

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For oral reply)

QUESTION NO. 324

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 35

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Mrs V Bam-Mugwanya (ANC) to ask the Minister of Tourism:

What projects has his department launched to market rural areas to ensure that the tourism sector includes the specific areas on their itinerary for tourist?

(NO3629E

Mrs V Bam-Mugwanya (ANC)

SECRETARY TO PARLIAMENT

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## THE MINISTER OF TOURISM ANSWERS:

(a) The National Department of Tourism launched its rural tourism strategy in April 2012. In order to ensure the implementation of the strategy, the Strategic and Annual Performance Plans of the National Department of Tourism has clear deliverables in terms of developing support packages. These support packages relate to develop certain identified projects within rural nodes. These nodes include amongst others the West Coast, The Karoo, OR Tambo District, Thabo Mafutsanyane District and the Richtersveld. The National Department of Tourism has undertaken site visits to each of these nodes and has identified key projects for further development and implementation.

The Expanded Public Works Programme of the department, namely the Social Responsibility Programme is aligned with this strategy and is funding the development of tourism products in the rural areas. Such products include the development of accommodation facilities, hiking trails, visitor information centres and interpretation centres.

(b) The marketing of products and/or attractions is done by South African Tourism, provincial and local marketing agencies. Significant work has been done to provide support to both public and private sector in marketing the Maloti Drakensberg Route cutting across three provinces (KZN, Free State, North Eastern Cape as well as Lesotho). The route also cuts across identified rural nodes namely the OR Tambo District in the Eastern Cape and the Thabo Mafutsanane District in the eastern Free State.

The National Department of Tourism through its Tourism Enterprise Programme (TEP) is also providing marketing support to a number of SMME's listed on the Hidden Treasure Programme. A number of the Hidden Treasures are located within rural areas.