
North West tourism sector ripe for investment

SOUTH AFRICA, Johannesburg – Friday, 10 December 2021: The world got a glimpse of the North West province as the South African pavilion continues its provincial showcase series at the Expo 2020 in Dubai last night.

Presented as a virtual showcase on the South African Pavilion online portal, attendees will get a sliver of each of the nine provinces over the next three weeks. The pavilion's theme "Think South Africa, Think Opportunity," calls on investors from around the world to consider South Africa a business destination.

The North West province is one of South Africa's largest and more significant local economies. The province is built primarily on mining with several multinational corporations having interests in gold, uranium, platinum and diamonds. A 2021 second quarter report from the North West Development Corporation shows that the province contributes six percent to the South African GDP.

However, the province also has a well-rounded tourism sector that is ripe for investment. Speaking at the virtual showcase, Acting CMO of the North West Tourism Authority (NWTa), Mpho Motshegoa, said that tourism in the province presents investors with numerous options of which to take advantage. "We are about wildlife, scenic beauty, adventure and fun. But most of all, we are about our people. You cannot read [about the people's warmth] in a brochure. You need to come to this beautiful province to engage with the wholeness of our people."

With the province nestled between Limpopo, Gauteng, Northern Cape, Free State and neighbouring country Botswana, North West can be packaged as part of a varied Southern African experience. "Seventy percent of international flights land at OR Tambo International Airport. So this permutation presents one with different travel opportunities to Limpopo, Botswana and Gauteng. Travellers want to see more but have little time. Our proximity to Gauteng makes it easier to travel here."

Tourism contributes about five percent to the North West economy providing some 30,000 jobs. The province is home to family tourism drawcards that include the Sun City Entertainment Complex, Hartebeespoort Dam, Madikwe and Pilanesberg Big Five game reserves, Vredefort Dome Heritage Site and Taung Heritage Site – where the 2.8-million-year-old Taung Child fossilised skull was found.

Partnerships and adapting to new kind of traveller

Acting CEO of the NWTa, Advocate Mthusi Tsineng, said his board will continue to partner with tourism sector gatekeepers in and outside the country to resuscitate it. "Marketing programmes like this one is something we wholeheartedly believe will assist in amplifying our efforts of rebuilding the economy in the tourism sector. We need to invest in a long-living and sustainable level."

He said that tourism would have to adapt to a new kind of enlightened traveller – far from the camera-toting kind that used to travel to escape the daily grind. "We are now dealing with a new breed of tourist who travels to be enriched. We are now in the epoch of the proactive tourist and who interact with communities in tangible way."

Motshegoa said that such flexibility applies to the province's tourism strategy. "We always had a strategy built to last. But Covid-19 showed us we need a strategy built to adapt. It needs to be futuristic in its outlook. It needs to make up for the lost numbers."

Tourism adheres to Covid-19 protocols

Tsineng said that the NWTa has been part of the Vooma nationwide vaccination campaign to encourage people to get the jab. At the same time, the NWTa also encourages establishments in the province to strictly

adhere to protocols. “We are working very hard and the number of people who have vaccinated have increased exponentially.”

Motshegoa said that the goal for the tourism sector is to attain herd immunity, which is 67% of South Africa’s adult population. Despite the Coronavirus denting tourism, those in the sector understand the need to adhere to protocols. “We can only return to the attractions we love once we are vaccinated and subjected ourselves to all the Covid-19 protocols. It is going to stay with us for a very long time but fortunately we have an industry that understands and adheres to the protocols as a way of insulating ourselves and the industry from this monster.”

The next provincial showcase will feature the Free State on Tuesday, 14 December. To catch these events, register on the pavilion’s [online portal](#).

The South African Pavilion can be located in the Opportunity District at Expo and further information can be found on <https://southafricaexpo2020.co.za/sa-pavilion/>

Keep up with the South African Pavilion Team on Twitter using the handle TeamSA_Expo2020. Follow the events at the pavilion using #ThinkOpportunity #Expo2020SA #ShareSouthAfrica.

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