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MEDIA STATEMENT

DATE: 28 FEBRUARY 2024

15 SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM BUSINESSES TO SHOWCASE AT PREMIER GLOBAL TRAVEL TRADE SHOW – ITB BERLIN

As part of its incentive programmes to support tourism businesses, the Minister of Tourism, Patricia de Lille, is pleased to announce that the Department of Tourism will support 15 small to medium enterprises (SMEs) to exhibit on the South African Tourism stand at the 2024 Internationale Tourismus Börse (ITB) Berlin.

The ITB Berlin, as one of the leading global travel trade platforms for tourism products, services and packaged offerings will see around 10 000 exhibitors from over 180 countries and more than 114 000 trade visitors engage on the trade floor between 5 and 7 March 2024.

Under the broader Tourism Incentive Programme, through the Market Access Support Programme (MASP), the Department provides an opportunity for SMEs to apply for funding support to travel to and exhibit at selected domestic and international trade shows.

The support offered under the MASP typically covers key cost elements associated with exhibition participation such as return economy airfare, exhibition costs, accommodation, ground transport and shipping of exhibiting materials.

The intention of the Department's incentive programmes are to stimulate growth, development and transformation of the tourism sector in South Africa, and the MASP specifically aims to support SMEs to access and penetrate new markets through providing support to participate in identified travel trade platforms.

"These international platforms provide a massive opportunity for South African tourism businesses to market Destination South Africa to the world and tell people our unique stories and experiences. The support provided by the Department for small tourism enterprises to exhibit at established domestic and international platforms has been a huge success for many South African businesses who have made new connections and business deals at various trade shows," Minister of Tourism, Patricia de Lille said.

The 15 small enterprises approved for support to participate and exhibit at ITB Berlin this year represent tourism businesses in the accommodation, travel and related services sub-sectors across eight of the nine provinces.

The investment by the Department of Tourism amounts to around R2.8 million in combined support for the 15 small enterprises, which based on previous MASP experience, is likely to result in between R15 million and R20 million in additional revenue and foreign exchange earnings for South Africa over the next year.

In addition to this, the Department is also supporting exhibition participation for 25 small enterprises at Meetings Africa in Sandton currently underway, and another 50 small enterprises at the WTM Africa in Cape Town in April 2024.

While applications for MASP support to participate at this year's Africa's Travel Indaba in May have already closed, more opportunities will be available to apply for support to exhibit at upcoming exhibitions such as IMEX America, WTM London and the World Youth Student Travel Conference (WYSTC) taking place later this year

"I encourage all eligible tourism businesses especially emerging enterprises to apply for funding support from the MASP programme so that they can market South Africa and their business at a trade platform that is most relevant to your unique tourism offering. Our tourism sector thrives thanks to the amazing packages and offerings put together by the private sector. We want to see more SMEs benefitting from this support so that their businesses can grow, attract more visitors and continue creating jobs and contributing to the country's economy," Minister de Lille added.

For more information on the MASP programme and other Tourism Incentive Programmes, please visit the Department of Tourism's website on www.tourism.gov.za

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