



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**MESSAGE OF SUPPORT BY DEPUTY MINISTER OF TOURISM,
MR FISH MAHLALELA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCIAL MEDIA LAUNCH OF THE TOURISM
MONTH, 4 SEPTEMBER 2020**

Programme Director

MEC for Department of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism,
Honourable Mr. Abraham Vosloo,

The Chairperson of the Northern Cape Tourism Authority,
Mr. Colin Fortune,

Board members present on this virtual platform,

The Acting Head of Department, Mr. Thami Mabija and Executive Managers
present;

Members of media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning

It is an honour to connect with everybody joining us today through the virtual platform,
community radio and social media for the launch of provincial tourism Month 2020.

I wish I could have been with you today to experience the offerings of your province
with its cultural and heritage offerings such as the Nama, Khoi, San, Griqua, Xhosa
and Tswana experiences throughout the province.

However, it could not be as I wished because of where we find ourselves today due to the global public health disruptor, COVID-19.

Tourism in South Africa, as with other international tourism destinations, has been thrown into a crisis by the Covid-19 pandemic, placing thousands of businesses and jobs at risk.

This year's launch of the Tourism Month 2020, takes place in the context of a period where government has to provide leadership to mitigate effects COVID-19 has on the economy and livelihoods.

Ladies and Gentlemen

COVID-19 has negatively affected the entire tourism value chain because of a decline in demand for tourism services.

The historic nature of this pandemic and the economic downturn has made it necessary for government work together so closely with the private sector, labour, communities and other actors in our society, to mobilise one of the largest economic response packages in the developing world, that is Tourism.

We all need to understand that the road to recovery will not be easy but, *we can rise above these challenges and achieve success, especially if we are dedicated to and passionate about what we want to do.*

COVID-19 has given us an opportunity to rebuild our rural economy and to resuscitate our rural and domestic tourism.

In announcing level 2 of the lockdown, the President of the Republic, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, announced that the South African borders will remain closed. This gives

us time to quantify the and cost the damage caused by the pandemic to our industry. Surely, our culture has taught us that you need to sweep your own house clean before you receive the visitors.

To this end, we have not made a clear analysis as to how much do our rural tourism activities contribute to the local economy. To sustain Tourism so that it can take care of the generation to come, we need to come up with new ways of doing things. This is what the new normal is bringing to us.

We can not confidently say all was well in our sector before the pandemic. We were in the downward slope, with the economy dwindling and unemployment on the rise.

As we strive towards the recovery of the sector, we have to work together. Tourism is the hope of each and every country when it comes to creating employment. We need to identify these opportunities and revive them.

Moving towards the recovery, let us not turn a blind eye to the new pandemic of GBV that has a potential of reversing the work that we have put our hearts into. Recovery will be meaningless if our women and children's dignity is not restored. Tourism is prepared to uplift women through programmes on Women in Tourism.

TOURISM MONTH 2020

Today's launch should demonstrate a recommitment to how we, as key stakeholders, can join hands to re-start this critical sector.

What makes it possible to revive tourism after the pandemic is that, the District Development Model approach has done away with silo planning. We can no more afford to leave the motive forces behind whereas they are the ones who stand to benefit from the sector.

The 2020 theme “**Tourism and Rural Development**” aims to promote the importance of tourism towards achieving its social, cultural, political and economic value with a concerted focus to rural communities.

The priority for the sector is to resume operations as early as it is safe to do so. However, re-opening will just be the start of a challenging recovery process due to the uncertainty of the duration of the pandemic.

This epidemic has challenged all of us to re-examine our ways of doing things, and presents an opportunity to rethink our businesses and innovate a means of survival, beyond the established health and safety protocols.

As partners, we need to start Rejuvenating Domestic Tourism

Today, we call upon South African families and individuals to be part of the ‘*We Do Tourism*’ campaign and during this month of September, visit our heritage sites, to reconnect with our past.

During Tourism Month 2020, as we reopen our sector we will showcase the many rural tourism offerings which include natural wonders, lifestyles, events, traditions, culture, cuisine, and crafts, to encourage and urge all communities in the Northern Cape and throughout the Country to take a *Short Left*.

Programme Director,

I am inspired by how the province has constructed the theme: Building **the Northern Cape Together—Promoting Rural Development through the promotion of tourism experiences in our Villages, Townships and Small Dorpies**.

This is a positive start to the recovery. This portrays your uniqueness as a province.

I am inspired by how you map your journey to recovery. I am reminded of the wise words of our former State President, Tata Nelson Mandela when he said, “*A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination.*”

Conclusion

As we begin this journey of re-igniting our domestic tourism sector, I want to urge all partners to inspire South Africans to want to visit and rediscover their country again.

South Africans must want to come to the Northern Cape and marvel at beauty the Home of the Khoi and the San.

The department is committed to accelerate its partnership with the Northern Cape to build it as a successful and attractive destination.

The province has unique tourism offerings that will ensure that it makes its mark in the tourism sector through its contributing in the areas of job creation, poverty alleviation and transformation.

Partnerships will be forged in projects, which are geared towards ensuring active participation of the youth in their own development, and ensuring that they contribute positively to development of their communities.

I look forward to the new ideas that will emerge throughout this month’s activities as we engage with all our stakeholders, as our youth brings in new ideas to propel tourism to its renewed glory.

Let the hope to recovery be our fuel!

I wish you a successful and inspiring tourism month, as we **rediscover the Northern Cape. Together Again**

I thank you.

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