

Abstracts of research studies to be presented

A policy Review of the Tourist Guiding Sector in South Africa- University of Pretoria

Abstract

Tourist guides are at the epi-centre of the tourism industry, they are integral and indispensable, but are dependent on a multi-layered number of entities that have both direct and indirect impacts on their role and place. Given the vastness and multivariate nature of the tourist guiding sector this research needed to prioritise and thus focused on the legislative and regulatory dimension, the training and accreditation authorities as well as issues of associations and professionalisation. The South African tourist guiding sector boasts an advanced regulated tourism sub-sector which pre-dates and surpasses many in the global North and South. The government is aware of the potential of tourism and it ranks it as a priority sector within the economy. However, the current legislation, training, professionalisation and the position of Department of Tourism is hampered by other extraneous regulations, structures and processes which at some levels amount to “over” regulation and “under” performance. This research appraises these aspects making recommendations as to how the Department needs to be repositioned at the helm of the tourism industry while training and accreditation as well as the professionalisation and associations, related to the tourist guide, need to be streamlined and again centred within its jurisdiction.

The governance and coordination involved in coastal and marine tourism: challenges and opportunities – University of KwaZulu-Natal

Abstract:

The aim of the study was to better understand how Coastal and Marine tourism could be optimally and sustainably governed and coordinated at both national and local level. The study was based on the assumption that the fundamental requirement for sustainable coastal and marine tourism governance and coordination is effective engagement of key public and private stakeholder bodies whose policies and actions can affect the impact of coastal and marine tourism development. The study used both the qualitative and quantitative research designs. The examination of the relevant literature assisted in identifying international best practices, national and sector specific (cruise tourism, beach tourism and events, adventure tourism, accommodation and facilities, etc.) trends in coastal and marine tourism. The secondary information derived from the literature and policy review as well as primary data collection was analysed thematically according to key themes, notably the level of accessibility, transparency, effectiveness and opportunities and challenges of coastal and marine tourism. The findings show that the challenge of marine and coastal tourism governance is to develop a synergy between different stakeholders. There was agreement among respondents that local government structures in tourism are effective, however, there is need for active engagement and coordination between national, regional, and local tourism structures. The results showed that there are insufficient skills, which could limit the understanding of tourism within municipalities, thereby hindering effective collaboration. Other challenges include inadequate capacity and budgeting for tourism functions, lack of tourism prioritisation and lack of private sector involvement. The results show that the fragmented policy-making process across different spatial scales and policy domains has resulted in an elusive governance approach. The study concludes that the current legislation needs to reflect local roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and ensure that certain regulations do not hold back coastal and marine tourism development.

Development of a framework to assess the economic impact of coastal and marine tourism in South Africa – Phase two (2) – University of KwaZulu-Natal

Abstract:

Coastal and Marine Tourism (CMT), as part of the oceans economy, offers significant development opportunities that can contribute to job creation and sustainability. However, a desktop study funded by the National Department of Tourism (NDT) revealed that there are limited national and international best practices to assess the economic impacts of CMT. It was evident from the desktop study that there were no specific accepted methodological approaches to assess the economic impacts of CMT within a country context. The extension of this component of the research entails piloting a framework (including the identification of key economic indicators, development of data collection tools and identification of appropriate economic models) to inform the development of a framework to assess CMT's contribution to South Africa's tourism sector. This presentation provides an overview of the piloting processes undertaken and reflects on the challenges and opportunities to assess the economic impacts of CMT. The methodological approach adopted was the implementation of stakeholder survey-based data collection tools. The key stakeholders identified were coastal and marine tourists/ users/ customers and CMT business (including the accommodation sector, CMT business owners, retail outlets and tour operators). The challenges in terms of data collection included ensuring a geographical and representative spread across all four coastal provinces, willingness to participate, quality of data collected (especially in relation to self-completion surveys) and the length of the surveys. Access to stakeholder contact details also emerged as a challenge. Finally, key recommendations in terms of developing the framework will be shared based on the piloting undertaken. For example, the piloting also revealed the need to revise some of the questions and rethink the number and types of stakeholders from whom primary data needs to be sourced. The importance of developing a standardised framework to measure, monitor and manage the economic impacts of CMT in South Africa remains. This research will inform the development of a framework for CMT.

Sustainability of Rural Tourism Products in South Africa: A Case Study of Selected Tourism Products - University of Venda

Abstract:

The study reviewed literature and other extant credible sources to identify and profile rural tourism products (RTPs) in South Africa in the context of sustainability to support the National Department of Tourism's (NDT) 2012 strategy, outcome seven, on sustainable rural communities, with a strong emphasis on supporting rural tourism. Given the complexity and diversity of issues surrounding rural tourism, the study provides a framework that acts as a base for RTPs to assess their sustainability. Rural tourism may not necessarily be confined in a non-urban milieu. A 'country experience' which encompasses a wide range of attractions and activities that take place in a cultural, agricultural or natural resource setting, may take place in an urban area, or in its outskirts thereof. This finding demonstrates the possibility of rural tourism transcending the rural-urban divide. The study provides the key principles, criteria and indicators to consider if an RTP's sustainability is to be assessed by the owners, to an extent that is institutionally feasible. In developing the framework, the indicators were aligned with policy documents of South Africa to improve the relevance and adequacy of the indicators. A few RTP cases were selected and empirically applied to test the developed sustainability framework. While the framework can typically be applied, the challenges underlying the development of a coherent, harmonised and comparable set of RTP indicators in all categorisations is acknowledged.

Demand and Supply Analysis for Destination Development: A market Analysis Framework-

University of Pretoria

Abstract

The overall aim of the study was to develop a market analysis framework that can be used by different tourism stakeholders to inform product development, infrastructure development and investment facilitation, with particular reference to the local level. Market analysis is critical in attracting tourism investment as investors are likely to put their money where both demand and supply analysis has been conducted in order to get return on their investment. The market analysis framework consists of a sequential iterative process with seven (7) steps. Each step represents the main components and sub-components for determining the market feasibility of a tourism project. A Workbook was developed to provide guidelines for a funding applicant to effectively structure the information and data on the market analysis in a funding application as well as to provide the funding body with an effective tool for evaluation of the funding application in terms of the market analysis. Information and data was gathered using 'diagnostic' tools, the purpose of which is to collect as much relevant data as possible. Information relevant to the project was written up in the Workbook. The diagnostic tools were designed to 'flag' potential challenges which could either lead to project dismissal or adjustments/interventions to overcome challenges that have been identified. Data was gathered via secondary and primary sources. Information gathered must be interpreted and condensed into the required format for a project proposal.