



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**Opening address by Tourism Deputy Minister, Tokozile Xasa, at the Event Greening Forum Conference at the Hackle Brook Conference Centre, Johannesburg**

**21 July 2016**

Programme Director,  
Distinguished guests,  
Members of the media present  
Ladies and gentlemen

Let me start by congratulating you on hosting this conference, the fourth conference hosted by the Event Greening Forum, but the first to be hosted as a stand-alone conference, independent of Meetings Africa.

'Sustainability' and 'going green' are buzzwords that are easily interchangeable but not everyone knows how to go about achieving this and hopefully this conference will provide a clear roadmap of how this can be done.

According to research conducted just last year, the tourism and hospitality sector has had above average growth for the last 6 six years or so since the 2008/09 economic crisis.

This critical sector now looks set to create 70 million new jobs over the next 10 years.

Dating back to the 1996 White Paper on the development and promotion of tourism in South Africa, the travel and tourism industry has been celebrated and embraced by both government and social partners due to its ability to spur entrepreneurial opportunities, its use of a multiplicity of skills, stimulation of job creation and its community beneficiation legacy.

Government has, in pursuit of unlocking the opportunities and stimulating jobs, invested millions of Rands in advancing tourism development and destination marketing since 1994.

The result of this is that International tourism arrivals have grown tenfold from 350 000 in 1994 to over 10 million in 2015, and the industry currently contributes about 9.4 percent (R375 billion) to the Gross Domestic Product and employs almost 4.5 percent (680 817 direct jobs) of total employment in the country. While this should be celebrated as it spells growth and progress for our country, this growth should also be carefully managed as the unintended effects of this growth can be disastrous.

Ladies and Gentlemen the effects of climate change and the greening of the tourism sector remains a strategic focus area of the National Department of Tourism and is also a key component of the Responsible Tourism programme.

To this effect, the National Department of Tourism has vociferously supported and advocated for the implementation of greening initiatives within the hospitality sector.

The national Department of Tourism together with the Department of Environmental Affairs, Eskom and the now Water Affairs and Sanitation department, held greening workshops across the country. The workshops were aimed at raising the hospitality industry's awareness on the importance of greening and resource efficiency in the sustainability of tourism enterprises.

During the 2013/14 financial year, the National Department of Tourism developed and is currently implementing the Tourism Resource Efficiency Programme (TREP) the main objective of which is to

assess the resource efficiency of tourism establishments in terms of water, energy and waste management.

The Tourism Resource Efficiency Programme (TREP) is being implemented in partnership with the National Cleaner Production Centre of South Africa. The National Cleaner Production Centre (NCPC-SA) is a key industrial sustainability programme of the Department of Trade and Industry and is hosted at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). This programme's mandate is to enable South African industry to increase its competitiveness and sustainability through more resource efficient and cleaner production.

The National Department of Tourism, in addition to the programmes I have just mentioned, is engaged in the renewable energy retro-fitment pilot project. This pilot project is being rolled out at eight iconic and strategic state-owned tourism attraction sites.

These eight sites include one at the Robben Island world heritage site, four at the Kruger National Park – one each at the Skukuza and Lower Sabie rest camps as well as and one each at the Tshokwane and Nkuhlu picnic sites. The other three sites can be found at the Karoo desert, Hantam and Free State botanical gardens respectively.

A comprehensive procurement process was followed and the appointment of Engineering, Procurement and Construction contractors for the design, construction, commissioning and maintenance of the most suitable solar PV system for each site has now been completed. The process of procuring the engineers, procurement and construction contractors was supported by the National Treasury and done in line with the provisions of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA). After certain approvals are obtained in relation to the environmental and heritage impacts, construction on these projects is set to commence in the coming months.

Ladies and gentlemen Greening is defined as 'the process of becoming more active about protecting the environment' so I hope by the end of this conference, useful information would have been shared on greening best practices and principles.

I THANK YOU!

Quotes to consider:

*"Green is the prime colour of the world, and that from which its loveliness arises".* - Pedro Calderon de la Barca.

*"All theory, dear friend, is gray, but the golden tree of life springs ever green".* - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe