This will be part of the upcoming UNWTO General Assembly to take place in Zimbabwe and Zambia in August 2013.

Preparations for the 2013 Tourism Month activations have started once again with the focus being on promotion of Domestic Tourism to address the challenges of seasonality and geographic spread. In this month, domestic travellers are encouraged to discover the hidden treasures of their country in those less visited provinces and most importantly do this in an environmentally responsible manner.

This year's theme for the event is, **“Water and Tourism, Protecting our common future”**. The North West Province has accepted to host this year's World Tourism Day celebrations taking place on the 27th September 2013.

I thank you.

Tokozile Xasa, MP

Deputy Minister of Tourism