



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**SOUTH AFRICA'S TOURISM GROWTH AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS
RECEIVE GLOBAL RECOGNITION**

South Africa's progress in growing its tourism economy through strategic collaboration between government and the private sector has received international recognition from the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC).

The recognition comes through the Global Champion Award, presented to Minister of Tourism Patricia de Lille at the WTTC Global Summit in Valletta, Malta, in acknowledgement of her leadership in advancing tourism growth by strengthening collaboration between government and the private sector.

Minister de Lille dedicated the recognition to the entire South African tourism sector, particularly the workers who keep this 24-hour industry operating.

"I am deeply honoured by this recognition, but this award belongs to the entire South African tourism sector, especially the workers who keep our industry running day and night. I have consistently said that our record-breaking 10.5 million international arrivals in 2025 were not a coincidence. They are the result of deliberate collaboration between government and the private sector through our Tourism Growth Partnership Plan. This recognition once again affirms what we have always said: Tourism Policy is Economic Policy," said Minister de Lille.

This international recognition also affirms Cabinet's endorsement of the Tourism Growth Partnership Plan (TGPP) and President Cyril Ramaphosa's decision to include tourism as a strategic economic growth sector under Phase Three of the Government-Business Partnership.

The award comes just over a week after the successful conclusion of the second Tourism Infrastructure Investment Summit, where the pipeline of bankable tourism projects from both the public and private sectors, grew from 8 in 2025 to 15 projects worth R3.5 billion investable opportunities.

“Minister de Lille has been a strong champion of engagement with the private sector, recognising that sustainable tourism growth is only possible when governments and businesses work together towards common goals. Her leadership and commitment to collaboration have helped strengthen South Africa’s Travel & Tourism sector and unlock opportunities for investment, job creation and long-term growth,” said WTTC President and CEO Gloria Guevara

According to the WTTC, South Africa's Travel & Tourism sector was forecast to support 1.9 million direct and indirect jobs in 2025, representing 11.3% of national employment, while contributing an estimated R659.8 billion to the economy. By 2035, the sector could support more than 620 000 additional jobs and contribute R911.7 billion to the economy.

WTTC Statement: <https://wttc.org/news/patricia-de-lille-global-champion-award>

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