



**MINISTER
TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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MINISTER DE LILLE, DEPUTY MINISTER SOTYU AND MEC SIDELL CHAMPION COMMUNITY-CENTRED G20 TOURISM OUTREACH IN MPUMALANGA

This week, Minister of Tourism Ms Patricia de Lille, Deputy Minister Ms Maggie Sotyu and MEC for Economic Development and Tourism Ms Jesta Sidell led G20 Tourism Community Outreach events in Ehlanzeni (31 July), Gert Sibande (31 July) and Nkangala (1 August), engaging more than 1 300 students, community members, SMMEs and industry stakeholders.

“At the heart of our outreach is listening—to hear your voice in shaping how tourism grows here,” said Minister de Lille. Echoing the G20 Tourism Working Group and Ministerial priorities, she highlighted:

- **People-Centred Artificial Intelligence and Innovation**, including the national G20 Tourism Hackathon that has challenged young innovators to prototype accessible booking platforms and smart-city visitor systems. Winners will pitch to G20 Ministers on 12 September 2025.
- **Tourism Financing and Investment**, underscored by the upcoming Tourism Investment Summit in Cape Town on 9 and 10 September 2025, where investors, government and community leaders will forge partnerships to fund scalable local tourism ventures.
- Air Connectivity for Seamless Travel.
- Enhanced Resilience for Inclusive, Sustainable Tourism Development.

Minister de Lille reminded communities that “South Africa will host more than 130 meetings and 23 ministerial-level meetings across major cities. Over 200 G20-related events are expected, pumping millions into local hotels, restaurants, and transport services.” She added that this surge will generate short-term jobs in hospitality, security, event management and logistics, while exposing local tour guides, guesthouses, craft markets and SMMEs to international audiences.

“Tourism must reflect the spirit, rhythm and aspirations of our communities,” said Deputy Minister Sotyu in Gert Sibande District Municipality, reinforcing Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability.

MEC Sidell participated in every session, listening to concerns—from road access and workforce training to local craft markets—and assuring delegates that provincial government is working hand-in-hand with national departments to maximise Mpumalanga’s gains from the September G20 Tourism Ministers Meeting.

In Nkangala District Municipality, Minister De Lille celebrated the Ndebele Nation’s cultural heritage and artists, including world-renowned icon Mama Esther Mahlangu, and affirmed: “You will write the next chapter of South African tourism—the students, entrepreneurs, innovators and storytellers of Mpumalanga.”

Across the three districts, the Department underscored its catalytic support through:

- **Green Tourism Incentive Programme (GTIP):** There are 23 approved projects in Mpumalanga, 18 are nearing agreement, five completed, including Tshamani Guest House and Timamoon Lodge, both 100 % women-owned.
- **Market Access Support Programme (MASP):** Since 2023, 21 enterprises from Ehlanzeni and four from Nkangala, all black-owned, 13 women-owned, have received funding and training to exhibit at major trade fairs. Similar MASP support is now rolling out in Gert Sibande to boost quality, competitiveness and digital readiness.

These outreaches build momentum toward Mpumalanga’s hosting of the G20 Tourism Ministers Meeting in September 2025—a milestone set to strengthen global partnerships, unlock investment and showcase local products on the world stage.

Minister de Lille closed the outreach by reaffirming: “We were here to listen, and through our Tourism Growth Partnership Plan, we will forge the partnerships that turn the community, tourism sector’s ideas into jobs, promote sustainable travel, and open doors to global markets.”

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