



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE OFFICE OF MR MARTHINUS VAN SCHALKWYK,
MINISTER OF TOURISM**

MINISTER LAUNCHES NATIONAL TOURISM SECTOR STRATEGY

At the launch of the National Tourism Sector Strategy at the Luthuli Museum in KwaDukuza in KwaZulu-Natal today, Mr Marthinus van Schalkwyk, the National Minister of Tourism, said the strategy will help position tourism as one of the fundamental pillars of the South African economy.

“The NTSS we are launching here today is a document that the entire tourism sector in South Africa can be immensely proud of. This strategy will serve not only as a tool of inspiration to grow our sector to greater heights than ever before, but also as a map to guide us along the way and a yardstick by which to measure our performance. “I believe the NTSS will be the driver that will enable us to reach our ambitious growth targets,” Minister van Schalkwyk said.

The South African government has identified tourism as one of the key contributing sectors to the medium-term strategic priorities of growing the economy and creating decent work. Tourism’s capacity to deliver on these priorities has been strengthened through the establishment of a dedicated National Department of Tourism (NDT).

In recognising government’s facilitation role in optimising the contributions of the various role players in the tourism sector, a coherent and coordinated strategic approach to tourism development and promotion is needed.

“The NTSS is a result of intense collaboration between the NDT, an advisory panel of top industry minds, representatives of a variety of professional bodies in the tourism sector, academia, provinces, tourism-marketing agencies, civil society, local and national governments and members of the public.

“The process of formulating the strategy, gathering and incorporating comments and input and fine-tuning this product was comprehensive and consultative and the result is a sector strategy we can all collectively take ownership of,” Minister van Schalkwyk said.

The draft strategy, which was published in May 2010, made provision for a period of public comment. In total, the NDT received more than 37 000 inputs from a wide range of stakeholders, including government agencies, provinces, municipalities, associations and individuals. These were considered, and further bilateral consultations on the revised draft strategy were held with stakeholders.

The final document has therefore been more than 18 months in the making, and was formally approved by Cabinet on 2 March 2011.

“The vision of the NTSS is to position South Africa as one of the top 20 tourism destinations globally by 2020, and I believe our concerted and focused efforts as a sector will enable us to reach this goal,” the Minister said.

“We all know that the tourism sector in South Africa, and its contribution to our gross domestic product (GDP), has grown tremendously in the last two decades. As a national department, and an industry, we believe we have not yet reached our full potential and the NTSS is intended to provide clear guidance on how to grow tourism’s absolute contribution to the economy.

“The NTSS recognises that tourism is a concurrent function across all spheres of government, and further acknowledges the enabling role that other government departments play in tourism. In addition, we are well aware of the vital role of the private sector and ordinary South Africans in terms of making tourism the success story it has become.

“We as a national department look forward to implementing this strategy with our partners across other spheres of government, as well as the private sector. We believe tourism is the embodiment of the idea that as a collective we can achieve exponentially more than as individual parts of a sum,” Minister van Schalkwyk said.

The overall goal of the strategy rests on four pillars, namely:

- To drive the tourism economy;
- To enhance visitor experiences;
- To position South Africa as a destination of choice; and
- To sustain good governance in the industry

The strategy proposes mutual trust; accountability; respect for our culture and heritage; responsible tourism; transparency and integrity; service excellence; upholding the values of our Constitution; a commitment to transformation, and adaptation to change as the guiding values for the tourism sector.

The key focus areas of the NTSS are:

- *Arrivals* – the strategy will direct the achievement of increased numbers of tourists to South Africa by among others working towards increasing the number of foreign tourist arrivals to 15 million in 2020.
- *GDP* – the aim is to increase tourism’s contribution to the GDP from an estimated R189.4 billion in 2009 to R499 billion by 2020.
- *Job creation* – the tourism sector is committed to consolidating its efforts to create jobs and aims to create 225 000 jobs by 2020.

In order to achieve these three overarching objectives, the NTSS will focus on the following:

- *Domestic tourism development* – The department and its partners would like to promote a culture of travel amongst South Africans. Through the NTSS we aim to increase the number of domestic trips from 30.9 million in 2009 to 54 million by 2020.
- *Regional tourism development* – it is becoming increasingly important that South Africa continue with its visible contribution to regional development, and the strategy is aimed at growing the value of regional tourism by establishing 5 SAT offices within the continent by 2020. Statistics indicates that within Africa there are markets that South Africa has not taken full advantage of in terms of the numbers of outbound tourists. Angola and Nigeria, for example, respectively recorded total outbound tourists of 264 000 and 741 000 in 2010.
- *Emerging markets* – South Africa has joined the BRIC countries, and this gives us a competitive advantage on a number of economic development endeavours. The number of outbound tourists from these markets in 2010 was more than 5.4 million from Brazil (5 497 000), more than 35 million from Russia (35 513 000), more than 12 million from India (12 497 000) and more than 31 million from China (31 664 000). Thus, the NTSS requires that in terms of the determination of target markets and marketing approaches we recognise the need to leverage on the platforms facilitated by BRICS.
- *Business events* – the emerging international approach to growing tourism, and business tourism in particular, is an increased focus on business events. Business events include meetings, expos, incentives, congresses, conferences, exhibitions and trade fairs. South Africa has already secured 200 international conferences for the next five years, which is estimated to attract 300 000 delegates and provide an economic boost of more than R1.6 billion.

"In this regard I can announce today that we are establishing a National Convention Bureau. We expect this Bureau to make a significant impact in terms of amongst others consolidating, co-ordinating and strengthening our efforts to attract meetings and conventions to South Africa. The Bureau will be established under the auspices of South African Tourism and will be operational early in the new financial year," Minister van Schalkwyk said.

Some of the key success factors in terms of the implementation of the NTSS have been identified as:

- Partnerships across and within the tourism sector is key to the delivery of the key focus areas and the new agenda.
- It will also be important that up-to-date market intelligence and constant information dissemination are key elements of future plans on the strategy and growth of the industry.
- People development is key to the success of the strategy and tourism growth. This will be facilitated through amongst others engaging the industry on skill development, providing support for tourism graduate

placement and facilitating initiatives to increase the employment of unemployed young people.

- Transformation is an important element of growing and sustaining tourism performance and thus the NTSS will enhance initiatives for SMME development and support
- Niche product development, new international markets and rural tourism development will contribute significantly to the success of the strategy and achievements of the 2015 and 2020 targets.
- Service excellence will remain the cornerstone of the tourism experience that the country will offer to both foreign and domestic tourists
- Responsible tourism principles shall be promoted across the sector
- Strong working relations and consolidated efforts between the provinces and local government. This will contribute significantly to addressing geographical spread and seasonality.
- Institutional collaboration is also central to the success of the implementation of the Strategy.
- Proper and agreed monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms will be put in place to ensure successful implementation of the Strategy between the 2011/2012 and 2020/2021 life cycle of the Strategy.

The NTSS has responsibilities for every stakeholder segment in the sector. Its success will depend on the extent of coordination of its implementation. To ensure that there is a cooperative and collaborative approach to implementation, the NTSS provides for the establishment of a Delivery Forum. This is comprised of the public sector, private sector, organised labour, civil society and knowledge groups. The Director-General will convene the forum at least twice a year.

For more information visit www.tourism.gov.za

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