



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY DEPUTY MINISTER ELIZABETH THABETHE AT THE INDIAN
OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION (IORA) COASTAL AND MARINE TOURISM WORKSHOP
AND**

THE 3RD IORA TOURISM EXPERTS MEETING ON 06 MAY 2018.

Tourism officials and experts from IORA Member States,
Country representatives,
Travel trade partners,
Coastal and marine tourism specialists,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you to my beautiful country, South Africa. I assure you that the city of Durban has much more to offer and so when you are done with business you are welcome to explore.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) classifies Tourism as an economic and social phenomenon. Tourism has experienced continued growth and deepening diversification to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world, despite the challenges facing the world economy. Therefore, tourism is a key driver for socio-economic progress. According to the UNWTO and the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), Tourism contributes to 10% of the world's GDP, creates 1 in 10 jobs globally, and generated US\$ 1.4 trillion in export earnings in 2016. The 2016 UNWTO Report predicts that international tourist arrivals will reach 1.8 billion by 2030.

The implementation of IORA's Blue Economy has potential to accelerate ocean-driven economic growth amongst its members. Coastal and Marine Tourism is continuously growing and provides valuable income for coastal communities world-wide. It also represents an important contributor to the economy of countries and for generating employment.

I am confident that the Coastal and Marine Tourism Workshop will provide an opportunity to share knowledge and information for the benefit of the IORA member states. Ladies and gentlemen, let's develop strategies that will have long term benefits for ourselves and the next generations. For example, South Africa has the following initiatives:

- South Africa launched Operation Phakisa in 2014, focusing on unlocking the economic potential of the country's oceans.
- We are targeting the Oceans Economy to grow and transform the economy, create jobs and attract investment.

- South Africa is ideally situated to advance the Oceans Economy with a coastline of approximately 3 924 kilometres. In 2010, the oceans economy contributed about R54 billion to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and accounted for approximately 316 000 jobs.
- South Africa's oceans have a potential to contribute up to R177 billion to the economy and create about 1 million jobs by 2033. These are sustainable jobs in fishing, ocean and river transport, tourism and recreation, and environmental protection.
- The Department of Tourism in collaboration with Coastal and Marine Tourism (CMT) stakeholders is implementing the CMT Plan to unlock the tourism potential of the ocean's economy.
- It is estimated that the Coastal and Marine Tourism sector could reach R21.4 billion to the GDP and create about 116 000 direct jobs by 2026, thus reducing poverty, inequality and unemployment, while contributing to sustainable livelihoods and development. These estimates are conservative as they are growing off a low 2015 base of R 11.9 billion direct contribution to GDP and 64 400 direct jobs.
- The CMT vision is to grow a world class and sustainable Coastal and Marine Tourism destination that leverages South Africa's competitive advantages in nature, culture, and heritage. The CMT vision is guided by Tourism's vision which is to grow an inclusive tourism economy that leverages on South Africa's competitive advantages in nature, culture, and heritage, supported by innovative products and service excellence.
- CMT will create opportunities for inclusive participation including vulnerable groups such as women, youth and people with disabilities as both consumers and providers of tourism related services to enhance their livelihoods and advance transformation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am aware that tomorrow, the 7th of May 2018, some of you will participate in the Third IORA Tourism Experts' Meeting which will discuss and finalise the establishment of an IORA Tourism Core Group. I am also optimistic that IORA's Dialogue Partners will contribute positively towards our plans and the implementation thereof. I am hopeful that the gathering of IORA member states will achieve tangible results which will contribute positively towards the development of all member states.

Ladies and gentlemen it is my pleasure to welcome you to attend and explore the 2018 Africa Travel INDABA, previously known as the Tourism INDABA. The INDABA is one of the largest tourism marketing events on the African calendar. It showcases the widest variety of Africa's best tourism products, and attracts international buyers and media from across the world.

I trust that you will have fruitful discussions over the coming two days and enjoy our beautiful country.

I thank you.