

TOURISM POLICY BULLETIN

National Department of Tourism

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tourism

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INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector is multidisciplinary in nature and its growth and success is highly dependent on other sectors. This multi-sectoral nature of tourism subjects it to various policy and regulatory frameworks some of which impacts negatively on the development and growth of tourism. The Tourism Policy Bulletin focuses on various policy developments at global, national and local level.

The aim of the Bulletin is to provide an overview of recent policy developments across sectors, with a view to inform tourism stakeholders and encourage proactive responses. Policy developments covered by this issue range from tourism, customs, transport, bills and international agreements.

NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

1. The National Tourism Grading System



The New Grading System has been approved and signed off by the Minister of Tourism in terms of section 28(1) of the Tourism Act of 2014. The revised National Grading System came into effect from the 01st of April 2019.

The National Grading System for tourism is intended to maintain or enhance standards and the quality of tourism services, facilities and products. These includes enhancements to Grading Criteria and Core Requirement as well as amendments to the format for presenting Minimum Entry Requirements/ Core Requirements from a vertical to a horizontal listing. The format change made the criteria easier to read and understand, allows for “fit-for-purpose” assessments and check for duplications as well as removing of superfluous and ambiguous words. The term “Minimum Entry Requirements” has been replaced with “Core Requirements”.

Core Requirements are thus a set of criteria that an establishment must fulfil to achieve a star rating. The Standard Criteria are applied by assessors to determine the overall quality, condition and standard of the features and services offered. As with the current grading system, the applicable star grading is determined from the achieved percentage from the Standard Criteria assessment as conducted by an assessor, however, the achieved score and star rating must meet or exceed the Core Requirement star grading result.

Enhancements to the Star Grading System include the introduction and addition of the Small Hotel and Apartment Hotel categories under the Formal Accommodation category and Hotel Sub-Category. The definitions are now as follows¹.

A Hotel provides accommodation with full or limited service to the travelling public and has a minimum of 10 rooms. A Hotel has a reception area and offers a dining facility.

A Small Hotel provides accommodation with full or limited service to the travelling public and has up to approximately 80 rooms. A Small Hotel has a reception area and offers a dining facility.

An Apartment Hotel provides accommodation with full or limited service to the travelling public and has a minimum of 10 rooms. An apartment hotel has a reception area and offers a dining facility. There is a kitchenette and dining area in each room.

The addition of Venue Grading for Hotels, whereby hotels/guesthouses/ other forms of accommodation with venue facilities that can accommodate 50 or more meeting/ conference delegates simultaneously must also be graded against the Venue grading criteria (these venues cannot be graded as part of the public areas as per the current system).

The revised system introduced Accolades to provide recognition for achievements/ distinguishing features. The Accolades programme allows for properties to capitalise on niche market differentiation under this system, the establishment would need to meet 3 to 6 clear minimum requirements to achieve an accolade or “badge” of recognition. Sixteen (16)

¹ <https://www.tourismgrading.co.za/>

accolade categories were proposed such as Wedding Venue; Cycling Tourism; Resort and Child Friendly. In an effort to encourage responsible tourism practices an Accolade for Responsible Tourism was proposed, whereby the TGCSA offers assessment against core or basic responsible tourism requirements as identified in SANS 1162. Responsible Tourism has been included as an accolade (and not a certification or award) as the proposed criteria are at an entry level when compared to existing schemes.

Aligned to international best practice, a “Premium” category is proposed, which allows for the recognition of exceptional 5-star properties namely 5-star properties with an exceptional score in the Standard Criteria assessment are eligible for a 5-star Premium award.

2. Competition Amendment Bill



The National Assembly forwarded the Competition Amendment Bill to the National Council of Provinces for concurrence. The Bill seeks to amend the Competition Act of 1998, so as to introduce provisions that clarify and improve the determination of prohibited practices relating to restrictive horizontal and vertical practices, abuse of dominance, price discrimination and to strengthen the penalty regime.

The Bill introduces greater flexibility in the granting of exemptions which promote transformation and growth; strengthens the role of market inquiries and merger processes in the promotion of competition and economic transformation through addressing the structures and de-concentration of markets. It also protects and stimulate the growth of small and medium businesses and firms owned and controlled by historically disadvantaged persons while at the same time protecting and promoting employment, employment security and worker ownership. The Bill further facilitates the effective participation of the Executive in the proceedings contemplated in the Act, by including a provision for Executive intervention in respect of mergers that affect national security interests of the Republic; and mandates the Competition Commission to act in accordance with the results of a market inquiry.

The Minister of Economic Development, Ebrahim Patel stated that the Bill promotes the participation of small enterprises in the economy, while aiming to dismantle cartels. The Minister outlined the benefits of the Bill as follows²:

- The Bill gives small businesses a special status as actions by dominant firms will be subjected to more scrutiny on practices like discriminatory pricing which have been found to be damaging to smaller players.
- Small players will have remedies against abusive buyer power from dominant firms when unfair pricing and trading conditions are imposed on them.
- Workers ownership of shares in companies will be promoted through a criterion on expanded ownership during mergers.
- Penalties for large businesses breaking the law will be outlined, and further more flexible regime will be in place for large

² <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/national-assembly-passes-competition-amendment-bill>

businesses to get exemptions to enable them to collaborate with each other to help expand the country's production in order to grow the country's export markets and develop new technologies to create jobs.

- Markets will be open for new investors, monopolies are being dismantled and economic concentration addressed for the country to be more innovation-driven, more dynamic and more inclusive.

The Bill was tabled before Parliament, gazetted for public comment and extensive discussions took place at the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) with businesses and organised labour.

3. Carbon Tax Bill



The Carbon Tax Bill was introduced in the National Assembly on the 20th November 2018. The Bill seeks to provide for the imposition of a tax on the carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent of greenhouse gas emissions and to provide for matters connected therewith.

The Minister of Finance stated that, "climate change poses the greatest threat facing humankind and that the country intends to play its role in the world as part of the global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions". According to the National Treasury, the Bill and its related measures will enable South Africa to meet its targets as agreed in the Paris Agreement.

The National Treasury announced that the Carbon Tax Bill will be effective from 01st of June 2019. The Bill will give effect to the polluter pays principle which aims to price the greenhouse gas emissions by obliging the polluter to internalise the external costs of emitting carbon and contribute towards addressing the harm caused by such pollution.

The review of the impact of the tax will be conducted after at least three years of the implementation of the tax. The first phase will be from 01 June 2019 to 31 December 2022 and the second phase from 2023 to 2030. The review will take into account the progress made to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission in line with the National Determined Contributions (NDC) commitments under the Paris Agreement.

The Carbon tax will be levied and collected for the benefit of the National Revenue Fund. Carbon tax will be a package of tax incentives and revenue recycling measures to minimise the impact in the first phase of the policy. Firms will therefore be incentivised towards cleaner technologies over the next decade and beyond.

The National Treasury further stated that the design of the carbon tax provides significant tax-free emissions allowances ranging from 60% to 95% for the first phase. This is to provide sectors with sufficient time and flexibility to transition their activities through investments in energy efficiency, renewables and other low carbon measures.

Allowances include a basic tax-free allowance of 60% for all activities; 10% process and fugitive emissions allowance; 10% allowance for companies that use carbon offset to reduce their tax liability; performance allowance of up to 5% for companies that reduce the emissions intensity of their activities and a maximum 10% allowance for trade exposed sectors.³

³ <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/mboweni-tables-carbon-tax-bill>

Lastly, the National Treasury will review the interaction between the carbon tax and the electricity generation levy at the beginning of the second phase of the carbon tax. The Bill has been approved by Parliament and awaiting to be signed into law by the President.

4. Department of Home Affairs published amended Immigration Regulations



The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) published on the 30th November 2018, the amendments to the Immigration Regulations of 2014. These amendments were made in terms of section 7 of the Immigration Act, 2002 after consultation with the Immigration Advisory Board. The amendments were effective from the 01st December 2018. The updated amendment of Regulations 6 of the regulations are in respect of minors (all children under 18 years of age) travelling to and from South Africa. The requirements for children travelling to or from the Republic of South Africa are aimed at giving effect to the Children's Act, 2005. The updated amendments are as follows⁴:

South African Minors: Relatively minor changes will be brought into effect by the amended regulations in respect of South African child travellers entering or leaving South Africa. New South African child passports are being issued containing the details of parents as a standard feature. Children travelling with both parents and in possession of such passport need no other

documentation, whilst children travelling with both parents and on a passport that does not have those details will still be required to carry a birth certificate (unabridged) with the details of their parent(s). South African children not travelling with both parents will still be required to produce additional documentation, including consent letters, adoption orders, custody or guardianship papers and death certificates, as the case may be.

Foreign Minors: In terms of foreign minors, the following are the salient changes which now apply:

- Copies of original documents are sufficient and need not be certified;
- Consent and authorization is simply in the form of a letter and need not be notarized or be an affidavit;
- Children travelling with both parents need no extra documentation, however, if there are situations such as where the surname is different, the carrying of proof of parental relationship is advised;
- In the event of a minor not travelling with both parents, but travelling with an adult, other documentation may be requested and it is strongly advised that such documentation be carried, being a birth certificate and other supporting documents such as a letter of consent, court orders or death certificate(s) as appropriate. A period of 24 hours is provided for to acquire such documents on arrival if they are requested and are not in the traveller's possession;
- In the event of a minor travelling alone, additional documentation must be carried;
- A birth certificate must contain details of parent(s);
- The requirements for children traveling with only one parent or another adult from visa countries have been retained. This means

⁴ <http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/statements-speeches/621-advisory-new-requirements-for-children-travelling-through-south-african-ports-of-entry-effective-1-june-2015>

that they have to produce the documentation on application for a visa, and a copy of a birth certificate will be required when applying for any child visa; and

- Should the adult(s) traveling with a child on a visa change from what was stated on visa application due to short term circumstances, the same advisory in respect of documentation to be carried applies.

Essentially, the key change is that child travellers and accompanying adults may only be stopped and asked questions, and be required to provide additional documentation in exceptional cases where there are grounds for suspicions or high risk.

Most importantly, travellers will be given an opportunity to source documentation in case they do not have it with them. The DHA also stated that these minor traveller documentation requirements are in line with many other international countries including Canada and the UK.

5. Draft Amendments for the Management of Elephants Published



The Environmental Affairs Minister published the Draft Amendments to the Norms and Standards for the management of elephants in South Africa. The Norms and Standards, or Elephant Norms

and Standards, were published in Government Gazette No. 42015 on 02nd of November 2018 for public comment for a period of 30 days⁵.

The aim of the Elephant Norms and Standards is to ensure that elephants are managed in a manner that ensures their long term survival within the ecosystem in which they occur, and may occur in future, and to promote broader biodiversity and socio-economic goals that are socially, economically and ecologically sustainable. The existing Elephant Norms and Standards promote the objective-based management of elephants in protected areas as well as on private land⁶.

Since the coming into force of the Elephant Norms and Standards, the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) has become aware of implementation and enforcement challenges facing owners and managers of elephants, including conservation authorities. These challenges and gaps were noted mainly around the management plan and in particular requirements; information required; approval process; as well as clarity on roles and responsibilities on the management of roaming (wild) elephants in instances where the origin cannot be readily ascertained. Furthermore, certain provisions did not adequately specify whether they apply to wild or captive elephants.

According to the DEA, the revised Elephant Norms and Standards create greater flexibility in the management of elephant population on state and private land, while retaining the guiding principles on which the existing elephant norms and standards have been based. Non-invasive disturbance management interventions and activities related to escaped and roaming elephants are clarified, while specific requirements for population management including the use of contraception are outlined.

⁵ <https://www.greengazette.co.za/documents/national-gazette-42068-of-30-november-2018-vol-641-20181130-GGN-42068>

⁶ <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/draft-amendments-management-elephants-published>

6. White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation



Cabinet approved the White Paper on Science and Technology as the policy of the country. The White Paper seeks to achieve the following objectives⁷:

- Improved National System Innovation (NSI) partnerships, coherence and coordination;
- Strengthened and transformed NSI institutions;
- Increased human capabilities;
- Expanded research enterprise;
- Enhanced enabling environment for innovation; and
- Improved financing NSI funding regime.

The South African Government developed a new STI White Paper for the country to be able to respond fully to the global technological, demographic and environmental changes taking into account megatrends spanning the geopolitical; economic; social; technological and environmental spheres. The development of the new STI White Paper further aims to help South Africa benefit from global developments such as rapid technological advancement; geopolitical and demographic shifts brought by the Fourth Industrial Revolution as well as respond to the threat associated with some of these global trends.

⁷ <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/summit-conclude-white-paper-science-technology>

The White Paper sets out the government's long term policy approach to the sector and also prepares the country for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. It is based on extensive review of various aspects of the NSI, as well as consultation with a wide range of role players such as relevant government departments, civil society, business and academia. The White Paper on STI emphasises the core themes of inclusivity, transformation, and partnerships.

The White Paper is not an implementation plan. There are policy actions proposed in the white paper and will be implemented according to decadal plans informed by technology foresight studies and consultation with all implementation partners (across government, business, academia and civil society) to ensure policy coherence and certainty. Decadal plans will detail technology focus areas, programmes to be initiated, institutional arrangements and funding required for these programmes, and ways to evaluate their performance. They will be reviewed and updated every five years, or as deemed appropriate by the Department of Science and Technology.

7. Tourism Conservation Fund launches third funding window



The Tourism Conservation Fund launched the third funding window of its Inclusive Business Linkage Fund (IBLF) on the 03rd of March 2019. The aim of the fund is to support partnerships around community homestay and related cultural experiences.

The CEO of the Tourism Conservation Fund, Mr Paul Zille, stated that “21st century travellers are increasingly seeking more than the traditional sightings of game and nature that lie in the heart of the wildlife experience. They want to meet local people and experience their way of life”. The Tourism Conservation Fund therefore invites potential partners to look at opportunities that might previously not have been considered feasible due to the uncertainties and costs associated with them. Activities and partnerships of this kind bring together formal and informal sector parties who have little prior experience of working together.

The fund only supports commercially viable initiatives. The fund actively seeks partnerships between commercial players, community enterprises and non-governmental organisations. The applications will be led by established business that have a vested interest in the commercial success of the partnerships they wish to establish. The fund, therefore, requires co-investment in the entities it finances.

More information regarding the funding window and a detailed guide that describes the funding criteria can be accessed on <http://tourismconservationfund.org>

8. Cabinet Approves Marine Protected Areas



Cabinet approved the declaration of 20 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) on the 24th October 2018 as part of Operation Phakisa: Oceans Economy MPAs Representative Network⁸. The Minister of Environmental Affairs welcomed the announcement, stating that “it will increase ocean protection within the South African Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) to 5%”.

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) emphasised that MPAs will contribute to fisheries sustainability; advance marine ecotourism; help maintain resilience in ecosystems that are under stress from climate change as well as advance South Africa’s efforts to protect its ocean heritage for future generations.

According to the Minister of Environmental Affairs, South Africa’s ocean space, which is one of the most varied in the world, is highly productive with rich biodiversity providing living and non-living resources that contribute significantly to the country’s economy and to job creation. As South Africa grows and intensifies the ocean economy, a representative sample of marine ecosystems must be protected to ensure their resilience to human use and impact, and also the impacts associated with climate change.

There is a recognition that these protected areas provide safe spaces in which fish can breed undisturbed. They are essential to maintain eco-certification of the South African deep-sea trawl fishery. The certification process assesses whether habitat and nursery areas for the hake fishery are adequately protected. Marine Protected Areas also contribute to growing South Africa’s marine eco-tourism sector by providing undisturbed natural habitat for whales, sharks, seals, dolphins, turtles and seabirds for international and domestic tourists to experience.

⁸ <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/cabinet-approves-marine-protected-areas>

South Africa is also mindful of its long term commitments to the protection of marine biodiversity, including meeting the 2020 Global Target in the Decadal Plan of the Convention of Biodiversity (CBD), which stands at 10%. MPAs are important in maintaining ecosystem functioning and structure, as well as protecting biological diversity. Therefore, the approved 20 new MPAs are a significant step towards meeting the global 2020 target.

9. White Paper on Home Affairs

The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) published the White Paper on Home Affairs for public comment in government gazette No 42162. The White Paper outlines the importance of the DHA, the mandate, constitutional roots; DHA's current status (operating model); and the strategic importance of DHA.

The DHA's mandate, as set out in its policy framework (discussed in chapter three of the White Paper), is to have sole authority for the following functions of the state⁹:

- Mandate 1: Manage the official identity and status of persons
- Mandate 2: Manage international migration
- Mandate 3: Manage asylum seekers and refugees.

Interested persons and organisations were invited to submit any substantiated comments or representations by no later than 18 February 2019. The White Paper is available online on <https://www.gov.za/documents/white-paper-home-affairs-comments-invited-18-jan-2019-0000>.

⁹<https://www.gov.za/documents/white-paper-home-affairs-comments-invited-18-jan-2019-0000>

10. Fly Airlink to St Helena.

St Helena is now available by scheduled air service from South Africa and Airlink operates direct flights between the island and Johannesburg every Saturday. The flight scheduled is as follows:

- SA8131: Depart Johannesburg at 09:00 – arrive in St Helena at 13:15.
- SA8132: Depart St Helena at 14:30 – arrive in Johannesburg at 21h15.

St Helena's history spans over 500 years. Napoleon Bonaparte was banished and died in the island; his tomb is in Sane Valley. Visitors can pay homage at Deadwood plain, the "Boer cemetery", or climb the 699 steps of Jacobs Ladder and visit High Knoll Fort. Another attraction is the plantation House, the residence of the island's governors, and meet Jonathan the tortoise, reputed to be at least 188 years old.

St Helena is home to a range of endemic flora and fauna, both marine and terrestrial. Conservation areas like Diana's Peak and Millennium forest showcase insects and prehistoric plant life, and visitors have a chance of seeing the elusive wire bird, seen only on St Helena.

Some of the activities in St Helena includes snorkeling and scuba diving to explore the diverse marine life of the mid Atlantic. Visitors can also take a boat trip along the leeward side of the island where they can spot the local super-pod of pan-tropical dolphins¹⁰.

¹⁰ <http://www.tourismupdate.co.za/article/188891/Watch-Fly-Airlink-to-St-Helena>

LOCAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

1. Go Durban Station to Open



The eThekweni Municipality announced that residents will soon have access to an improved public transport service. The announcement was made during a meeting attended by the eThekweni Mayor and the Minister of Transport, which was focusing on resolving challenges faced by Go Durban as it is being implemented.

Go Durban is an Integrated Rapid Public Transport network designed to provide all Durban commuters with safe, reliable and organised transport service.

The meeting was aimed at discussing progress, achievements and challenges. The Minister of Transport underlined the importance of participation of the current public transport industry for the project to succeed.

The Mayor of eThekweni indicated that the city had been working hard implementing the project. Successes of the project include local labour being drawn from wards where the projects are implemented; 25 unemployed graduates employed; a total of 22 967 job opportunities created for 11 767 youth; 3 677 women; and 231 people with disabilities¹¹.

The meeting concluded with an oversight visit to the C3 route, which started in Pine Town Central Business District to Bridge City in

KwaMashu. The oversight meeting included a stop at Regent station to assess various system components of the station such as wayfinding and station building structures.

2. Mbombela Considers an Agreement on Outdoor Advertising



The City of Mbombela is considering entering into a long term contract with companies renting out advertising space to advertise within Mbombela. The duration of the agreement is 9 years, reviewable annually.

The Draft Agreement outlines the nature of Billboards acceptable by municipality. Billboards shall be neatly and properly erected in line with the approved drawings and must be finished to an appropriate standard of workmanship. Of significance is that Billboards shall not be constructed without prior approval of plans by the municipality.

The Draft Agreement states that “failure to obtain approval before proceeding with construction may nullify the agreement”. The agreement also indicate that it is the responsibility of the companies to engage with all service departments prior the erection of the billboard infrastructure.

In the event of damage to the road or any underground infrastructure during the erection, the Draft Agreement specifies that the company

¹¹ http://www.durban.gov.za/Resource_Centre/new2/Pages/Go-Durban-service-station-to-be-opened-soon.aspx

shall repair such damage to the satisfaction of the Municipality. The City of Mbombela underlined certain conditions for the erection of the Billboard. These include ensuring that the visibility of traffic signs is not affected by the Billboard and the that traffic signal must be clear to oncoming motorists and no advertisement in the background from a distance of 100 meters before the signal.

3. City of Cape Town Host World Travel Market



The City of Cape Town hosted the World Travel Market (WTM) 2019. The previous event in 2018 was reported to have been attended by 5 800 industry professionals from over 70 countries across the globe. This generated over \$410 million dollars over the 3 days of WTM.

The Mayor of Cape Town indicated that the WTM platforms provides an opportunity for Africans to share with the world what Africa can offer. The Mayor also indicated that the City of Cape has turned the corner in relation to drought and Mother City is now world-renowned for water demand management and conservation efforts. The Mayor also acknowledged the contribution of the tourism industry.

According the Mayor, hotels and guest houses are in the process of driving sustainability and encouraging visitors to save water whilst enjoying the best of Cape Town.

4. Johannesburg Hosted Digital Transformation Summit



Huawei hosted the Road to Digital Transformation Summit at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg with a view to establish and promote open innovative partnerships.

The event provided an opportunity for Huawei to showcase its Platform and Ecosystem Strategy displaying a comprehensive range of the latest ICT products in emerging fields such as cloud computing, big data and digital platforms.

The summit sought to provide an opportunity for interaction with leading experts on Digital Transformation Strategy; latest global business insights; business opportunities with potential customers and partners and latest technology trends, solutions and opportunities to inspire technological innovations.

REGIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

1. Botswana to join KAZA uni-visa system



Botswana has committed to join the Kavango-Zambezi (Kaza) uni-visa system, in order to expedite the movement of tourists between the country and other Kaza members, namely Zimbabwe and Zambia¹².

The visa system came into existence in 2014 and currently exists only between Zimbabwe and Zambia. This visa is valid for 30-days and allows holders to do a day-trip to Chobe National Park in Botswana.

During Phase 2, the visa is expected to be extended to Angola, Namibia and with Botswana. The regional target is to extend the uni-visa to all SADC countries to further boost the tourism sector in the region.

The aim of the uni-visa is to leverage technology to ease tourist movement and the milestones include the embedding of the uni-visa into the respective immigration departments' systems and ensuring that the systems are interfaced.

2. Zambia's plan for tourism development Approved



Zambia's Cabinet has approved the Tourism Master Plan for the period 2018 to 2038. The aim of the 20-year practical development strategy is to enhance the economic contribution of the tourism sector to Zambia's economy.

The tourism plan envisions Zambia to rank amongst the most-visited holiday destinations in Africa and to be a regional conference hub with a high-quality, diversified and sustainable tourism industry, with tourism making a major contribution to the economic and social well-being of Zambians.

The establishment of a Presidential Tourism Council to enhance co-ordination in the promotion of tourism in the country, was also approved by Cabinet. The main functions of the council will be to bring all ministries that are relevant to tourism growth at a senior executive level under one umbrella, as well as to identify and unlock obstacles that inhibit implementation and tourism growth, whilst monitoring performance and progress.

¹² <http://www.tourismupdate.co.za/article/189735/Botswana-to-join-KAZA-uni-visa-system>

3. Zimbabwe and Zambia to set up One-stop Border post in Victoria Falls



Zimbabwe and Zambia are working on plans to develop the existing Victoria Falls Border Post, that links the two countries into a one-stop border post to expedite the movement of travellers and cargo. According to the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (Zimra) Commissioner General, Faith Mazani, the concept will also be spread to other border posts after the roll-out of the Victoria Falls post¹³.

The benefits of a one-stop border post are that traffic going into Zambia will be cleared on the Zambian side, while traffic entering Zimbabwe is cleared on the Zimbabwean side, thereby cutting down time spent at the border.

4. Rwanda Signs Bilateral Air Service Agreements with 20 countries



Rwanda signed Bilateral Air Service Agreements (BASA) with 20 countries to expand its air transport network¹⁴. The BASAs were signed at the eleventh International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Air Services Negotiation Event (ICAN2018). Rwanda's Minister of State in charge of transport signed BASAs with various countries including Burkina Faso, Gambia, Greece, Iceland, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Kingdom of Spain, Guyana and Comoros.

The Minister also signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and initialed a further 9 BASAs with the Bahamas, Cambodia, Chile, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Finland, Jamaica, Luxembourg and South Korea. According to the Minister, the agreements would allow the national carrier, RwandAir, to operate air services to these countries, and allow the commercial airlines of international partners to operate in Rwanda without restrictions.

5. African Countries Are Becoming More Open to Each Other

The year 2018 was a landmark chapter in Africa's regional integration efforts. Leaders across the continent signed the Continental Free Trade Agreement, which aims to connect a marketplace with 1.2 billion people and a GDP of \$3.3 trillion. Another milestone was also marked with the launch of the Single Air Transport Market initiative which outlines a better and faster connected continent through air travel. Findings in the 3rd edition of the Africa Visa Openness Index Report 2018, published by the African Development Bank and the Africa Union Commission, show that on average

¹³ <http://www.tourismupdate.co.za/article/189035/Zimbabwe-and-Zambia-to-set-up-one-stop-border-post-in-Victoria-Falls>

¹⁴ <http://www.tourismupdate.co.za/article/188616/Rwanda-signs-Bilateral-Air-Service-Agreements-with-20-countries>

African countries are becoming more open to each other¹⁵. The top 10 and the top 20 most visa-open countries continue to improve their average score, reflecting more liberal visa policies. In addition, 43 countries improved or maintained their score¹⁶.

Benin has improved in opening up its borders to African travellers, moving from 27th place in the 2017 edition of the report to 1st place in the 2018 report, holding the same position as Seychelles. Zimbabwe also broke into the top 20 with the introduction of a visa-on-arrival policy for SADC members. Nevertheless, the free movement of people still remain beyond the reach of many Africans. When compared with 2017, Africans do not need a visa to travel to 25% of other African countries (up from 22%); can get visas on arrival in 24% of other African countries (same as 2017); and need visas to travel to 51% of other African countries (down from 54%)¹⁷.

The 2018 report shows citizens of 35 countries including Sierra Leone, Egypt, Morocco, and Angola need visas to travel to at least 26 countries or more. Only the citizens of Seychelles and Benin need no visas at all to travel to all the nations in the continent. Several Africans need visas to travel around the continent.

6. African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)



¹⁵ <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20181128/african-countries-are-becoming-more-open-each-other-2018-africa-visa-openness>

¹⁶ <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20181128/african-countries-are-becoming-more-open-each-other-2018-africa-visa-openness>

The Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr Rob Davies, welcomed the ratification of the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) by Parliament.

The AfCFTA was launched during an Extra-Ordinary Summit of African Union Heads of State and Government on 21 March 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda. South Africa signed the Agreement during the 31st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union on 1 July 2018 in Nouakchott, Mauritania. The AfCFTA aims to build an integrated market in Africa that will see a market of over 1 billion people with a combined GDP of approximately US\$3.3 trillion¹⁸.

AfCFTA seeks to create a single continental market for goods and services with free movement of business persons and investments. It also seeks to enhance competitiveness at industry level through market access; expand intra-Africa trade through trade liberalization and harmonisation and expedite continental integration. Indications are that if the agreement is ratified by all countries, Africa will be the largest free trade area in terms of participating countries.

Currently, 49 countries have signed the Agreement and Kenya, Ghana, Rwanda, Eswatini, Chad, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Guinea Conakry have deposited their instruments of Ratification.

According to the Minister of Trade and Industry, South Africa deposited its instrument of ratification during the margins of African Union Ministers of Trade meeting that took place in Egypt in December 2018.

¹⁷ The 2018 Africa Visa Openness Index

¹⁸ <http://www.polity.org.za/article/dti-parliament-approves-the-agreement-establishing-the-african-continental-free-trade-area-2018-12-05>

7. Governments urged to unlock Africa's aviation's benefits



At the 50th Annual General Assembly meeting of the African Airline Association (AFRAA), the International Air Transport Association (IATA) urged governments in Africa to maximise the positive social and economic power of aviation by working together to promote safe, sustainable and efficient air connectivity¹⁹.

According to IATA's Director-General and CEO, African aviation supports \$55.8bn of economic activity and 6.2 million jobs. To enable aviation to be an even bigger driver of prosperity across the continent, Governments should work together to address the following areas.²⁰:

- **Safety:** Governments were urged to recognise the IATA Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) in their safety oversight programs. Countries must also push forward greater adoption of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPS).
- **Closer cooperation with governments** IATA called for an aviation agenda to focus on improving competitiveness, developing effective infrastructure, modernising the regulatory framework focusing on global

standards and connectivity; and ensuring a well-trained and diverse workforce.

- **Competitiveness:** Airlines in Africa, on average, lose \$1.55 for every passenger carried. Establishing competitive cost structures that enable growth and reducing blocked funds are essential to improving the competitiveness of African aviation. Africa is an expensive place for airlines to do business. Jet fuel costs are 35% higher than the rest of the world. User charges, as a percentage of airlines' operating costs, are double the industry average. And taxes and charges are among the highest in the world. Furthermore, \$670 million of airline funds are blocked.
- **Infrastructure:** In Africa there are infrastructure problems in two extremes. In some cases, it is overbuilt and expensive. In other cases, it is deficient and cannot meet demand. Industry and government should communicate to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to meet demand, that airline technical and commercial quality standards are met and that the infrastructure is affordable.
- **Harmonised regulation:** IATA expressed strong support for the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) initiative.
- **Sustainable and gender diverse workforce:** Governments are urged to develop policies to build their training pipeline to support growth and tap into the power of women to help alleviate a growing skills shortage in the region.

¹⁹ <http://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/145/583/184772.html>

²⁰ <http://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/145/583/184772.html>

8. Maputo-Katembe Bridge is the longest suspension bridge in Africa



Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi and KwaZulu-Natal Economic Development MEC Sihle Zikalala officially opened, on the 10th November 2018, the new Maputo-Katembe Bridge that connects Maputo and KwaZulu-Natal's East Coast Border²¹.

The Bridge is now the longest suspension bridge in Africa and part of the African Continental Free Trade Area. The Bridge is reported to be around three kilometres in total length, standing 141 meters.

According to the KZN Economic Development MEC, the bridge will boost the countries' economies and create more jobs. It will also enhance trade opportunities, which will make it easier for exports and imports between the two countries. The Maputo-Katembe bridge will significantly reduce travel time between Maputo to Kosi Bay, KwaZulu-Natal's East coast border post, from 6 hours to 90 minutes.

9. SA-Kenya to introduce multiple entry visa



South Africa and Kenya are expected to introduce a 10-year multiple entry visa for business people to ease movement between the two countries²². The two countries are currently working on a visa exemption framework to ensure free movement for the purposes of promoting tourism and business in the two countries.

According to the Minister of Home Affairs, the South African Government will be working together with visa facilitation services in Kenya for the implementation of the visa framework. The Minister further stated that both countries committed to further discussions on any additional impediments of migration that may arise. It is envisaged that the two countries will eventually become visa-free.

²¹ <http://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/146/494/184657.html>

²² <http://www.bizcommunity.co.ke/Article/111/747/183991.html>

10. Nigeria Grants Tax Exemption to Tourism Investors



The government of Nigeria, in its efforts at ensuring that tourism meets the country's development expectations, has introduced some incentives. According to the Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, Nigeria has approved a three-year tax exemption and export incentives to intending tourism investors.

The incentives would ensure that the sector meets the country's development expectations in line with the National Tourism policy of Nigeria and existing fiscal incentive regime for investment ²³. The incentives offer a tax exemption for up to three years, export incentives, land at a concessionary rate, import/export incentives and work permit to foreigners with specialised skill among others.

The minister stressed the role the sector played in improving the economy through harnessing the vast potentials in it, which he said would serve as a catalyst for diversifying the nation's economy and job creation²⁴. According to the Minister, "lack of accurate statistics on arrivals and receptions were major challenges confronting the tourism sector", hence the ministry with the support of the United Nations World Tourism Organisations (UNWTO) would implement a Tourism Master Plan.

²³ <http://www.bizcommunity.com.ng/Article/157/595/184851.html>

²⁴ <http://www.bizcommunity.com.ng/Article/157/595/184851.html>

GLOBAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

1. Australia's New Temporary Parent Visa



Countries continue to explore various visa policy measures to enable movement of people. The Australian Department of Home Affairs announced a new temporary parent visa which will allow migrants to sponsor their parents to live in the country for up to five years. Applications will open on the 1st July 2019 and the new visa will be called Parent (Temporary) visa. The visa has the following characteristics²⁵:

- Be temporary and never convert to permanent residence;
- Require the parent to be sponsored by their child who must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident;
- Be capped at a maximum of 15,000 visas per year;
- Require the child to meet certain income thresholds in order to act as the sponsor;
- Require the child to be able to provide financial and accommodation support to the parent;
- Cost AUD5,000 (R50,200) for a visa up to three years and AUD10,000 (R100,000) for a visa up to five years;
- Not give the parent any work rights in Australia;

²⁵ <https://businesstech.co.za/news/lifestyle/308754/new-australian-visa-option-will-make-it-easier-for-south-africans-to-bring-their-parents/>

- Require the parent to hold health insurance and meet health and character checks.

The visa allows parents of Australian permanent residents or citizens to live in Australia for a continuous period of up to 5 years. After this 5-year period, there will be a single opportunity to renew the visa for a further 5 years. Once both visas have been used then parents will have to leave Australia.

2. UNWTO partners with Spain to face the demographic challenge



Tourism and innovation were identified as key solutions in addressing the depopulation being suffered by the rural environment during the World Tourism Organization forum titled "Facing the Demographic Challenge through Tourism and Innovation"²⁶. The objective of the forum is to find solutions from the tourism sector to combat the demographic challenge.

According to the Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili, the UNWTO wants to work alongside Spain to turn the discussion on the challenge of rural depopulation into a conversation about the opportunities that the rural environment represents. The UNWTO Secretary-General also stated that "the UNWTO is dedicating 2019 especially to

²⁶ <https://www.traveldailynews.com/post/unwto-allies-with-spain-to-face-the-demographic-challenge>

education, the development of professional skills, employment and innovation which are necessary to face these challenges and ensure the survival of the rural environment". The role of rural tourism as a tool for socio-economic revitalization, sustainability and territorial rebalancing was identified as critical.

3. UAE new visa rules



The new rules approved by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) cabinet offer the residency visa for widows and divorced women and their children. This will be extended for a year without a sponsor starting from the date of the death of the husband or the date of the divorce²⁷. Meanwhile, those on tourist visas will be granted an extension of up to 60 days (30-day visa extension twice) without having to leave the country.

In an effort to support the country's economy and real estate market, which have been negatively affected by low oil prices, the UAE decided to offer long-term visas to rich property investors, senior scientists and entrepreneurs²⁸.

The new rules also offer a five-year residency to owners of UAE real estate worth at least 5 million dirhams (\$1.4 million), as long as ownership is not based on loans. Renewable

²⁷ <https://gulfbusiness.com/uaes-new-visa-rules-visitors-students-widows-divorcees-take-effect-next-week/>

10-year visas will also be provided to foreigners with investments in the UAE of at least 10 million dirhams, if non-real estate assets account for at least 60 percent of the total. Investors are allowed to bring spouses and children into the country.

4. UNWTO and ICAO hosted tourism and air transport conference



The UNWTO and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) hosted Africa's First Ministerial Conference on Air Transport and Tourism in Sal Islands, Cabo Verde. The Conference was hosted in partnership with the government of Cabo Verde from the 27th to the 29th of March 2019.

Recognising the intricate link between tourism and transport, the conference sought to identify opportunities and challenges fostering the development of connectivity and seamless travel in the continent and enhance common understanding to business imperatives through dialogue. Most importantly, the conference sought to raise political awareness and willingness to mainstream priorities of tourism and transport and support the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 for Africa.

²⁸ <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/world/2018/11/25/uae-seeks-rich-educated-foreigners-with-longterm-visa-scheme/#hwTR8w0eBamX3ib5.99>

The UNWTO and ICAO acknowledged that the joint venture between the two organisations is long overdue. Both organisations agreed that the relationship is mutually reinforcing. Meanwhile the Prime Minister of Cabo Verde, His Excellency, Mr Ulisses Correia e Silva lauded the new focus on tourism and air transport and urged African countries to collectively improve connectivity within the region.

The conference adopted the Cabo Verde Declaration and Action Plan on Air Transport and Tourism Development in Africa. Essentially, the declaration provides guidance towards the sustainable development of air connectivity and seamless travel in the African continent.

5. UNWTO Convenes Cities on Sustainable Urban Tourism

The UNWTO convened the First Mayors Forum for Sustainable Urban Tourism in Lisbon, Portugal. The event was co-organized with the Ministry of Economy of Portugal and the Lisbon Municipality on the 8th of April 2019. The event was graced by the presence of high-level city representatives from around the world.

The theme “Cities for all: building cities for citizens and visitors” enabled the forum to explore issues and solutions for developing and managing tourism in cities in a way that promote economic growth, social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

Delegates discussed innovative ideas and public policies on urban tourism and ways of promoting the integration in the national and local urban developmental agenda.

The forum concluded by adopting the Lisbon Declaration on Sustainable Urban Tourism. The adoption by Mayors meant that they were committing to align urban tourism policies with

United Nations New Urban Agenda and 17 UN SDGs, particularly Goal 11, which underlines the importance of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The Declaration is expected to be presented in September 2019 during the UNWTO General Assembly in St Petersburg, Russia.

6. ICAO GAP analysis Workshop



The International Civil Aviation Organization hosted the ICAO GAP analysis workshop in partnership with the government of Nigeria in Abuja on the 19th of March 2019. The workshop focused on investment in aviation infrastructure as a way of unlocking growth in Africa.

ICAO indicated during the session that the realisation of better air connectivity in Africa can only be accomplished through mobilisation of appropriate investment. ICAO also highlighted the need for Africa to urgently address its infrastructure gap in light of the high level of awareness on how connectivity has become a unique catalyst for socio-economic growth in the continent.

The President of ICAO Council, Dr. Olumiyiwa Benard Aliu, emphasised the importance of ensuring that investment in aviation infrastructure and modernisation is directed to well-managed projects, featuring solid business

cases; accountability; transparency and quality assurance.

Investment in aviation infrastructure was identified as a necessity given that Africa's long-term traffic forecast by ICAO shows potential growth of 4.3 percent and 3.8 percent annually through 2035. In fact, Africa presents the highest potential for growth out of all ICAO's global regions.

