

Research topic: Leveraging State-owned tourism assets for black Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises development: a case of state owned parks, lodges and attractions

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Abstract:

The challenge is recognised for achieving greater 'inclusion' in South African tourism, including provision of opportunities for formerly disadvantaged communities to benefit from sector growth. The National Tourism Sector Strategy calls for a broadening of the economic beneficiaries of tourism development, for programmes to attract more black entrepreneurs into the tourism sector and to own and operate tourism SMMEs. The achievement of inclusive tourism growth requires that benefits flow to local (black) communities as well as other groups (especially women and the disabled) that formerly remained largely outside of the mainstream of the country's tourism economy. National government has introduced a range of initiatives to deepen specifically SMME development in tourism sector, to support wider objectives of transformation and of inclusive growth in tourism. The majority of these existing initiatives are *supply-side* interventions aimed to enhance enterprise support through, for example, business incubators. Recently, the DoT is concerned to complement these supply-side support interventions with a suite of *demand-side* initiatives. One significant facet of fresh policy thinking towards demand-side interventions is to leverage the potential of state-owned assets for tourism development and in particular for SMME upgrading. The question of leveraging state assets for tourism development was identified by the Department of Tourism in the National Tourism Research Agenda. The University of Johannesburg is undertaking a 3-year research project to examine the potential for leveraging the state assets for a demand-driven approach for inclusive tourism. Year one findings are given from this project using case studies in Pilanesberg and the Overstrand.