



**economic development  
& tourism**

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## ***MEDIA STATEMENT***

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Date: Tuesday, 12 May 2020

Attention: Journalists, News Editors and Executive Producers

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

### **MEC NGOMANE CONVENES PROVINCIAL TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS TO DEVELOP TOURISM RECOVERY PLAN**

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**Mbombela** – Finance, Economic Development and Tourism MEC, Mr Pat Ngomane has urged all tourism stakeholders in the Province, to work with government in developing the tourism recovery plan aimed at reversing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This follows the MEC's virtual meeting, via video-communication, with tourism private sector stakeholders this morning (12 May 2020).

“We must prepare to resuscitate our tourism sector as early as now. I have previously said, and I continue to say that tourism is our gold mine. It is the goose that lays the golden egg for the benefit of our Province. I therefore direct that we must collectively develop the Provincial Tourism Recovery Plan. The final Plan should be the product of both government and the private sector. To this end, I would appreciate if such a plan could be concluded by the end of this week”, explained MEC Ngomane.

The virtual meeting was attended by the representatives of the three (3) Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs); that is, Kruger Lowveld Chamber of Business and Tourism (KLCBT); Highveld Tourism (Gert Sibande District); Nkangala RTO; the CEO of the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA), Mr Johannes Nobunga; MTPA's Head of Tourism, Mr Xolani Mthethwa; and officials from the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. KLCBT was represented by Mr Oupa Pilane and Ms Lisa Sheard; Highveld Tourism by Mr Athol Stark; and Nkangala RTO by Ms Nomsa Mazibuko.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has put the industry to a halt. This crisis might be an end to some industry players, and will be changing the face of the industry and introducing a new way of doing business”, added Mr Ngomane.



The envisaged plan is aimed at suggesting strategies to be implemented (in the medium to long term) in order to resuscitate the tourism sector in the Province, which continues to be affected by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the gazetted lockdown regulations, tourism activities will only resume from level 2 of lockdown.

“We want to save jobs; so let us be well-prepared for the time when the sector will be opened for business again. For now, the sector is scheduled to be re-opened from level 2 of the lockdown. As government, we are still committed to support all business and tourism growth activities in our Province”, concluded the MEC.

The meeting with all tourism stakeholders was the first one since the lockdown was implemented over a month ago. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for next week, where the proposed Mpumalanga Tourism Recovery Plan is expected to be presented for adoption by all stakeholders. The Plan will thereafter be submitted to the Provincial Command Centre for consideration.

***\*ENDS\****

***Issued by the Mpumalanga Department of Economic Development and Tourism***

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