



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X424, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa. Tel. (+27 12) 444 6780, Fax (+27 12) 444 7027
Private Bag X9154, Cape Town, 8000, South Africa. Tel. (+27 21) 469 5800, Fax: (+27 21) 465 321

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Tourism Minister welcomes the conclusion of the Tourism Policy Review

As we emerge from commemorating Tourism Month 2024, Minister of Tourism, Patricia de Lille welcomed Cabinet's approval of the *The White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa* which was gazetted on Friday, 4 October 2024.

"The finalisation of the White Paper is a milestone for the tourism sector as it will provide guidance to the next phase of tourism development and ensure that the country as a tourism destination moves towards reaching its full potential. The policy envisages a sustainable, competitive and inclusive tourism sector that leverages on innovation, digital technology, addresses barriers to tourism growth, builds partnerships and responds to the social imperatives of the country. It further will enable the tourism sector's contribution to the broader economy, employment and entrepreneurship whilst ensuring that the sector becomes resilient as it better responds to the future needs of the tourism sector," the Minister said.

The Department of Tourism reviewed the *Tourism White Paper of 1996* as the tourism sector in South Africa is yet to exploit and reach its full potential. Moreover, significant policy developments and trends have emerged since 1996 which necessitated a policy review.

The tourism sector in South Africa has continued to grow over the past decade, earning the reputation of being one of the most significant and fastest-growing sectors. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), Tourism's direct and indirect contribution to South Africa's GDP was 8.2% in 2023. In terms of job creation, according to WTTC statistics, South Africa's tourism sector employed 1.46 million people in 2023 and the sector's contribution is expected to grow to 1.7 million jobs in 2024.

Despite its impressive contribution to the South African economy, the tourism sector lags behind relative to its potential.

To respond to this challenge, the Department of Tourism embarked on a process of reviewing the 1996 Tourism White Paper. The policy review process has resulted in a Tourism White Paper that seeks to sustainably and competitively grow the South African economy through an inclusive, inspiring, and visitor-oriented tourism sector.

The Tourism White Paper has been taken through tourism stakeholder consultation sessions across the country's nine provinces, including local government participation.

Consultations also took place with national departments and bilateral sessions with affected departments. The process also included a public comment process which was open for 60 days from 1 September 2023. The approximately 3,500 comments received, were all taken into consideration in developing and strengthening the Tourism White Paper.

The Tourism White Paper focuses on, promoting safety and security; facilitating ease of access; domestic tourism; crisis management; promoting transformation; enabling technological developments and recommitting to the responsible tourism agenda.

“We would like to thank all stakeholders and the public who took the time to review and make input into the policy process. It was clear that stakeholders supported the policy review process, which was identified by many as long overdue. We now need a collective effort to build on the relationships that have been established as we move towards implementing the Tourism White Paper principles so that tourism can reach its full potential in South Africa,” Minister De Lille said.

The Tourism White Paper is available at <https://gpwonline.sharepoint.com/sites/gpw-web/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?ga=1&id=%2Fsites%2Fgpw%2Dweb%2FShared%20Documents%2FGovernment%2F2021%2D2025%2F51354%204%2D10%20Tourism%2Epdf&viewid=7a8fe278%2D931f%2D49d0%2D9374%2Dc8d511d7c610&parent=%2Fsites%2Fgpw%2Dweb%2FShared%20Documents%2FGovernment%2F2021%2D2025> or www.tourism.gov.za

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For Media Enquiries:

Zara Nicholson

Cell: +27 (0) 79 416 5996

Email: znicholson@tourism.gov.za