



MESSAGE OF SUPPORT & INTRODUCTION OF THE MINISTER

26th February 2013

Honourable Minister of Tourism

Municipal Mayor's & Speakers

Municipal Managers

Director General of Tourism and Programme Director

Honourable Councillors

Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you for this opportunity for SALGA part a role of this Local Government Tourism Conference. We can only salute the Minister and the Department for taking a bold and taking an effective step forward for **Tourism Development** by having a specific focus on why (and how) “**Why Local Government Matters?**” As highlighted in the Departments National Tourism Sector Strategy, enhancing local government’s role and profile will serves as a tool to drive change, and improve the performance and competitiveness of the sector.

Local government tourism represents the third sphere of public sector tourism. While National and Provincial tourism organisations are chiefly responsible for the design and implementation of tourism strategies and national and international marketing campaigns, it is the lesser-known local government authorities that often shoulder the responsibility for promoting and supporting the local tourism.

While there is need to widen the Local Government's own view in how they manage their socio-economic environment in how it impacts, positively or negatively, on tourism, National and Provincial Government must also be aware and ensure that municipalities do need greater support, capacity building and funding to better support tourism from the local level.

As previously highlighted by the Minister of Tourism; "the importance of intergovernmental relations cannot be overemphasised". The development of tourism at the local level is dependent on the better coordination of the funding of tourism projects – particularly:

- Improving the working relationships between municipalities, and national and regional stakeholders will result in better planning for tourism.
- Integrated and coordinated approach to tourism at all levels of government.
- Nature of governance under which tourism projects can be funded
- A meaningful investment into the capacity of local government to realise tourism opportunities.

SALGA is therefore excited both about this partnership led approach both evident in this and also within the larger **Local Government Tourism Support and Capacity Building Programme** which has been added to the list of priority projects for the Department in the upcoming financial year.

I would like to use platform, to both welcome and thank the Keynote Speaker for this long overdue initiative?

Minister of Tourism of the Republic of South Africa, Marthinus Van Schalkwyk.

He is a Former Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. He was formerly both Premier of the Western Cape and Leader of the Opposition in the Parliament of South Africa. The SA government has nominated him to head the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Under his direction, strategy and energy tourist arrivals to South Africa grew by 10.5% for the first six months of 2012, more than double the global average of 5% for the same period, despite the global economic downturn.

As SALGA we will continue to support ability to build and nurture strong partnerships between national, provincial and local government and the industry around Tourism. We continue to support the implementation of the National Tourism Sector Strategy and in turn the **Local Government Tourism Support and Capacity Building Programme**.

I thank you

Councillor Thabo Manyoni

SALGA Chairperson