



Eco-tourism Commission 3

ECO-TOURISM COMMISSION

DATE: 26 MARCH 2024

TIME: 14:00 -16:00 PM

VENUE: BIRCHWOOD CONFERENCE CENTRE, BOKSBURG, GAUTENG PROVINCE

EVENT THEME: COLLECTIVE ACTION FOR THRIVING NATURE AND PEOPLE

1. INTRODUCTION

South Africa's biodiversity provides a wide array of benefits to the economy, society, and human well-being, which are dependent on intact ecosystems, healthy species populations and genetic diversity. South Africa promotes a diverse biodiversity-based economy that includes both non-consumptive and consumptive uses of all the benefits and services of biodiversity, including ecotourism and associated value chains. Biodiversity-related jobs number approximately 418 000 and the biodiversity-based tourism industry is worth over R30 billion per year. Biodiversity-based jobs are prevalent in sectors including ecotourism.

Intact natural ecosystems, catchments, plants and animals and high species diversity are essential for ecotourism and contribute to cultural, spiritual and economic development. By providing an enabling environment for, and investing in, the restoration, protection, and conservation of biodiversity assets and ecological infrastructure, social and economic development is enhanced, while at the same time contributing to human well-being.

The National Biodiversity Economy Strategy (NBES) is developed to optimise biodiversity-based business potentials across the terrestrial, fresh water, estuarine, marine and coastal realms, and to contribute to economic growth with local beneficiation, job creation, poverty alleviation, and food security, whilst maintaining the ecological integrity of the biodiversity resource base, for thriving people and nature.



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GOAL 1: Leveraging biodiversity-based features to scale inclusive ecotourism industry growth in seascapes and in sustainable conservation land-use.

IMPACT STATEMENT: To grow sustainable and inclusive eco-tourism-based businesses by 10% per annum through marine-based ecotourism activities and expansion of the conservation estate from 20 million ha to 34 million ha by 2040 (4,2 million ha from declared protected areas and 10 million ha from Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures-OECMs).

ACTIONS:

- Establish 5 mega living conservation landscapes through voluntary involvement of suitable state, private and community areas.
- Prioritise infrastructure development and viable enterprises in community reserves and areas adjacent to (faunal Big 5 areas) such as Kruger Park, suitable state protected areas and Private Game Reserves.
- Develop Ecotourism infrastructure in priority locations in existing and developing large terrestrial and marine conservation areas that are not based on big-five activities, and with high potential for community involvement.
- Develop themed and packaged ecotourism infrastructure across small state and private conservation areas and community areas with high potential.
- Extend and develop infrastructure in four key TFCAs.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMISSION:

- To facilitate technical discussions towards development of an inclusive programme of action or roadmap for the implementation of Goal 1 of the National Biodiversity Economy Strategy in line with the goals of the White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity and
- Promote inclusive growth and transformation of the ecotourism sector.

Key discussion pointers

The commission will base discussions on state-owned protected areas and community/private-owned land to explore development and expansion of ecotourism value chain businesses in an inclusive and transformed manner.

Day 2: (26 March 2024, 3 hours 15 minutes)

Session 1 Panel Discussion (1 hour)

Theme: Optimising state, private and community land to create mega-living conservation landscapes compatible with spiritual, cultural and traditional practices.

- How can we create awareness about the mega-living conservation landscapes?
 - Discussions can include identification of potential areas for mega-living conservation landscapes; awareness on the concept; institutional arrangements; co-management arrangements (how equal and balanced partnerships with the private sector and

communities can be achieved); implication to the land-owners and surrounding communities.

- How can communities accrue benefits within the mega-living conservation landscapes?
 - Discussions can include development of viable ecotourism enterprises compactible with the land use that optimises on the cultural and traditional tourism; ownership of ecotourism facilities by communities; skills and capacity building; mobilising of resources including funding and other opportunities link the landscapes.

Session 2 Panel Discussion (1 hour)

Theme: Ecotourism infrastructure development and expansion within state-owned protected areas and communal land.

- How do we promote access to, and unlock socio-economic benefit streams from state-owned protected areas to adjacent communities?
 - Discussions to be based on mechanisms to ensure that communities adjacent to protected and conservation areas have access to economic opportunities based on activities within ecotourism facilities. The commission can look at activities that could be carried out in and around state-owned protected and conservation areas that could benefit adjacent communities. Providing infrastructure development support and capacity for ecotourism facilities in communal land linked to surrounding protected areas. Incubation and support to local ecotourism entrepreneurs.
- How do we promote ownership of ecotourism facilities by PDIs?
 - Discussions to be based on expanding conservation estate through expanding existing protected and conservation areas such as TFCAs, establishing new ecotourism facilities outside protected areas or in areas classified as OECMs.

Interactive participation: The commission to deliberate on interventions to address barriers and hurdles in the ecotourism sector such as permitting, logistics challenges and other relevant challenges.

Proposed Running Order for the session.

Time: 14:00-16:00 PM

Date: 26 March 2024

Venue: Commission 3

Convenor: Mr Sydney Nkosi, Chief Director: Protected Areas Systems Management

Supported by: Dr Tshifhiwa Ramatshimbila, Director: Woodlands & Indigenous Forests Management

Time	Item	Responsibility	Description
5 Min	Welcoming remarks	Facilitator: Ms Hapiloe Sello: CEO SANParks	The Facilitator to introduce the session by talking to the Goal on Eco-tourism as well as the aspiration of the sector to grow the eco-tourism sub-sector i.e impact statement.
45 Min	Panel Discussion: Optimizing state, private and community land to create mega-living conservation landscapes compactible with spiritual, cultural and traditional practices.	Panel Members: Ms Kristal Maze (SANParks) Mr Mduzi Vilakazi (CEO MTPA) Ms Masechaba Sedibana (THO)	SANParks (Kristal) to talk to the mega-living conservation landscape concept, how other stakeholders can participate, how that will contribute to

Time	Item	Responsibility	Description
15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions and Answers 	All	<p>expansion, land-use compatibility with the community day to day living, how traditional leaders and healers are brought into the concept. Use the recently GEF funded project as a case study and how SANParks envisage the project implementation.</p> <p>CEO MTPA to talk to how they embrace the mega-living conservation landscapes with the Loskop Dam Cluster project. How communities will benefit and how the envision the whole project.</p> <p>THO to talk about how spiritual, cultural and traditional practices can be taken into account and be respected within the context of conservation and contribute to conservation targets, and eco-tourism offerings.</p>
45 Min 15 Min	<p>Panel Discussion: Ecotourism infrastructure development and expansion within state-owned protected areas and communal land.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions and Answers 	<p>Panel Members: Ms Matilda Skhosana (DFFE – EP) Dr Kenny Hlela (Department of Tourism) Mr Vuyani Dayimani (CEO:ECPTA) Mr Eric Buthelezi (Babanango Game Reserve) Kgosigadi Kereeditse Lillian Gopane (Batshweneng CPA)</p> <p>All</p>	<p>DFFE EP to talk about the importance of infrastructure development in state owned protected areas and community-owned land and how such could booster eco-tourism development and livelihoods, using lessons learned from EP Infrastructure Support as a reference point.</p> <p>DoT to talk about documenting ecotourism offerings and how such can be enhanced, and how can we attract tourists within Pas and communal land; and what has been observations and lessons and how can we better reposition tourism within conservation estate.</p> <p>CEO ECPTA to talk about adventure eco-tourism facilities/offerings and its contribution especially in non-big 5 reserves and how such can be nurtured and contribute to community beneficiation.</p> <p>Babanango to talk about what has been the key clientele drivers to their facility and any lessons learned on community</p>

Time	Item	Responsibility	Description
			governance, and contribution of infrastructure investment on their project. Batsweneng CPA to talk about the importance of diversification of offerings in an ecotourism facility, support required for community owned eco-tourism and gaps, governance model used and how the broader communities benefit. What makes their facility works.
20 Min	Interactive participation: The commission to deliberate on interventions to address barriers and hurdles in the ecotourism sector such as permitting, logistics challenges and other relevant challenges.	Facilitator	The facilitator to highlight some of the barriers and hurdles that came from the presenters talks/presentations and use them as a base to open discussion on proposed interventions to address those as well as any other barriers coming from the floor
15 Min	Unpacking the key Actions required/ Implementation Plan	All	What are the immediate actions required for implementation for us to reach the aspirations of NBES in relation to the Ecotourism Goal (Leveraging biodiversity-based features to scale inclusive ecotourism industry growth in seascapes and in sustainable conservation land-use).
5 min	Closure and vote of thanks.	Facilitator	Facilitator to thank all delegates, indicate that the discussions and proposals will form part of the Indaba report as well as feedback to the main plenary the following day. Further to this, the Facilitator will share the programme for the next day.

OUTCOME OF THE SESSION

- Actions plan on the development and expansion of ecotourism sector in-line with Goal 1 of NBES.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Eco-tourism entrepreneurs and Associations
- National and Provincial Departments
- NGOs
- Academia
- Research Institutions

- Traditional Leaders
- Traditional Health Practitioners
- CPAs
- Communities
- Public Entities

Enquiries:

Ms Koena Cholo,

Tel: 012 399 9543/ **Cell:** 074 775 2472



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