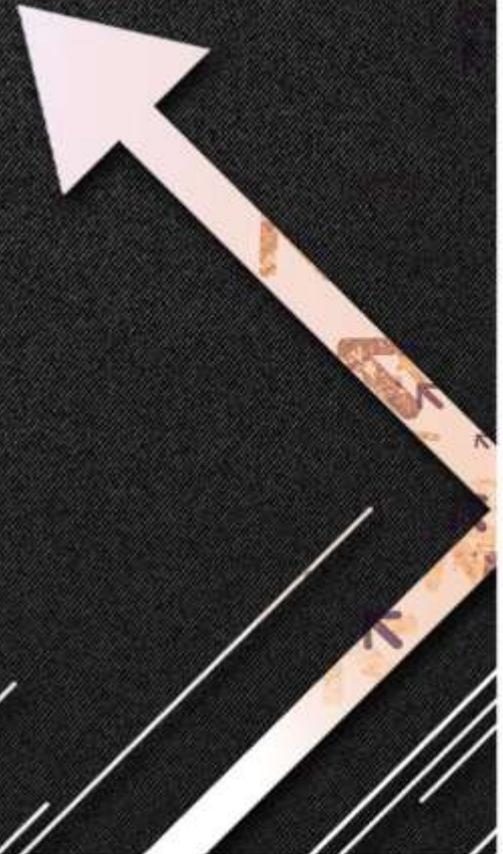


NDT POLICY WATCH

QUARTERLY UPDATE

July – September 2014



INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL POLICY
DEVELOPMENTS



tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

1. INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Aviation Safety on Conflict Zones.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Airports Council International (ACI) and the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO) have made a declaration committing parties to review the process of flying over conflict zones. The declaration was made in a high level meeting called by ICAO following the downing of MH17 flight over Ukraine in July.

Amongst other things, the declaration includes a commitment by ICAO, with the support of the aviation industry, to establish a senior task force composed of state and industry experts to address civil aviation and national security issues arising from the MH17 flight incident¹. The responsibility of the task force would be to look at how relevant information can be effectively collected and disseminated.

The aviation industry also requested ICAO to address some of the pertinent issues. These include channels for essential threat information to be made available to civil aviation authorities and industry; the need to incorporate, into international law, measures to govern the design; manufacturing and deployment of modern anti-aircraft weaponry. In addition, the industry requested ICAO to urgently request governments to provide airlines with better information so that they can make risk assessments of various threats they may face. In the long run, the industry requires governments to find better ways of controlling weapons with a potential to pose a danger to civil aviation.

Emphasising the significance of better information, Tony Tyler, IATA's Director General and CEO, stated as follows 'we were told that flights traversing Ukraine's territory at above 32000 feet would not be in harm's way but we know how wrong that guidance was'. Accordingly, Tyler highlighted the need for airlines to receive clear guidance regarding threats to passengers, the crew and aircrafts and such information ought to be accessible, authoritative and consistent. The issue of consistency was amplified by citing an example of Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport where Israel declared the airport safe to fly in whilst the US Federal Aviation Administration advised its airlines not to fly. The latter advice was also provided by European Aviation Safety Agency to their airlines. Such conflicting advice illustrates IATA's concern about the lack of consistency, authority and accuracy in guidance by aviation authorities.

Lastly, IATA will be convening a High Level Safety Conference with all its 191 member states in February 2015. The conference will, amongst other things, focus on ensuring safety and security of the global air transport system and its passengers.

World Heritage Sites Reach a Milestone

The Okavango Delta of Botswana became the 1000th site to be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the 22nd of June 2014². It was inscribed as a natural site by the World Heritage Committee, which met in Doha in June 2014. Other sites inscribed are from France, Israel, Italy, Turkey and the United States of America. Okavango Delta is situated in the north west of Botswana and is reputed for its permanent marshlands and seasonally flooded plains.

¹ Karantzavelo, V. (2014). Joint efforts to improve safety industry and governments address safety over conflict zones. <http://www.icao.int>

² UNESCO World Heritage Centre (2014) World Heritage Sites Reaches 1000 sites with inscription of Okavango Delta in Botswana <http://whc.unesco.org>

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 'Okavango is one of the very few major interior delta systems that do not flow into a sea or ocean, with a wetland system that is almost intact'³. A unique characteristic of the site, UNESCO noted, is that annual flooding from Okavango River occurs during the dry season. This has led to native plants and animals synchronizing their biological cycles with these seasonal rains and floods.

Such phenomenon is viewed as an exceptional example of interaction between climatic, hydrological and biological processes. Most importantly, the Okavango Delta is home to some of the world's most endangered species of large mammal, such as cheetah; white rhinoceros; black rhinoceros; African wild dog; and lion.

In the same platform, five African Ministers (i.e. from Botswana, Ethiopia, Senegal, South Sudan and South Africa) participated in the 3rd African Ministers' round-table discussion on World Heritage. This meeting was held on the sidelines of the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee. The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange views on the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in the African Region.

In addition, a small exhibition and short film on the African World Heritage Fund were presented, together with an exhibition on UNESCO's emergency actions for safeguarding Mali's Cultural Heritage. The need to protect Mali's cultural heritage emanated from the recent political instability which led to the destruction of some of the cultural sites.

Almost 150 participants from the 38th session attended the African side event. This included the Director General of UNESCO, Ms Irina Bokova, who appealed to the Ministers to support efforts aimed at integrating culture into the post 2015 development agenda⁴. Critically, many of the participating Ministers, which included South African Minister of Environmental Affairs, Honourable Edna Molewa, focused on the need to reconcile conservation and development needs. The Chairperson of the African World Heritage Fund, Mr. Sibusiso Xaba, also called on all state parties to contribute to the endowment fund, to ensure that effective capacity building activities can be continued across the continent and to implement action plans for World Heritage in Africa.

Tourism and Ebola

ICAO is continuing to collaborate with the World Health Organisation (WHO) over the Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa. Although the number of affected people has continued to grow, the WHO have recommended against travel or trade restrictions. Furthermore, WHO, ICAO and IATA considered passenger screening revisions to the WHO Document on Travel and Transport in light of the outbreak⁵. WHO also indicated the intention to seek input from the World Tourism Organisation and Airports Council International (ACI).

³ As cited in UNESCO's World Heritage Centre.

⁴ UNESCO World Heritage Centre. (2014). African Ministers meet in Doha for roundtable discussion during the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee. <http://whc.unesco.org>.

⁵ ICAO. (2014). ICAO and World Health Organisation Collaboration on Ebola Outbreak. <http://www.icao.int>

ACI is also in contact with WHO on potential efforts which may be required to facilitate repatriation flights and matters relating to air ambulance services in the affected areas. In addition, WHO has provided information on the transmission of the disease. According to WHO, transmission of the Ebola virus occurs when patients are displaying symptoms of the disease which are severe. Symptoms of Ebola include fever; intense weakness; muscle pain; headache; sore throat; followed by vomiting; diarrhea; rash; impaired kidney and liver function; external and internal bleeding at an advanced stage⁶.

The argument by WHO is that it is highly unlikely that a person suffering from such symptoms would feel well enough to travel. Thus there was an emphasis that the risk of a tourist or business people becoming infected with Ebola virus during a visit to the affected area and developing a disease after returning is extremely low. This includes travelling to local areas where primary cases have been reported. Most importantly, WHO stated that 'transmission requires direct contact with blood; secretions; organs or other body fluids of the infected living or the dead persons or animal; which are all unlikely exposures to the average travellers'⁷.

Critically, WHO has embarked on awareness initiatives for travellers to and from the affected region. Moreover, passengers are advised not to travel if they are not well and any traveller developing symptoms within three weeks of returning from an affected region is advised to seek rapid medical attention.

In South Africa, port health authorities are on a high alert for any ill person displaying Ebola virus or compatible symptoms who has travelled to and from the affected region. As part of the preventative measures, the OR Tambo, Cape Town and Lanseria International Airports have been specifically targeted to have thermostats to check body temperature of arrivals as fever is one of the early symptoms of Ebola.

Benefits of Liberalised African Air Highlighted

A report published by IATA highlighted enormous social and economic benefits for African Countries should they liberalise their skies. InterVISTAS, which is an experienced independent consultant, developed the report on behalf of IATA and outlined benefits that would accrue in case twelve countries mentioned in the report can implement the Yamoussoukro Decision. The twelve countries referred to are Algeria, Angola, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia and Uganda⁸.

According to the report, additional services generated by liberalisation between just 12 countries could provide an extra 155 000 jobs and \$1.3 billion in annual Growth Domestic Product⁹. The report also highlighted that approximately five million passengers are being denied the chance to travel between these markets because of unnecessary restrictions on establishing routes.

⁶ Karantzavelou, V. (2014). IATA advises no flight restrictions. <http://www.traveldailynews.com>

⁷ As cited in Karantzavelou.

⁸ Karantzavelou, V. (2014). Significant benefits of liberalised African Air Markets. <http://www.traveldailynews.com>

⁹ InterVISTAS Consulting Limited. (2014). Transforming Intra-African Air Connectivity: The Economic Benefits of implementing the Yamoussoukro Decision, p. v. <http://www.iata.org>

The implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision is therefore critical as it remains the single most important air transport reform policy initiative by African governments to date. It was adopted out of the recognition that restrictive and protectionist-intra African regulatory regimes based primarily on Bilateral Air Services Agreements (BASAs), hampered the expansion and improvement of air transport on the continent. One of the vital parts of the Decision was liberalisation, which was viewed as a means to develop air services in Africa and stimulate the flow of private capital in the industry. The Yamoussoukro Decision committed 44 signatory countries to deregulate air services and open regional air markets to transnational competition. However, the implementation of the Decision has been less than optimal and the benefits have not been realised.

Tony Tylor, IATA'S Director General, indicated that 'employment and economic growth are just the tip of the iceberg in terms of the benefits of connectivity'¹⁰. Tyler also remarked that 'aviation is a force for good and plays a major role in helping to reach the African Union's mission of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa. The African Airlines Association (AAA) also supported the report and pointed out that it clearly highlights the crucial role that air transport plays in driving economic and social development in Africa through enhanced connectivity. Furthermore, AAA urged governments to support the growth of the aviation industry by fully liberalising the African Skies as intended in the Yamoussoukro Decision, while supporting the implementation of global safety standards, security and regulations aimed at reducing/ removing taxes and visa requirements.

The research findings demonstrate that liberation will create opportunities for further significant employment growth and economic development. The table below demonstrates opportunities for GDP and employment growth should the twelve countries fully liberalise their skies.

Nation	Additional Employment	Additional GDP (USD)	Nation	Additional Employment	Additional GDP (USD)
Algeria	11 100	123.6 mil	Namibia	10 600	94.2 mil
Angola	15 300	137.1 mil	Nigeria	17 400	128.2 mil
Egypt	11 300	114.2 mil	Senegal	8 000	40.5 mil
Ethopia	14 800	59.8 mil	South Africa	14 500	283.9 mil
Ghana	9 500	46.8 mil	Tunisia	8 100	113.7 mil
Kenya	15 900	76.9 mil	Uganda	18 600	77.6 mil

Modified from InterVISTAS Report, p.v1

In light of the above, AAA Secretary General expressed concern on the practice wherein African States open their aviation markets to third countries but not amongst each other. Furthermore, the secretary general expressed hope that the facts and figures as highlighted in the report will send a strong message to states and key decision makers such as Finance, Tourism and Trade Ministries across the continent, to place aviation at the centre of economic development¹¹. Lastly, IATA highlighted the significance of African governments to use aviation as a critical driver of social and economic development, as well as steering the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision.

¹⁰ As cited in Karantzavelou.

¹¹ As cited in Karantzavelou.

Survey reveals travellers' hypes and gripes in South Africa.

Travelstart, an internationally renowned travel agency, released findings of traveller's pain in South African Airports. Out of 6000 respondents (i.e. jet-setters), 72 percent of South Africans say overpriced fees are the biggest irritation when it comes to the domestic airport experiences, while 26 percent have been a victim of baggage theft and the majority of these incidents occurring at OR Tambo International Airport¹².

The survey also revealed that passengers expressed dissatisfaction about careless handling of baggage, unclear PA system announcements, lack of free Wi-Fi and surly check-in staff. However, questionable bathroom cleanliness, aggressive security personnel and lack of facilities were amongst the lesser annoyances revealed by the broad cross-section of business and leisure travellers, who took part in the study¹³.

It was reported that Airports Company South Africa's response was that 'customers are offered state-of-the-art facilities equipped with features such as car registration plate recognition matched against the parking ticket, which is used to exit the parking area. Such parking, according to ACSA, offers a safer environment for customers' vehicles, with no car theft or human attacks recorded at any of its airports for years¹⁴. This included an indication that airport parking rates are much lower than other international airport tariffs and is approved by the regulator.

On the 26 percent that experienced baggage theft, 83 percent of these incidents happened at the OR Tambo International Airport. The study indicated that the number of baggage pilferage taking place at OR Tambo is abnormally high compared to other major airports such as Cape Town and Durban, where 9 percent and 4 percent of respondents reported incidents of theft¹⁵.

On internet access, the report indicated that 65 percent of respondents cited free Wi-Fi as the feature most likely to improve airport experience. There was an acknowledgement that ACSA Airports offer free Wi-Fi services of either 30 minutes or 50 MB of data, with users having an option of top up facility on a pay-as-you-go basis. The data presented in the study can be a valuable source of information to decision makers.

Airline On-time Performance Report June 2014

FLIGHTSTATS released the Airline On-time Performance report for the period 01 June 2014 to 30 June 2014. The report compared the on-time arrival performance of scheduled passenger flights operated by the top airlines throughout the regions. It (report) breaks down data by airline on issues relating to on-time, late, very late and excessively late arrivals and departures. It also includes percentage of flights cancelled and diverted. Late arrivals ought to be understood as meaning 15-19 minutes, very late 30-44 minutes, and excessively late as meaning 45+ minutes.

Iberia Airlines topped the June global list with 89.53 percent on-time arrivals on a sample size of 6583. The percentage of late arrivals on the same airline was 6.26 percent, very late arrivals at 1.91 percent, excessively late at 2.30 percent, cancelled at 0.28 percent and none diverted¹⁶. Saudi Arabian Airlines, Aeroflot Airlines, Australian Airlines and ANA Airlines featured on the top five globally.

¹² Rokou, T. (2014). Travelstart survey reveals travellers' airport hypes and gripes. <http://www.traveldailynews.com>

¹³ As cited in Rokou.

¹⁴ As cited in Rokou.

¹⁵ As cited in Rokou.

¹⁶ FLIGHTSTATS. (2014). Airline On-time Performance Report: 1 June 2014 through 30 June 2014.

Australian Airlines demonstrated consistency because, it is the only airline which featured in the top five of both March and June On-time Performance Reports.

With regard to the Middle East and African Regions, Comair topped the list followed by South African Express and Airlink. On one hand, South African Express with a sample size of 923 achieved 90.21 percent on time arrivals, 4.89 late arrivals, 1.33 very late arrivals, 3.45 excessive arrivals, 2.60 percent cancellation and 0.11 percent of diverted planes¹⁷.

On the other hand, South African Airways with the sample size of 4139 achieved 89.53 on-time arrivals, 6.20 late arrivals, 2.16 very late arrivals, 2.06 excessively late, 0.27 cancellation and 0.05 diverted planes¹⁸. Although South African Airways came third after Comair and Airlink, a detailed analysis of data demonstrates that it has excellent performance given that it had the highest sample size compared to the top two airlines. In addition, it appears that there is an improvement in all SAA's categories when comparing March and June performance reports.

Vacation and Productivity

Purchasing Power, an Atlanta based company conducted a study titled 'The Power of Vacations: Helping employees achieve better work-life balance'. The study found that employees are not using their vacation days. This, according to the study, is taking a toll on their health, their work-life balance and is ultimately affecting their employer's bottom line¹⁹.

The study highlighted advantages of vacation days. Using vacation days allows workers to recharge both physically and mentally. It also reduces stress, helps prevent burnout and promotes work-life balance by allowing for more time to be spent with family, significant others and close friends.

The study found that employees who take most or all of their vacation time each year perform at higher levels, are more productive and are more satisfied with their jobs than those who do not²⁰. Employees who feel they don't have appropriate work-life balance were asked about some of their concerns. 60 percent identified not having time to take care of themselves as the biggest concern, 57 percent identified burnout due to not taking time off, 50 percent identified missing family social functions because of work and 49 percent identified long hours as their big concern.

In addition, 44 percent felt guilty for not spending enough time with family, 38 percent were concerned about work intensity, 36 percent concerned about lack of work place inflexibility (set hours and inability to work from home one day a week), 33 percent concerned with continuous flexibility (email and phone calls) and 21 percent were concerned about having to take work home.

The study then outlined various reasons for unused vacation days. These ranged from failure to plan, financial worry, forgetfulness or the feeling that one is required at work.

¹⁷ As cited in FLIGHTSTATS.

¹⁸ As cited in FLIGHTSTATS.

¹⁹ Purchasing Power. (2014). The Power of Vacations: Helping employees achieve better work-life balance. www.PurchasingPower.com

²⁰ As cited in Purchasing Power Study.

However, the irony about feeling that one is always required at work is that rested employees are more productive employees. Therefore, taking regular vacations may help companies more than failing to do so.

As part of the recommendations, the study highlighted the need for companies to encourage employees to take advantage of all their benefits, especially paid time off. The study also recommended that companies could explore employee purchase program, as a voluntary benefit that includes vacation options. According to the study, 'an employer-sponsored employee purchase program is an affordable way to employees to take vacation, because it offers a disciplined payment plan through payroll deduction, which is less expensive than credit cards and other financial options'²¹.

Gender equality and youth employment in tourism

Research by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and Oxford Economics revealed that travel and tourism employs a higher proportion of women and young people than is represented in the workforce as a whole. The research also indicated that tourism is a sector that thrives on entrepreneurship, and as such, offers women prospects for self-employment which are less accessible in other sectors²².

Regarding population groups, the research reported that women's pay in hotels and restaurants is much closer to that of men than in other sectors. This, according to the report, elevates the significance of tourism's contribution on the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals, the third of which is to promote gender equality²³

Research focused on five countries i.e. Australia, France Germany and South Africa and Turkey. In the first four countries, research revealed a significantly higher proportion of women in tourism than the overall economy. Put differently, women make up less than half of the total workforce yet represent over 60 percent of Travel and Tourism employment²⁴. Only Turkey was found to have a different employment distribution. Women were merely represented on employment and even more underrepresented in the travel and tourism industry, with only 27 percent compared to 29.8 percent of the total workforce²⁵.

The research also focused on the age distribution in travel and tourism, with particular reference to young people and in comparison with other sectors. In all the five countries, research shows that travel and tourism has a significantly higher youth employment rate than the overall labour market. France employed more than double the percentage of young people as do all industries combined, whilst Turkey was over 7 percent points above the average, although it has a relatively young workforce. South Africa was the exception, wherein, the percentage of youth working in the tourism industry was superseded slightly by the youth working in manufacturing.

²¹ As cited in Purchasing Power Study.

²² World Travel and Tourism Council. (2014). Gender equality and youth employment: Travel and Tourism as a key employer of women and young people. <http://www.wttc.org>

²³ As cited in the WTTC Report.

²⁴ As cited in WTTC Report.

²⁵ As cited in WTTC Report.

The research concluded by acknowledging the fact that sectors like human health and education are ahead of travel and tourism in terms of proportion of women employed. However, the tourism industry employs some of the highest percentages of people between the ages of 15 and 25 years old²⁶. This according to the report makes tourism a significant contributor to addressing issues of gender equality and youth employment.

2. OTHER INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Visa facilitation initiative in Mongolia welcomed by UNWTO

The Government of Mongolia is one of the most recent examples of countries advancing travel facilitation by removing visa requirements. This was achieved by granting free access to the country for up to 30 days for tourists and short business trips from 42 countries, in addition to the 20 countries already benefitting from visa agreements²⁷. The decision follows the open skies resolution passed by the Mongolian Parliament in 2013, which is currently being implemented. The resolution is captured in their 2020 State Policy of the Civil Aviation Sector, which seeks to develop a competitive national civil aviation sector in order to contribute to sustainable development.

There appears to be consensus within the tourism industry that visa facilitation is inextricably linked to tourism development and contributes to economic growth and job creation. UNWTO research emphasises the significance of improving visa facilitation and at the same time the need to advance air connectivity.

Easing visa restrictions to stimulate travel is one of UNWTO's recommendations to promote growth in the tourism sector and its positive impact on the economy. In elevating the significance of visas, the UNWTO reflected on its joint report with WTTC, which showed that 'improving visa processes and entry formalities could generate an extra 206 billion US\$ in tourism receipts and create as many as 5.1 million additional jobs between 2012 and 2015 in the G20 economies alone'²⁸.

UNWTO Secretary General Mr. Rifai, commended the Mongolia government for following its recommendations and taking concrete action in the area of travel facilitation. Rifai further emphasised that 'with adequate policies, tourism can have an immense impact on GDP, exports and jobs and visa facilitation and air liberalisation are central to maximise tourism development potential'.

The Airline Information Technology (IT) Trends

The Airline Information Technology Survey, co-sponsored by Airline Business and SITA, revealed a continuous upward trend in the level of absolute IT investment by airlines. The trend shows greater recognition of the value IT brings to airlines and their customers.

²⁶ As cited in the WTTC Report.

²⁷ Rokou, T. (2014). UNWTO welcomes travel facilitation measures by Mongolia <http://www.traveldailynews.com>

²⁸ As cited in Rokou.

The survey also found that the rise in mobile technology dominates the airline IT strategy landscape, as it has been the case in the last few years²⁹.

In addition, the survey found that the extension of self-service into new areas is taking shape and the disruption management is slowly becoming the next frontier. With regard to IT spend, statistics forecast a slight surge in overall IT spend of 2.2 percent in revenues, driven by higher capital investment in new generation systems and infrastructure³⁰. The survey also found a widespread recognition of the positive impact technology has on air travel and its role in assisting airlines getting ahead of the competition. Accordingly, three-quarters of airlines are expected to invest more heavily on information technology this year compared to 2013.

Amongst the investment areas, self-service check-in appears to be the area of interest hence the appetite for investment aimed at boosting self-service choices for passengers. In this area, the survey shows that the global self-service is progressing steadily with mobile channel growing at the fastest pace. Also, ticket booking through airline websites has now reached 30 percent globally, while the proportion of check-in using a mobile, kiosk or web has reached 38 percent of all check-ins, up from 28 percent in 2010³¹.

Although some airlines have performed well on the self-service check-in initiative, some have struggled to convert passengers. This was attributed to cultural reasons and/or lack of airport infrastructure. There is however an expectation by airlines to reach 15 percent of passengers using their mobile to check-in by 2017³². The ultimate objective of the airlines is to remove the check-in step from passengers altogether.

Lastly, the airline industry appears to be constantly working towards removing any inconveniences to passengers. The next area of focus aimed at removing such is disruption management. This is solely intended to help passengers with better information and recovery options during the times of disruptions. In the area of communication, just over half of airlines were found to be able to inform their passengers in real-time through their mobile technologies should the disruption occur. This is expected to increase to 92 percent by 2017³³.

Celebration of Tourism and Community Development on the World Tourism Day

Tourism and Community Development was identified as this year's theme for the World Tourism Day. The choice of the theme is underpinned by the desire to underline the potential of tourism in promoting opportunities for communities around the world. This includes highlighting the role that community engagement has in advancing sustainable tourism development. The UNWTO identified the 27th of September 2014 in the city of Guadalajara, Mexico, as the date and place for celebrating the World Tourism Day.

²⁹ SITA. (2014). 2014 Airline IT Trends Survey <http://www.sita.aero/surveys>

³⁰ As cited in SITA Survey.

³¹ As cited in SITA Survey.

³² As cited in SITA Survey.

³³ As cited in SITA Survey.

According to the UNWTO, this year's theme is timed to contribute to the debate on tourism's impact to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which would become the blueprint after 2015. The SDGs will, amongst other things, focus on sustainable transport; poverty eradication; disaster risk reduction; climate change; oceans and seas; and forest and biodiversity, etc. The UNWTO also acknowledged tourism contribution to local economies hence the choice of the theme.

In emphasising this point, the UNWTO Secretary General remarked that 'each time we use local transport at a destination or buy products from a local market, we are contributing to a long value chain that creates jobs, provides livelihoods, empower local communities and brings in new opportunities'.

The critical point driven by the UNWTO is that tourism can only prosper if it actively engages local communities, contribute to social values and preserve local cultures.

Lastly, this year's celebration will include development experts, high level think tanks bringing together Ministers and key tourism representatives to address the relevance of community based tourism. The UNWTO reported that the discussions will be moderated by the news anchor from Cable News Network (CNN), which is its 2014 global media partner. The celebration of the World Tourism Day in South Africa will be held in Northern Cape in Upington.

3. NATIONAL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

Department of Environmental Affairs' Declaration of Management Authorities

The Department of Environmental Affairs published notices in the gazette declaring management authorities for various World Heritage Sites. The declarations are in line with the World Heritage Convention Act of 1999, which provides for the establishment of authorities, granting of powers to existing organs of state, as well as powers and duties of such authorities, especially those safeguarding the integrity of World Heritage Sites.

The declared management authorities were as follows:

- Robben Island Museum Council as the Management Authority responsible for Robben Island Museum World Heritage Site for a period of 5 years, subject to a performance review under Section 8 of the World Heritage Convention Act 1999 (Act No 49 of 1999),
- KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Board as the Management Authority responsible for the UKhahlamba / Drakensburg Park World Heritage Site for a period of 5 years, subject to a performance review under Section 8 of the World Heritage Convention Act 1999 (Act No 49 of 1999), and
- MEC for Environment and Conservation Management in the North West Province as the Management Authority responsible for the Taung Skull Fossil World Heritage Site for a period for 5 years, subject to a performance review under Section 8 of the World Heritage Convention Act 1999 (Act No 49 of 1999).

These management authorities will perform their responsibilities in line with powers and duties referred to in Sections 13 (1), (2) and 15 of the World Convention Act 1999 (Act No 49 of 1999).

Section 13 (1) of the World Convention Act 1999 gives authorities the powers to, amongst other things, implement the convention and conserve and protect cultural and natural heritage.

Section 13 (2) prescribes duties such as developing measures for the protection and sustainable development of World Heritage Sites, taking effective steps to protect, preserve and present cultural and natural heritage, and liaising sensitively with communities living on World Heritage Sites. Section 15 of the World Convention Act outlines the duties of the Board of the management authority. The board is entrusted with the policy of and general oversight over the authority. This includes providing direction to the executive.

The Notices were gazetted in the Government Gazette of the 18th July 2014, Notice 568 of 2014, Notice 571 of 2014 and Notice 570 of 2014.

Regulations on Environmental Impact Assessments

On the 29th of August 2014, the Department of Environmental Affairs published Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2014 in notice 733 of the government gazette. The purpose of the regulations include, amongst other things, regulating procedures relating to preparation, evaluation, submission and processing on applications for environmental authorisations for the commencement of activities.

Such activities, the regulations prescribes, ought to be subjected to an environmental impact assessment in order to avoid damage on the environment or where it cannot be avoided, ensure mitigation and management of such to acceptable levels and to optimise positive environmental impacts.

With regard to notification of the applicant on the decision, the competent authority is expected to provide the applicant with a decision within five days after reaching it and provide reasons for such a decision to the applicant. In cases where there is a need for an appeal, the competent authority ought to alert the applicant of the available appeal mechanisms in line with the regulations.

Comments on the regulations are expected within 30 days after the publication of the notice in the government gazette.

Sustainable Aviation Biofuel

Initiatives are going on to make sustainable aviation biofuel from a new type of tobacco plant. Boeing, South African Airways (SAA) and SkyNRG announced their collaboration in this regard. It was reported that the initiative broadens cooperation between Boeing and SAA to develop renewable Jet fuel, in ways that support South Africa's goals for public health as well as economic and rural development³⁴.

The Managing Director for Africa Boeing International, expressed appreciation of this new development and remarked that ' South Africa is leading efforts to commercialise a valuable new source of biofuel that can further reduce aviation's environmental footprint and advancing the region's economy'³⁵. Likewise, it was reported that SkyNRG was in the process of expanding production of the hybrid plant known as Solaris, as an energy crop that farmers could grow instead of traditional tobacco.

³⁴ Rokou, T. (2014). Boeing partners with South African Airways to turn new tobacco plant into jet fuel. <http://www.traveldailynews.com>

³⁵ As cited in Rokou.

In addition, test farming of the plants, which are effectively nicotine free was reported to be underway in South Africa, with biofuel production expected from large and small farms in the next few years. The process entails converting oil from the plant seed into jet fuel and Boeing expects emerging technologies to increase South Africa's aviation biofuel production from the rest of the plant ³⁶.

As part of their efforts to develop sustainable aviation biofuel supply chain in Southern Africa, Boeing and SAA are working with Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials (RSB) to position farmers with small plots of land to grow biofuel feedstock. RSB is an international multi stakeholder initiative bringing together farmers, companies, experts and governments concerned with ensuring sustainability of biomass and biomaterial production and processing. The ultimate objective of collaboration between RSB and small farmers is to provide socio-economic value to communities without harming food supplies, fresh water and land use.

As a concluding remark, it was reported that aviation biofuel reduces carbon emissions by 50 to 80 percent compared to petroleum jet fuel through its lifecycle, when produced sustainably. Moreover, airlines were reported to have conducted more than 1 500 passenger flights using biofuel since the fuel was approved in 2011³⁷. This includes South African Airways.

Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Amendment Act 2014

On the 15th of August 2014, the President of the Republic of South Africa assented to the Municipal Property Rates Amendment Act. The Municipal Property Rates Amendment Act alters the Municipal Property Rates Act no 6 of 2004.

The 2014 Act seeks to, amongst other things, provide that a rate policy must determine criteria not only to increase but also to decrease rates and provides that the exclusion from rates in respect of land belonging to a land reform beneficiary is extended to the spouse and dependents.

With regard to enhancing monitoring and reporting, the municipalities are expected to report at intervals to be prescribed by the Minister. The reporting ought to focus on categories of properties; rates and rebates; exclusions; exemptions determined; rations between residential and all other categories of property; property rates revenue; and revenue forgone as a result of exclusion and exemption.

On provincial reporting, the Members of Executive Council (MECs) are expected to submit reports in time to the Minister. Amongst other things, the MECs are expected to report on the granting of condonation to municipalities for non-compliance with timeframes, implementation progress on valuation roll and any other matter as required by the Minister.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

City of Tshwane on youth empowerment in tourism.

The City of Tshwane is reported to be making strides in addressing youth unemployment. The city's Economic Development Department highlighted the partnership they have with national and

³⁶ As cited in Rokou.

³⁷ As cited in Rokou.

provincial tourism departments, which has resulted in the recruitment of 100 unemployed youth from seven regions of Tshwane³⁸.

During the address to participants of the Tourism Buddies Programme, who were being inducted on the 11th of September 2014, the Member of the Mayoral Committee, Cllr Pillay indicated that Tshwane has been engaging various companies in the tourism industry with a view to facilitate placement in the workplace. This is aimed at ensuring that the youth get the requisite skill and experience in the tourism field.

Durban in contention for the New 7 Wonders Cities.

Durban has been announced as part of 21 cities contending for the New 7 Wonders Cities. The program was initiated in year 2000, as a millennium project, with a view to choose wonders of the world from a selection of 200 existing monuments.

Founder President of New 7 Wonders announced the 21 official finalists voted to go through to the next round and indicated that the diversity of the remaining cities in contention for the "canon of 7" is remarkable in terms of regional geography and urban culture³⁹.

The announcement was made in Lisbon to coincide with the 7th anniversary of the first global vote for the original New 7 Wonders campaign, in which Table Mountain was named one of the New 7 Wonders of Nature. The New 7 Wonders' Cities will be revealed on the 7th December 2014. The City of Durban is competing with other international cities such as Barcelona, Chicago, Doha, Havana, Istanbul, London, Mexico, Perth, Saint Petersburg and Seoul, etc. The campaign now enters its penultimate voting stage, which will run until the 7th of October 2014, when the list of 21 will be reduced to 14. To vote visit www.new7wonders.com.

Green Transport Summit in the City of Johannesburg (COJ)

COJ will be hosting the Green Transport Summit to mark the start of the transport month on the 1st of October 2014. The City reported that the one-day Gas for Mobility Summit, to be held at the Bunting Campus of the University of Johannesburg, will be addressed by international and local experts on gas mobility issues, including the City's leadership.

The City, through its Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Transport, reiterated its commitment to using gas as an alternative fuel source in its own fleet. This includes promotion of its use within the taxi industry, other public transport operators and private vehicles⁴⁰. The ultimate objective is to reduce the City's reliance on fossil fuels; reduce air pollution and carbon emissions; whilst enabling local job creation and income generation.

COJ reported that the paper on international and local experience will be delivered by Professor Ludger Eltrop from the University of Stuttgart, whilst the Executive Mayor, Cllr Parks Tau will provide a key note address, share thoughts and experiences on how the City is doing on gas for mobility. Various speakers and workshops are lined up for the Summit.

³⁸ City of Tshwane. (2014). City of Tshwane empowers youths with tourism skills <http://www.tshwane.gov.za>

³⁹ Rokou, T. (2014). New7Wonders Cities: 21 going through to the next round.

⁴⁰ City of Johannesburg. (2014). Joburg summit to kick-start transport month. <http://.joburg.org.za>

One workshop would be deliberating on how the taxi industry could migrate from fossil fuels to gas and funding modalities. The COJ intends to attract numerous participants such as government officials, exhibitors, biogas producers, and Non-Governmental Organisations.

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