

Tourism blazes the trail in Best Practice

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In the pursuit for excellence, organisations are constantly exploring new ways to work better and smarter. Sharing of best practice is a benchmarking mechanism which is at the forefront of many organisational strategies. Align to this, the Department of Tourism today hosted its 8th Sharing of Best Practices Workshop virtually with countries it has MOUs and Bilateral Agreements, under the workshop theme: “*Tourism Recovery post Covid-19 – a country perspective*”.

Representing South Africa at the forum, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Mr Fish Mahlalela, welcomed delegates and reiterated that the South African Government places tourism high on its agenda for sustainable growth and job creation which is one of the eight interventions in the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

“Our President, in his 2019 State of Nations Address set a target of 21 million tourist arrivals by 2030 for the tourism sector. It is through initiatives and platforms such as the Sharing of Best Practices Workshop that will make meaningful contributions in achieving such targets,” said the Deputy Minister.

For the past eight years the Department has been conducting the Best Practices Workshops with the aim to share information and best practices; build tourism capacity on the African continent; and strengthen regional integration and cooperation. Today’s event was attended by delegates from Angola, Benin, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Mexico, Singapore, Vietnam and Venezuela.

“I am delighted to note that in this workshop you are going to robustly engage on the discussions and sharing information and the best practices on tourism recovery plans in addressing the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. I also take note that this workshop further seeks to align tourism’s contribution to Agenda 2063 through improving the standards, systems and policies in regulating the tourism industry while creating jobs and alleviating poverty,” the Deputy Minister stated.

Presentations were made by various countries present which generated much discussion among all the delegates in attendance. It was pointed out that the way forward to recovery of the sector is through collaborations and dialogue like this whereby participants can share and learn best practices.

The three pillars of the Africa Joint Continental Strategy for Covid-19 are limiting transmission, preventing deaths, and laying the foundation for socio-economic recovery to get the integration agenda back on track following the disruptions caused by the pandemic, which include the funding gaps, weak health systems, poor supply chain infrastructure and undefined eligibility and prioritisation criteria.

“Now more than ever and in the coming days, tourism academics need to step up and contribute research-based, data-driven ideas and solutions to support what will be left of the tourism industry. Data will have to be collected and tracked to help stakeholders make informed decisions. Academics will need to support new creativity and new opportunities that will be created in the recovery stages. Tourism education will have to be changed entirely to reflect new realities,” the Deputy Minister concluded.

To view the presentations of the Sharing of Best Practices Workshop, visit www.tourism.gov.za

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