Cross-Border Themed Tourism Routes in the southern African region: practice and potential

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In essence, the intention of this study is to develop and test a model for the development and implementation of guided cross-border themed tourism routes according to existing and potential tourism niche markets.
Research Reports of 2012-2018

CROSS-BORDER TOURISM

DEPARTMENT OF HERITAGE AND HISTORICAL STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

2013 – 2018

- “Cross-Border Tourism pilot project: The Namibian-South African Corridor” 2017-2018
TOURISM is a rapidly growing globalised industry

- Product diversification and global competitiveness
- Recent trends include:
  - Cross Border tourism
  - Route tourism
  - Niche tourism
TOURISM CHALLENGES & TRENDS

CROSS-BORDER TOURISM
- movement of tourists across the borders of a country under the guidance of a qualified tourist guide

ROUTE TOURISM
- linking together of a series of tourism attractions under a unified theme to promote entrepreneurial opportunities among the local communities

NICHE TOURISM
- specific tourism product which is custom-made to meet the needs and demands of a particular audience/market segment

Need for renewal
Tourism Benefits in Africa

- A powerful vehicle for economic growth and job creation

- Tourism is growing faster in the world’s emerging and developing regions than in the rest of the world

- Potential of tourism has not been fully recognized as a vital source of economic and development power that can strengthen and expand the continent’s economies.
CROSS-BORDER TOURISM ROUTES

• border regions peripheral / marginal
• integration of value chains
• augment foreign investment
• diffuse innovations
• intensify tourist flows
• multiply socio-economic effects

(Stepanova, 2017)
“A landscape portrayed and utilised in a tourism context, like when a list of arbitrary tourist attractions is combined into a route based on a thematic approach”
SOUTHERN SADC

Namibia
Botswana
Zimbabwe
Mozambique
Swaziland
Lesotho
TOURISMSCAPES

CROSS-BORDER TOURISMSCAPES
The Origins Route

“TOURISMSCAPE”
a landscape portrayed and utilised in a tourism context, like when a list of arbitrary tourist attractions are combined into a route based on a thematic approach.

NAMIBIA-SOUTH AFRICA CORRIDOR

NAMIBIA
Botswana
Lesotho
Swaziland
Pretoria
Cape Town
Durban
KwaZulu-Natal
SOUTH AFRICA

CROSS-BORDER TOURISMSCAPES
The Liberation Route

HEROES’ ACRE
- Commemorates the Nambian freedom struggle
- Celebrates Namibian independence on 21 March 1990
- House of 174 graves, including 6 symbolic leaders
- Status to the Unknown Soldier
- The Eternal Flame: the unifying spirit of freedom

THIRDS DIGONG MONUMENT
- Honours 3 soldiers who perished when Queen Victoria in London for protection
- Chief Namib in the Namibian front
- Chief Deborah of the Rongo-Design
- Bekuamobla Protestor (1888)

NATIONAL HEROES ACRE
- Memorial to national heroes in Namibia
- Commemorates those who fought for independence
- The grave of the unknown hero
- The bronze statue of the leader
- The monument’s structure after an attack

SAMORA MACHEL STATUE
- Honours former president of Mozambique (1975 – 1986)
- Machel is hailed as a hero of Mozambican independence
- The statue of the former president is located in the city's main square
- The statue is symbol of the nation’s struggle for freedom

CHINAMPERE ROCK ART SITE
- World Heritage Site (2008)
- 6,000 to 7,000 years old
- Recent oil paintings and rock art
- Rock art displays, including the famous Lion Caves

OHSANGWI ROCK ART SITE & LION CAVERNS
- Rock art images
- Rock art engravings
- Lion Caves: oldest in the world
- Dates back 43,000 years
- Protected by the government

QUIVER TREE FOREST PARK & MESOSAURUS FOSSIL SITE
- Quiver Tree: South Africa’s national tree
- Mesosaurus: oldest fossil found in Africa
- Site for Quiver Tree and Quiver Tree Forest

TSOLO HILLS
- World Heritage Site (2001)
- 100,000 years old
- High concentration of rock paintings
- Sacred, mystical place of ancestral spirits
- Extensive trade networks

LEREFLEUR CAVES
- Sotho: “place of the land”
- Open-air cave
- Rock art displays
- Animal figures, including the famous Lion Caves

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The Liberation Route

MOROGOLOS MOUNTAIN
- A mounain that marks the border between Mozambique and South Africa
- A popular hiking destination
- A symbol of peace and cooperation between the two countries

LIBERATION ROUTE
- Celebration of the liberation struggle
- Frontline for guerrillas fighting for independence
- A symbol of the struggle for freedom
- A testament to the courage and sacrifice of those who fought for independence

TUNISIA
- Nationality: Tunisian
- Capital: Tunis
- Official language: Arabic
- Official currency: Tunisian Dinar
- Area: 163,610 square kilometers
- Population: 11.8 million

NAMIBIA
- Nationality: Namibian
- Capital: Windhoek
- Official language: Afrikaans
- Official currency: Namibian Dollar
- Area: 824,292 square kilometers
- Population: 2.5 million

SOUTH AFRICA
- Nationality: South African
- Capital: Pretoria
- Official language: Afrikaans
- Official currency: South African Rand
- Area: 1,220,902 square kilometers
- Population: 57.9 million

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Themed cross-border tourist routes “Tourism-scapes”

**Origins Route** – fossils, first inhabitants and first kingdoms

**Colonial Remnants Route** – colonial histories and heritages

**Liberation Route** – movements opposed to colonial oppression

**Literature and Film Route** – literary and film tourism sites

**7 Natural Wonders of Southern Africa** – nature attractions

**Culinary Route** – tasting and learning to cook the local cuisines

**Culture Rumble Route** – cultural villages and attractions

**Supernatural Southern Africa** – mysterious local legends on monsters, ancestors, spirits, ghosts and other supernatural occurrences.
• DESTINATION AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

• PRODUCT DIVERSIFICATION

• REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

• ACCUMULATIVE BENEFITS
INBOUND TRAVEL MARKET SHARE 2016

Collaborate – not compete
“development of new tourism products [through] the connection of already established forms of tourism with alternative/niche tourism products [...] including cultural tourism”

Acolla Cameron, Niche Focused Tourism Development in Small Island Developing States: The case of Trinidad”, Academic Conferences Association, 2017, p. 732
- **Cross border:**
  D.J. Timothy; Association of European Cross-border Communities (AEBR); H. Wachowiak; K. Vodeb; E. K. Prokolla; S.V. Stepanova; G. Skaremo; A. Murphy.

  **Theme Routes:**
  - C.M. Rogers; J. Briedenhann & E. Wickens; D. Meyer; M. Lourens; J.D. Snowball & S. Courtney

  **Niche tourism:**
  - N.J. Morgan; & A. Pritchard; M. Novelli; J.M. Ali-Knight; A. Cameron; G. Visser & G. Hoogendoorn

  **Tourist Experiences:**
  - J. Pine & J. Gilmore; E. Cohen; N. Wang; P. Pearce; G. Moscardo; A. Zatori.
Niche Tourism Framework (Novelli, 2005)
Niche Tourism market competitiveness (Cameron)

Figure 1 - Factors shaping Market Competitiveness

Source: Hassan (2000: 241)
Key stakeholders in CBTRE development

- Competitors
- Governmental Bodies
- Tourists
- Voluntary Sector
- Experts
- Pressure Groups
- Media
- Tourism Industry

Adapted from J. Swarbrooke
## Government Stakeholder departments – 7 SADC countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Botswana</th>
<th>Eswatini</th>
<th>Lesotho</th>
<th>Mozambique</th>
<th>Namibia</th>
<th>South Africa</th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tourism</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism</td>
<td>Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs</td>
<td>Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture</td>
<td>Ministry of Culture and Tourism</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment and Tourism</td>
<td>National Department of Tourism</td>
<td>Ministry of Tourism and hospitality Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs</td>
<td>Ministry of Home Affairs</td>
<td>Ministry of Home Affairs</td>
<td>Ministry of the Interior</td>
<td>Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration</td>
<td>National Department of Home Affairs</td>
<td>Ministry of Home Affairs and culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transport</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Transport and Communications</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Works and Transport</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Works and Transport</td>
<td>Ministry of Transport and Communications</td>
<td>Ministry of Works and Transport</td>
<td>National Department of Transport</td>
<td>Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreign Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation</td>
<td>Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation</td>
<td>National Department of International Relations and Cooperation</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Existing routes – 7 SADC countries: Culture & Adventure & Nature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Botswana</th>
<th>Eswatini</th>
<th>Lesotho</th>
<th>Mozambique</th>
<th>Namibia</th>
<th>South Africa</th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✨ Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park</td>
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<td>✨ The Greater Limpopo Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>✨ The Ai-Ais Richtersveld Transfrontier Park</td>
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<td>✨ Rovos Rail Routes</td>
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<td>✨ Kalahari Red Dune Route</td>
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<td>🌟 East 3 Route</td>
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<td>🌟 The Genesis Route</td>
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<td>🌟 Diamond Route (De Beers)</td>
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<td>🌟 Maloti Drakensberg Route</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>🌟 Cape To Namib, desert Route</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>◦ N7 Route</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>❌ Maloti Route/Route 26</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>◦</td>
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<tr>
<td>✨ Kavango and Zambezi Route</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>✨ The Caprivi Strip</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>❌ Karoo Highlands Route</td>
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<td>❌ Go Ghaap Route</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Borders as barriers
- Hinder travel
- Intimidating

Challenges in SADC:
- Varied levels of development (SA – 34 & Swaziland 167)
- Infrastructure (Technical and Social)
- Transport (air, road, rail connectivity)
- Coordination and Collaboration
- Customs and Immigration (Visas (“evisa”?))
- Language
- Currencies
- Competitiveness
- Standards and quality assurance
- Safety and Security
Mitigations and solutions in SADC:
- Collaboration and partnerships (smaller)
- Diplomacy and supra-national agreements (1996-2013)
- Regionally accepted currency
- Investment
- Visa consolidation and exemption (Univisa)
- Harmonization of standards (SADC Tourism Protocol 1998)
- Experience diversification (opportunities...)

- Enabling structures
- Involve stakeholders
Two aspects:

**general guiding principles:** considerations throughout the development process

**a three phase development plan:** with more specific actions and considerations in each phase
## Guiding principles of CBTRE development

**Guiding Principles of CBTRE Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical</th>
<th>Structural</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predicated on the idea that all aspects of the route such as travel times</td>
<td>Predicated on the idea that the environment within which you are attempting</td>
<td>Predicated on experience driven management practices that include the tourist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and stops are achievable as is with itinerary creation:</td>
<td>the route is enabling with little destabilising factors such as visa</td>
<td>as a central part of the experience:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be realistic about time constraints and the times and types of travel</td>
<td>requirements of providing the route, driver guide permits in all the</td>
<td>• Consider the levels of immersion offered across your tour and at each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>required to get from A – B.</td>
<td>countries present, vehicle licenses, etc.</td>
<td>attraction or activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consider things such as accommodation, meals, transport, budget and</td>
<td>• Ask questions about the legal requirements of providing the route,</td>
<td>• Engage as many of the senses as you possibly can in your experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day by day activities.</td>
<td>driver guide permits in all the countries present, vehicle licenses, etc.</td>
<td>• Learn to speak the Lingo, for example, if you are offering a geological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Take your time to improve experience; don’t include too much travel or</td>
<td>• Ask questions about the path of least resistance, for example will this</td>
<td>tour, you need to know some terminology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activities in a day.</td>
<td>experience sell or are there too many administrative burdens such as visa</td>
<td>• Allow for flexibility and options in content narration and attractions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide tourists / customers with the necessary additional information</td>
<td>• Make some connections with activities, attractions and experiences offered</td>
<td>• Add some drama and myth to tourist interactions and storytelling like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about health and safety, forex, what to pack, bookings, travel documents,</td>
<td>on the route in order for you to negotiate partnership arrangements and co-</td>
<td>personal interactions.</td>
</tr>
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<td>reservations, time changes, etc.</td>
<td>• Include sufficient downtime and leisure time.</td>
<td>• Consider the tourist as co-creators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Guiding principles of CBTRE development*
**PRACTICAL:**
- Realistic time constraints
- Accommodation, meals, transport, budget
- Improve experience
- Additional information – safety, health, forex
- Downtime
- Market with creative language
- Optional extras

**STRUCTURAL:**
- Legal requirements
- Administrative issues
- Partnerships to co-create
- Standards at attractions
- Research conducted
- Competitiveness - uniqueness
EXPERIENTIAL:
- Levels of immersion
- Engage senses – smell, touch, taste, sight, hear
- Subject specific lingo
- Flexibility
- Drama, myth, story telling
- Tourists as co-creators
- Education opportunity
- Spontaneity
- On-going experience – at and in between
- Theme suites the selected destinations, attractions activities and experiences
A three phase development plan

**Phase 1: Conceptualisation and Research**

- Consider a theme for your experience. Think of something innovative and unique. Perhaps consider what you would like to experience when travelling.
- Conduct research and profile your tourists groups and/or niche market segment and consider individual and/or collective wants and needs. This might also include some market statistics and indications for demand for your CBTRE, which might also inform other aspects such as pricing, marketing practices and viability.
- Conduct research on your competitors, both direct and indirect. You might even take a tour, collect brochures and Google similar types of tours offered in the market. This will assist you to see how other experiences are designed and created, and also give you some ideas for your experience and appropriate quality of the experience. It might also lead you to consider another unique experience.
- Conduct further research on your theme, potential partners, attractions and activities that can be incorporated in your theme. Start generating narrative and conversational content for you and potentially your partners.

**Phase 2: Planning and Assessment**

- Start planning your CBTRE by mapping out the main proposed attractions, activities and experiences and on route alternatives.
- Consider all practical itinerary aspects of the CBTRE, such as different methods of transport, duration and travel times, arrival departure times, accommodation, meals.
- Consider experiential elements such as engaging multiple senses and the experience of travel (this might inform a variety transportation choices)
- Complete your research on key attractions and tailor make conversational topics and narratives to fit your theme and experiences and attractions. Create a quick reference guide, should you need to consult your sources.

**Phase 3: Testing and Implementation**

- Contact potential partners and explain your plan and theme to them. Discuss partnership agreements and joint experience development in the form of tailored narrative content and discussion topics if necessary.
- Create lists for main attractions, activities and experiences; alternatives; accommodation; meals plans, etc. Remember to include extra fees and optional extras.
- Make sure that you acquire all necessary legal permission and permits that will be needed on route, for attractions, at border crossings for both you and your tourists.

- As always it is very important for you to test the viability of your route a couple of times before implementing it. This will also allow you the opportunity to meet with potential partners and invite industry partners, test tourists in niche markets and tourist guides along, if possible, to provide feedback on the experience.
- Incorporate feedback and make adjustments accordingly.
- Consider marketing solutions and distribution channels appropriate to your niche or target group.
PHASE 1: CONCEPTUALIZATION AND RESEARCH
- Identify a theme (innovative, unique, niche)
- Conduct research (desktop, field and indigenous)
- Conduct network research (partners, activities)
- Brand - creative name or angle

PHASE 2: PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT
- Mapping (route and alternatives)
- Practicalities (transport, accommodation, meals, timing)
- Complete research and follow ups on key attractions
- Contact potential partners
- Tailor-made narrative and content
- Check permissions (legal)

PHASE 3: TESTING AND IMPLEMENTATION
- Viability (check route, meet partners, feedback)
- Incorporate feedback
- Marketing and distribution channels
Potential Combination Routes – 7 SADC countries: Culture & Adventure & Nature

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<td>4X4 Routes</td>
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<td>Famous peoples Routes</td>
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<td>Entertainment/Events Routes</td>
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<td>Origins Route</td>
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<td>Extreme sport route</td>
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<td>Train Routes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walking/Backpacking Routes</td>
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<td>Supernatural Routes</td>
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<td>Flower/Plant Routes</td>
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<td>Sky Routes (balloons)</td>
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<td>Natural Wonders Routes</td>
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<td>Mountain Climbing Routes</td>
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<td>Indigenous people’s Routes</td>
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<td>Colonial Routes</td>
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<td>Migration Routes</td>
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<td>Film and literature Routes</td>
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<td>Fishing/Hunting Routes</td>
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Tourismscape – Theme: Film Tourism
The critics are raving... the natives are restless... and the laughter is non-stop!

**The Gods Must Be Crazy**

At last, a comedy everyone can laugh with!

- **1980s**
- **US$ 51.2 million**
- **Award Winning**
- **Sequels**
Northern Cape, Namibia, Mpumalanga, Botswana
BUSHMAN CULTURE
- 2018
- US$ 900 million
- Award Winning
The Southern African Wakanda Experience Route
Timbuktu

Sotho-Tswana rondavels (huts)
Victoria Falls
Maasai
The language of Wakanda
THE WAKANDA EXPERIENCE ROUTE

Body Art / Hairstyle / Ovahimba / Connie Chiume

Scenic Beauty / Victoria Falls

Architecture / Rondavels / Smells / Tastes / Cuisine

Fashion / Seana Marena

Fashion / Izicolo

Language / isiXhosa / John Kani
Thank you!

Professor Karen Harris
Mr Hannes Engelbrecht
Ms Sian Pretorius
Mr CR Botha