

NDT POLICY WATCH QUARTERLY UPDATE

October - December 2013



INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL POLICY
DEVELOPMENTS



tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

1. INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Boeing, South African Airways launch sustainable aviation biofuel effort in Southern Africa.

South African Airways (SAA) and Boeing announced a partnership to develop and implement a sustainable aviation biofuel supply chain in Southern Africa, which is the first for the continent¹. The two companies signed a Memorandum of Understanding for sustainable aviation biofuel supply chain development at the Corporate Council on Africa's 9th Biennial U.S.-Africa Business². This was attended by executives from leading U.S., African firms and government representatives from several countries.

The partnership between Boeing and SAA is aimed at supporting the companies' broader efforts to environmentally sustainable airline operations and the commercial aviation industry overall, while advancing South Africa's social and economic development³. Most importantly, it was reported, flight tests showed that biofuel, which is derived from organic sources such as plants or algae, performs as or better than petroleum-based jet fuel. Similarly, there is an acknowledgment that biofuel contributes far less to global climate change than traditional fuels because carbon dioxide is pulled out of the atmosphere by a growing plant-based feedstock.

The above move is seen as a critical step by South Africa in taking the lead towards sustainable aviation fuels. Moreover, SAA views this as an opportunity that can positively shape aviation biofuel efforts in the region. The SAA also committed to applying the best global technology to meet the unique conditions of Southern Africa, diversify energy sources and create new opportunities for the people of South Africa⁴. This, SAA emphasised, will be done in collaboration with Boeing's sustainable biofuel team, which has distinguished itself through lower-carbon biofuels collaborations.

Boeing sees sustainable aviation fuel initiatives as a significant step towards curbing carbon emission from commercial aviation. Lastly, Boeing and SAA believe that the new technological developments will enable the conversion of biomass into jet fuel in a more sustainable manner without competing with other sectors for food and water resources. It was reported that the World Wildlife Fund-South Africa will monitor compliance and ensure that the initiative leads to genuine carbon reductions. There was also an indication that aviation biofuel refined to required standards has been approved for a blend of up to 50 percent with traditional jet fuel. Globally, more than 1,500 passenger flights using biofuel have been flown since the fuel was approved⁵.

The initiative between the two companies is a positive development in the light of fuel challenges besetting the aviation industry and the complex carbon emissions. Perhaps this presents an opportunity to the aviation industry to address the carbon emission challenges, which recently created diplomatic tensions as a result of the European Union's taxing of flights into the European Space. Be that as it may, such biofuel initiatives have not been without detractors. Critics have raised numerous unintended consequences that may occur.

¹ Koumelis, T. (2013). Boeing and South African Airways launch sustainable aviation biofuel effort in Southern Africa.

² As cited in Koumelis October 2013.

³ As cited in Koumelis October 2013.

⁴ As cited in Koumelis October 2013.

⁵ As cited in Koumelis October 2013

They argue that the possible increase in the demand for corn and related crops will likely lead to price increases. Also, increase in the prices of crops, critics argue, may present a challenge to farmers to feed their livestock, which will then result in price increases for dairy and meat products⁶. Moreover, the increases in demand for fuel may, according to critics, lead to deforestation and destruction of wetlands to make space for planting of biofuel crops.

Airbus calls on the aviation industry to set a new standard for long haul comfort.

New research conducted by Harley Street Medical Practice: London Sleep Centre, on behalf of Airbus, highlighted the impact of seat width on the level of passenger comfort on board during long haul economy flights. Using polysomnography to record every standard physiological sleep movement, including monitoring brainwaves; eye; abdominal; chest and hip leg movement- on a selection of passengers, the research revealed that a minimum seat width of 18 inches improved passenger sleep quality by 53 percent when compared to the mid-20th century 17 inch standard⁷.

The research also showed that all passengers experienced a deeper, less disturbed and longer night sleep in the 18 inch seat⁸. Essentially, the research reported that they went from one sleep stage to the next as it is the case under normal circumstances. However, in the narrower 17 inch seat, passengers were affected by numerous disturbances during sleep. This means they rarely experienced deep restorative sleep⁹.

Accordingly, Kevin Keniston, the Airbus Head of Passenger Comfort, highlighted the need for the aviation industry to ensure passenger comfort or risk jeopardising passenger comfort into the year 2045 and beyond. This point was raised in the context of aircraft delivery timetables combined with expected years in service, which means another generation of passengers will be consigned to seats based on outdated standards.

Moreover, the study revealed that not only does seat width make a dramatic impact on passenger comfort, but there appears to be a growing cohort of discerning economy passengers who are not prepared to accept long haul 17 inch crusher seats and instead will choose airlines that offer better seat comfort, often turning to social media or specialist websites to determine true seat value¹⁰.

With regard to ethics and validity of the research result, it was reported that the study followed established principles of clinical research, which entailed a cross-over study, assessing the impact on sleep variables by two different seat sizes of 17 and 18 inches in a small sample of six healthy adults. These adults were pre-screened for the presence of medical or sleep disorders¹¹. The research results are groundbreaking in the sense that passengers, and in particular tourists, look at various products that will eliminate any inconveniences.

⁶ <http://forcechange.com/233/an-overview-of-the-arguments-against-biofuels/>

⁷ Koumelis, T. (2013). Airbus calls on aviation industry to set a new standard for long haul comfort

⁸ As cited in Koumelis October 2013.

⁹ As cited in Koumelis October 2013.

¹⁰ As cited in Koumelis October 2013.

¹¹ A cited in Koumelis October 2013.

Most importantly, the aviation industry in South Africa ought to consider this, especially when ordering new aircrafts. The timing of the research results could not have been better, given that the South African Airways (SAA) is on a mission to acquire new aircrafts as was reported in Parliament early this year.

Visa Developments.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) presented a report at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) High Level Policy Dialogue held in Bali, Indonesia on the 01st October 2013, showing that visa facilitation could create up to 2.6 million jobs in the APEC countries¹².

The report titled "*The Impact of Visa Facilitation in APEC Economies*" highlights successful collaboration and advances but also indicates that 21 percent of expected international tourists arriving into APEC over the period 2014-2016 would still be required to obtain a traditional visa prior to travel under current visa policies¹³. Accordingly, the report points out that easing of visa facilitation processes for these tourists could create as much as 2.6 million additional jobs in APEC economies by 2016.

During his address at the APEC High Level Policy Dialogue, the UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai urged APEC leaders to look at the opportunities arising from visa facilitation. He reflected on the report which showed that placing visa facilitation as a national priority can translate into significant socio-economic benefits in terms of income and jobs generated by the growth of tourism demand. In relation to that, the President and CEO of WTTC indicated that encouraging freedom to travel is a key strategic priority for WTTC.

One of the leading global travel search sites, Skyscanner, also conducted a study which showed that 81 percent of people in Asia are in favour of an EU-style single visa system across Asian countries¹⁴. The study comprised of seven thousand respondents from Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, Korea, Thailand, India and China. In addition to the 81 percent support for a common visa system across South East Asia, a visa reciprocity system between countries also gained the support of a huge 87 percent of total participants.

According to the study, the findings illustrated the extent to which visa requirements influence the holiday choices of Asian travellers, with three-quarters admitting that their choice of destination was often dictated by visa requirements. An overwhelming 90 percent of Chinese respondents responded likewise¹⁵. The survey results also suggest that many travellers find visa application processes complex. The significance of visa requirements in facilitating travel has not only gained traction in Asia.

¹² UNWTO Press Release no 13063.

¹³ As cited in the UNWTO Press Release no 13063.

¹⁴ <http://www.traveldailynews.asia.columns/article/49764> retrieved 31 October 2013.

¹⁵ As cited from <http://www.traveldailynews.asia.columns/article/49764>

In the United Kingdom, Government has, for example, announced that visa requirements for Chinese visitors are to be simplified in the summer of 2014. Meanwhile, Southeast Asia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Cambodia and the Philippines are said to be in talks over a smart visa system¹⁶.

The elevation of visa significance in regional policy dialogues and forums should be welcomed. This is critical in that it increases the sensitiveness with which destinations and regions ought to treat visa requirements. Various studies, including the aforementioned study, have demonstrated the significance of simplified visa processes in promoting tourism. Recent reports by the Department Home Affairs that the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) visa policy discussions are towards conclusions is a positive development.

The European Parliament support new stricter rules on aircrew fatigue.

The European Parliament voted for new stricter European Union-wide rules on pilot fatigue. The support for the new stricter rules, it was reported, is aimed at protecting passengers and promoting safer working conditions for the crew¹⁷. Principally, the new legislation intends to modernise the high European standards on aviation safety by clarifying and improving the current regulations on flight and duty time limitations, taking into account the latest scientific and technical evidence.

The new rules include more than 30 provisions aimed at improving crew protection against fatigue, offering them safer and better working conditions. The aforementioned protection entails in-flight rest for cabin crew and strict limits on flights, standby and reserve¹⁸. Moreover, the new legislation includes¹⁹:

- The reduction of flight duty time at night by 45 minutes (max 11 hour instead of 11h45)
- The reduction of the maximum number of flying hours from 1,300 to 1,000 in 12 consecutive months
- The increase of weekly rest by 12 hours (2 days instead of 1½ day) twice a month
- The allowance of up to 5 days of rest at home base in case of significant time zone crossing (instead of 2 days currently, or even less in some member states)
- An important reduction of the maximum duty time (standby + flight time) in case of airport standby (16hours instead of 26 -28hours in some member states)

The support for the new stricter rules by the European Parliament was based on the view of the majority of aviation safety professionals. The aviation safety professionals are in favour of a comprehensive and well balanced approach, which will bring about improvements in terms of safety for flight attendants and pilots in the European aviation sector, to the benefit of passengers²⁰. The regulations are expected to be enforced by the end of 2013 and fully applicable in the next two years.

¹⁶ As cited in <http://www.traveldailynews.asia,columns/article/49764>

¹⁷ Karantzvelou, V. (2013). The Commission welcomes the European Parliament's support for new stricter rules on aircraft fatigue.

¹⁸ As cited in Karantzvelou October 2013.

¹⁹ As cited in Karantzvelou October 2013.

²⁰ As cited in Karantzvelou October 2013.

The introduction of additional safety measures should be viewed positively by the tourism industry. Aviation sector, authorities, and governments in various countries ought to learn from such initiatives. This is extremely important in that safety is one of the top issues that tourists consider before taking a holiday. Similarly, the African continent, which was reported earlier this year to have higher numbers of aviation accidents, ought to learn from such best practices. Such initiatives may even be more relevant for long haul destinations.

Tourism Concern demands an end to Orphanage tourism.

Tourism Concern, an organisation that campaigns for better tourism and fights against exploitation, has demanded an end to Orphanage tourism. Based in the UK, the organisation launched a petition demanding that tour operators and volunteering organisations stop sending tourists and unqualified volunteers to orphanages.

According to Tourism Concern, this practice is fuelling demand for orphans thereby driving unnecessary separation of children from their families²¹. Furthermore, Tourism Concern indicated that, children are being separated from their families and forced to live in squalid institutions pretending to be orphanages, while well-meaning but misguided tourists are then invited to volunteer as carers, as part of a holiday experience.

Tourism concern reported that their Google research found 505 000 results for volunteer orphanage abroad and numerous of these are marketed by tour companies, 30 of which are in the UK²². Accordingly, Tourism Concern has written to these tour operators to stop sending unqualified volunteers and tourist to orphanages. Moreover, Tourism Concern is pleading with tourists not to visit orphanages and must explore alternative ways that can benefit local people. For Friends International in Cambodia, they view these aforementioned activities as literally placing children as a tourist attraction, and a commodity that is viewed and enjoyed like animals in the zoo²³.

In the light of the above development, it is important that the tourism sector and its sub-sectors apply the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism in all its activities. The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism highlights the need for tourism activities to promote human rights and more particularly the individual rights of vulnerable groups, notably children, the elderly, the handi-capped, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples²⁴.

Moreover, Article 2 of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism states that, 'any exploitation of human beings in any form, especially when applied to children, conflicts with the fundamental aims of tourism and is the negation of tourism'²⁵.

²¹ Karantzavelou, V. (2013). Tourism Concern demands an end to orphanage tourism.

²² As cited in Karantzavelou October 2013.

²³ As cited in Karantzavelou October 2013.

²⁴ Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

²⁵ As cited in the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

2. OTHER INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Social media and hospitality.

The use of social media to promote the hospitality sector has gained traction in the United Kingdom (UK). The findings from a study conducted by Trip Advisor: Trip Barometer Mobile and Social Trends show that nearly 44 percent of UK hoteliers allow bookings through a mobile device. Moreover, four in ten hoteliers (which is 44 percent) ensure that their website is mobile friendly. Most importantly, 39 percent of global travellers expect the hospitality business to provide a mobile-friendly site²⁶. The percentages on mobile device use by the UK hoteliers, it was reported, show that their businesses are quickly responding to consumer demand.

In relation to the above, the study revealed that only less than one in ten UK hospitality businesses currently use offline operators such as high street travel agents as a marketing platform. The study also indicated that half of UK hospitality businesses devotes market spend to mobile and social media channels as online marketing continues to capture its share from offline spend.

The study also provided statistics with regard to the utilisation of social networks by hoteliers to interact with current and potential guests. The following table outlines the level of interaction with guests by hoteliers through social media globally and in the UK.

Social Network	Percentage of hoteliers who use social networks to interact with current or potential guests	
	Global	UK
Facebook	78%	67%
Twitter	30%	38%
YouTube	21%	12%
Google +	19%	15%
Pinterest	8%	9%
Blogs	13%	12%
Instagram	8%	3%
Forums	5%	3%

Source: Theodore Koumelis 30 October 2013.

The percentages in the above table demonstrate the seriousness with which some hoteliers take social media. As a matter of fact, social media and mobile phones have transformed almost all sectors of the economies. It has become so pervasive in the business environment owing to its ability to reach customers quickly and in an economical way.

²⁶ Koumelis, T. (2013). Half of UK hospitality businesses now marketing on mobile and social media channels.

Like other businesses, the tourism industry in South Africa has no option but to intensify the utilisation of social media if it is to compete at international level. In fact, word of mouth, which the tourism industry used to thrive on, has now been substituted by people's experiences shared instantly through social media.

3. NATIONAL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

Mpumalanga Provincial Strategy on Cultural and Heritage Tourism

The Mpumalanga Provincial Government is currently finalising the Provincial Strategy on Cultural and Heritage Tourism. The Province reported that the Strategy is informed primarily by the National Tourism Sector Strategy (2010), National Heritage and Cultural Tourism Strategy, Mpumalanga Tourism Growth Strategy and the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (1996).

The strategy espouses the values of the NTSS such as respect for culture and heritage, especially in the context of developing and growing domestic tourism. The strategy is also aligned to the guiding principles and values of sustainable development, social cohesion, public participation and public private partnerships. It is also aligned to the National Heritage and Cultural Tourism Framework Strategy.

The strategy provides for coordination and the integration of heritage and culture into the mainstream of tourism. It is a framework from which Mpumalanga Province draw a clear plan of action around the issues of heritage and cultural tourism. The strategy moves from the notion that heritage and cultural tourism products are notably the fast emerging competitive niche or product within domestic and international markets.

The Mpumalanga Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism is the custodian of the strategy. It is the lead department to guide and provide strategic direction regarding the development and implementation of the strategy, through strategic partnerships with key stakeholders.

The National Tourism Sector Strategy highlights the importance of intergovernmental relations. This includes alignment between national, provincial and local level. The development of the Mpumalanga Cultural and Heritage Strategy, which is aligned to the NTSS and the National Cultural and Heritage Strategy, augurs well for coordinated implementation.

KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Master Plan

The Department of Economic Development and Tourism in KwaZulu-Natal launched a Master Plan for Tourism in September 2013. The KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Master Plan is aligned with the National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS), the National Growth Path, the National Development Plan and the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Economic & Spatial Objectives.

The KwaZulu Natal Tourism Master Plan (KZNTMP) is seen by the province as a comprehensive long term strategy, which provides a framework for success in the development, marketing, management and monitoring of tourism, while anticipating problems and mitigating impacts²⁷.

²⁷ KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Master Plan.

Essentially, this is a plan that guides all tourism plans in the province. The KZNTMP is futuristic in nature and covers a 19 year period to 2030. The KZNMTP seeks to position KZN as a globally renowned Africa's top beach destination with a unique blend of scenic, and heritage experiences for all visitors by 2030.

The strategic objectives include, amongst other things, increasing the tourism's GDP levels, increasing tourism employment in the province, improving geographical spread of tourism within the province and ensuring growth in levels of foreign and domestic visitor arrivals to KZN²⁸. The KZNTMP strategic objectives also reflect on the significance of niche tourism, improving visitor service and achieving transformation.

With regard to the guiding principles, the KZNTMP acknowledges the differences in municipalities' tourism potential and emphasises the importance of considering these dissimilarities when developing tourism. Furthermore, the KZNTMP emphasises the significance of selling the experience first and then the destination. According to the KZNTMP, the geography of the destination comes second after experiences.

The development of a long term tourism plan for KZN is interesting. It is interesting in the sense that, this may be perhaps the first provincial tourism plan that looks beyond 2020 (NTSS vision) to set out the time frames similar to those of the National Development Plan. This signals the appreciation of long term planning.

Western Cape Tourism, Trade and Investment Promotion, Agency Bill, 2012

Western Cape's Department of Economic Development & Tourism developed the Western Cape Tourism, Trade and Investment Promotion Agency Bill of 2012. The Amendment Bill seeks to repeal the Western Cape Tourism Act, 2004. It also seeks to revisit and refocus the tourism destination's marketing function, previously housed within the Destination Marketing Organisation (CTRU) and align governance aspects between the Western Cape destination marketing agency and provincial legislation regulating provincial public entities.

Western Cape's Department of Economic Development and Tourism highlighted that it is not its intention to completely redraft the Western Cape Trade and Investment Promotion Act or establish a new entity. However, the intention is to extend the current purpose of the Western Cape Trade and Investment Promotion Agency, to include tourism destination marketing as part of its economic development mandate.

National Environment Management Act No 107 of 1998

National Department of Environmental Affairs gave a notice on the 25th October 2013, under section 11(8) of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) No 107 of 1998 to establish the guidelines for the preparation of Environmental Implementation Plans and Environmental Management Plans.

According to the notice, the guidelines represent a 3rd generation of development since the promulgation of NEMA no 107 of 1998. The guidelines are aimed at providing technical assistance to provincial and national departments on how to develop and report on the implementation of

²⁸ As cited in KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Master Plan.

environmental implementation and management plans in line with Chapter 3 of the NEMA Act. Moreover, the guidelines are developed with the intention of encouraging and promoting consistency in preparation of and reporting on the environmental implementation and management plans by provincial and national departments listed in Schedule 3 of NEMA Act of 1998.

Chapter 3 of the NEMA Act emphasises the significance of coordinating and harmonising environmental policies and plans of various national departments which exercise functions that may affect the environment. The departments referred to here, which are also listed in Schedule 3 of the NEMA Act, included the erstwhile Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. The departments were chosen on the basis of functions involving the management of the environment.

It is therefore important that departments monitor the developments around guidelines for Environmental Implementation Plans. This is also more relevant for the Department of Tourism which has activities that impact on the environment.

Members of the public are invited to submit their comments within 30 days after the publication date i.e. 25th of October 2013. All inquiries in connection with the notice should be directed to Mr. N November on nnovember@environment.gov.za or by fax (012) 322 5890.

Proper Administration of Special Nature Reserves, National Parks and World Heritage Sites Amendment Regulations, 2013.

On the 25th October 2013, the Department of Environmental Affairs released a notice to amend the Regulations for the Proper Administration of Special Nature Reserves, National Parks and World Heritage Sites as promulgated in in Government Gazette No 28181

An amendment on the Regulation was made on Regulation 2, Regulation 45 and Regulation 64²⁹. Regulation 2 initially applied to special nature reserves, national parks and world heritage sites. The amendment seeks to exclude the Vredefort World Heritage Site from the regulations. Regulation 45 outlines restricted activities in national parks, world heritage sites and special nature reserves, whilst the amendment effect minor changes in the wording. Regulation 64 highlights the penalties and the amendment specifies the fine to be imposed on the first and second conviction as well as prison sentence to be imposed on the second conviction.

The regulations emanates from the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act of 2003. The aforementioned Act provides for the protection and conservation of ecologically viable areas representative of South Africa's biodiversity and its natural landscapes, and seascapes.

The tourism sector ought to follow and internalise these new amendments, including the principal Act. This is critical in two ways. Firstly, the aforementioned amendments have an impact in areas that are frequented by tourists. Secondly, understanding and communicating these amendments to tourists will assist in ensuring compliance by tourists and in avoiding penalties.

The public was invited to submit their comments within 30 days after the 25th of October 2013 to gcowan@environment.gov.za

International Health Regulations Bill, 2013

Government has approved the publication of the International Health Regulations Bill, 2013 in the Government Gazette for public comments. The Bill provides for the repeal of the International Health Regulations Act, 1974 (Act No 28 of 1974),

²⁹ Government Gazette, Notice 1052 of 2013.

to incorporate the International Health Regulations of 2005 into the domestic law in order to apply the International Health Regulations in the Republic and to provide for matters connected therewith.

The Bill also provides the Minister of Health with, amongst other things, powers to designate the national International Health Regulation (IHR) focal point, which centre must be accessible at all times for communities with World Health Organisation IHR Contact Points. In addition, the Bill gives the Minister of Health powers to make regulations regarding the designation and authorisation of port of entry, public health measures on arrival, vaccination, prophylaxis or related certificates for specific disease like yellow fever, as well as ship sanitation and control³⁰, etc.

The International Health Regulations of 2005 seeks to prevent, protect against, control and provide a public health response to the international spread of disease in ways that are commensurate with and restricted to public health risk, whilst avoiding interference with international traffic and trade³¹. Article 3 of the International Health regulations highlights the significance of implementing these regulations with full respect to human dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons.

In the light of the above developments, it is important to emphasise that strict adherence to international health regulations plays a significant role in preventing transportation of diseases globally. The tourism industry therefore ought to constantly monitor the developments around international health regulations with a view to provide clarity to potential visitors. Recently, the diplomatic wrangling between South Africa and one of its African counterparts erupted after the South African Government refused entry to visitors with fake yellow fever immunisation. It is therefore important to be as transparent as possible about the health requirements when interacting with potential visitors. This includes emphasising that international regulations are determined by the World Health Organisation. The responsibility of communicating such applies to those who are within and outside the tourism industry.

Moreover, health restrictions should be understood within the context of trying to prevent the spread of communicable disease which may be deadly. The spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) from China to 37 other countries between 2002 and 2003 highlights the significance of abiding with the International Health Regulations.

Interested persons were invited to submit any substantiated comments on the proposed Bill or any representations within 30 days after the 14th of October 2013 to the Director General: Health, Private Bag x 828, Pretoria, 0001- for the attention of the Chief Director: Communicable Diseases.

Traditional Affairs Bill, 2013

The Department of Traditional Affairs published the Traditional Affairs Bill, 2013 for public comment. The Bill seeks to consolidate national legislations dealing with traditional leadership and repeal the National House of Traditional Leaders Act, 2009 and the Traditional Leadership Government Framework Act, 2003.

With regard to the provisions, the Bill provides for the recognition of traditional and Khoi-San communities, leadership positions, and withdrawal of such recognition. It (Bill) also provides for the functions and roles of traditional and Khoi-San leaders, including the administration of kingship/queenship, traditional councils and establishment of the National and Provincial Houses of Traditional Khoi-San leaders³². Moreover, the Bill provides for regulatory powers of the Minister and for the establishment and operation of the Commission on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims.

³⁰ Government Gazette, Notice 1020 of 2013.

³¹ International Health Regulations 2005, second edition.

³² Government Gazette, notice 947 of 2013.

The recognition of the Khoi-San Traditional Leadership and the establishment of related institutions ought to be understood within the context of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The Constitution emphasises the need to promote achievement of equality and other measures aimed at advancing the disadvantaged, and gives national and provincial government the right to establish houses of traditional leaders and traditional councils.

From the tourism perspective, it is important to follow these developments given that traditional leaders are critical stakeholders towards accessing communities. As a matter of fact, some tourism developments occur in the land under traditional authorities.

Stakeholders interested in providing comments were given 60 Days from the date of publication, which was 20 September. Written comments can be submitted to RinaldiB@cogta.gov.za and TrishaR@cogta.gov.za.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Municipal Tariff Benchmarks for the 2014/15 Financial Year.

National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) has released the consultation paper on the municipal electricity tariff benchmarks for 2014/15 financial year. As customary, the energy regulator approves the municipal tariffs benchmark annually. After consolidation of all the inputs from stakeholders, which were due on the 08th of November 2013, NERSA intends to hold public hearings.

NERSA identified various customer classes for the purpose of benchmarking. These are Domestic Tariffs, Commercial Prepaid, Industrial/Large user Tariff and Industrial Time-of-Use Tariff³³. In arriving at the appropriate benchmark, NERSA intends to use the actual load factors of each municipality that will be provided by ESKOM. According to NERSA, this will assist in drawing a distinction between municipalities with high and medium load customers.

NERSA also pointed out that municipalities applying for the tariffs outside the approved benchmarks ought to justify such increases. The information required for justification include amongst other things, total number of customers per tariff category, expected revenue per tariff category, forecasted total sales, average load factor and load profile in percentages³⁴. The specifications above were requested due to the large volumes of complaints relating to excessive kVA (Kilovolts –Amps) charged by municipalities.

The issue of electricity prices has been the subject of heated debates. Businesses and communities have constantly raised the issue of affordability and the impact electricity prices have on businesses and individual consumers. Tourism businesses rely on energy to deliver memorable experiences and should therefore participate actively in this process.

New rail networks proposed

Gauteng Department of Roads and Transport (GDRT) announced the 25 year Integrated Transport Master Plan, which proposes new rail networks. This long term plan intends to prioritise public transport and views rail as critical to the transport network.

³³ Consultation Paper for the Municipal Tariff Benchmarks for the 2014/15.

³⁴ As cited in the Consultation Paper for Municipal Tariff Benchmarks 2014/15

GDRT intends to work closely with other partners including the Gautrain Management Agency and the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) in extending the rail networks into an integrated and efficient transport system³⁵.

The proposed rail networks are as follows³⁶:

- A link to high speed rail from Johannesburg to Durban proposed by the National Department of Transport
- A link from existing Gautrain Park Station to Westgate in Johannesburg CBD
- A link from the existing Rhodesfield Station to Boksburg
- A rapid rail link from Naledi in Soweto to Mamelodi via either the proposed Gautrain in Samrand Station or existing Gautrain Midrand Station
- A link from the existing Gautrain Sandton Station to Randburg
- A metropolitan railway system based on the existing PRASA/Metrorail
- A commuter rail network that provides mobility between concentrations of residential and employment areas.

The above proposal is aimed at facilitating the shift from private vehicles to public transport that will reduce road traffic, improve efficiency and promote sustainability.

Historically, various modes of transport played a significant role in facilitating the growth of tourism. The introduction of the steam engine locomotives in the early 19th century and the Concorde aircraft in the mid-20th century transformed travelling. The plans therefore to improve land transport, particularly the rail network, should be supported by the tourism industry. Such plans, if implemented successfully, will contribute towards an integrated transport system thereby improving convenience to visitors and communities.

Tax committee calls for public input

On the 5th of November 2013, the National Treasury released a media statement by the Davis Tax Committee requesting stakeholders' contribution regarding the tax burden and tax mix. The Davis Tax Committee, including its members, was announced by the Minister of Finance on the 17th of July 2013.

Davis Tax Committee's mandate is to examine the role of South Africa's tax system, with a view to promote growth, job creation, sustainable development and fiscal reliance³⁷. The tax committee is expected to consider the long term objectives of the National Development Plan when doing its work.

Essentially, the Davis Tax Committee has prioritised the establishment of specialist sub-committees on small businesses, looking at the appropriateness of the tax base and tax mix in South Africa. This also includes looking at base erosion and profit shifting³⁸.

³⁵ <http://www.gautrain.co.za/newsroom/2013/10/new-gautrain-routes/>

³⁶ As cited in <http://www.gautrain.co.za/newsroom/2013/10/new-gautrain-routes/>

³⁷ National Treasury latest news.

³⁸ As cited from National Treasury latest news

Davis Tax Committee intends to hold consultative sessions with a wide range of stakeholders for the engagement on the aforementioned issues. Principally, the Davis Tax Committee intends to look at ways in which the tax system can be improved to facilitate entrepreneurship and growth of small businesses. This includes looking at better tax packages that may assist small businesses to grow and thereon contribute to economic growth.

The above initiative presents an opportunity to a wide range of stakeholders to express their views on the tax regime. This also presents an opportunity to businesses to shape the tax regime structure with a view to unleash small business' potential and entrepreneurship.

Contributions on issues pertaining to the tax burden and tax mix were expected by 30 November 2013, whereas contributions regarding base erosion and profit shifting are expected by 31 January 2014 at taxcom@sars.gov.za

City of Johannesburg establishes a Tourism Sub-committee.

The City of Johannesburg's Department of Economic Development established and launched a tourism sub-committee in October 2013. This is aimed at fast-tracking tourism as an economic growth imperative. Broadly, the sub-committee seeks to stimulate the economy by focusing on sectors that would, amongst other things, ensure decent job creation, employment, resource resilience, liveability, and safe communities³⁹. The sub-committee consists of representatives from the City of Johannesburg, private sector, other affected stakeholders, citizens groups and non-profit sectors.

With regard to its orientation, the committee would act as a consultative forum that addresses the needs and challenges besetting the tourism sector in Johannesburg. The initiative of this nature is informed by the City's role of facilitating economic growth and transformation.

The establishment of the tourism sub-committee will play a critical role in unblocking tourism bottlenecks within the city. This is also in line with the National Tourism Sector Strategy, which emphasises the significance of intergovernmental relations and relations with the private sector.

Johannesburg launches Rea Vaya 1B

The Bus Rapid Transport system is set to be rolled out in other places within Johannesburg. The City of Johannesburg (COJ), as part of the transport month, launched the Rea Vaya Phase 1B projects on the 14th of October 2013⁴⁰. The new bus services, COJ reported, will be rolled out until February 2014. Commuters will be able to access key public hospitals such as Rahima Moosa, Helen Joseph, Charlotte Maxeke and other private hospitals in Brenthurst and Parklane.

Apart from that, the introduction of this new service will allow commuters to access educational institutions like University of Johannesburg (Doornfontein, Bunting road, Kingsway and Soweto), Wits University, Milpark College, John Orr's College, Parktown Boys High, Randpark High and other institutions⁴¹.

³⁹ City of Johannesburg Press Release

⁴⁰ City of Johannesburg 15 October 2013 news update at <http://www.joburg.org.za>

⁴¹ As cited in COJ news update at <http://www.joburg.org.za>

The R1.7 billion infrastructure for phase 1B roadways and bus stations provided the city with an opportunity not only improve public transport but also to create job opportunities⁴². The expansion of the bus rapid transport systems linking various parts of Johannesburg contributes towards integrated public transport, which is central to tourism development.

⁴² As cited in COJ news update at <http://www.joburg.org.za>

5. REFERENCES

City of Johannesburg. (October 2013). Joburg launches Rea Vaya phase 1B. Retrieved on 02 December 2013 from <http://www.joburg.org.za>

Department of Economic Development and Tourism. (2013). KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Master Plan. Retrieved on 07 November 2013 from <http://www.kznded.gov.za/>

Department of Environmental Affairs. (October 2013). Intention to amend Regulations for Proper Administration of Special Nature Reserves, National Parks and World Heritage Sites. Government Gazette, Notice 1052 of 2013.

Department of Health. (October 2013). Publication of International Health Regulations Bill. Government Gazette, Notice 1020 of 2013.

Department of Traditional Affairs. (September 2013). Invitation to comment on the Traditional Affairs Bill. Government Gazette, Notice 947 of 2013.

Gautrain Media Release. (October 2013). New Gautrain Routes. Retrieved on 21 November 2013 from <http://www.gautrain.co.za/newsroom/2013/10/new-gautrain-routes/>

Koumelis, T. (2013). Boeing and South African Airways launch sustainable aviation biofuel effort in Southern Africa. Retrieved on 05 November 2013 from <http://www.traveldailynews.com/news/article/57156/boeing-south-african-airways-launch>

Koumelis, T. (2013). Airbus calls on aviation industry to set a new standard for long haul comfort. Retrieved on 31 October 2013 from <http://www.traveldailynews.asia/news/article/53883/airbus-calls-on-aviation-industry>

Karantzavelou, V. (2013). The Commission welcomes the European Parliament's support for new stricter rules on aircraft fatigue. Retrieved on 05 November 2013 from <http://www.traveldailynews.com/news/article/57077>

Karantzavelou, V. (2013). Tourism Concern demands an end to orphanage tourism. Retrieved on 05 November 2013 from <http://www.traveldailynews.com/news/article/57311>

Koumelis, T. (2013). Half of UK hospitality businesses now marketing on mobile and social media channels. Retrieved on 05 November 2013 from <http://www.traveldailynews.com/news/article/57405>

National Energy Regulator. (October 2013). Municipal Tariff Benchmarks for the 2014/15 financial year. Consultation Paper.

National Treasury Latest News (November 2013). The Davis Tax Committee calls for contributions. Retrieved on 21 November 2013 from <http://www.treasury.gov.za/>

Travel daily news. (2013). New Skyscanner survey finds that three-quarters choose holiday destinations based on visa requirements. Retrieved on 31 October 2013 from <http://www.traveldailynews.asia/columns/article/49764>

United Nations World Tourism Organisation's Press Release. (2013). Visa facilitation can create 2.6 million jobs in the APEC economies. Retrieved on 17 October 2013 from <http://media.unwto.org/en/press-release/2013-10-01/visa-facilitation-can-create-26-million>

Vercueil, L. (2013). Johannesburg Business Forum Launches Tourism Sub-committee. Retrieved on 28 November 2013 from <http://www.joburg.org.za>

United Nations World Tourism Organisation (2001). Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. A/RES/56/212.