

ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM, MR NORMAN MOKOENA, MPL DURING THE TOURISM AWARENESS DAY AT KAMHLUTSHWA, NKOMAZI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.

Friday, 07 September 2012

Programme Director, Mr JZM Sambo;

Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms Tokozile Xaza;

The Executive Mayor of Nkomazi Local Municipality, Councillor TS Khoza;

Chairperson of the MTPA Board, Mr Jerry Ngomane;

Acting CEO of the MTPA, Mr Edward Thwala;

Tourism industry stakeholders;

Regional Tourism Organisations;

Product owners;

Members of the media;

Distinguished guests;

Ladies and gentlemen;

Good Morning

Theme: "Tourism and Sustainable Energy – Powering Sustainable Development"

Just two (2) days ago, we launched the ***Tourism Month*** and provided details of what we plan to do in order to promote domestic tourism. This is because of the realisation that South Africans do not travel nor explore their own country. As government, supported by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (*the UNWTO*), we have selected the month of September to be celebrated as the ***Tourism Month*** on an annual basis.

The decision was based on the *UNWTO's* believe that the ***World Tourism Day*** should be celebrated annually on September 27, given that the day comes at the end of the high tourist season in the northern hemisphere, and the start of the tourist season in the

southern hemisphere, when tourism is of contemporary interest to many people worldwide, particularly travellers and those working in the tourism sector.

During this season, we must therefore celebrate and create awareness on the enormous contribution that the tourism industry makes to the provincial and national economic growth and job creation.

The theme for the 2012 Tourism Month is ***"Tourism and Sustainable Energy – Powering Sustainable Development,"*** as adopted by the UNWTO.

Through this theme, we aim to raise awareness on the significance of switching to green energy in powering the tourism industry. The *UNWTO* argues that travel and tourism is the third largest industry in the world. At 9% of global gross domestic product (GDP), it is larger than automotive manufacturing, which stands at 8%, mining at 8%, and chemicals manufacturing at 7%. The industry is expected to create an additional 21 million direct jobs over the next decade, taking total direct employment to over 120 million, which constitutes more than 3,5% of total employment – excluding the multiplier effect.

What does the theme communicates?

It intends to educate our people that:

- Energy is a vital resource for tourism development as it is integral to accommodating and transporting tourists;
- The sustainable use of energy within the tourism sector is pivotal for the competitiveness and sustainability of the sector;
- Humanity has to start living more sustainably (in terms of energy use, natural resources use) if the planet is to survive and support life;
- True sustainability takes into consideration far more than just the environment in which we live – it starts with us;

- True sustainability is not only about limiting negative impact, but rather about amplifying positivity; and that
- True sustainability is the intangible goodwill that emanates deep within our soul that brightens another person's day and makes our world a better and happier place.

Our objective for hosting the *Tourism Awareness Day*, is to make the community understand what tourism is, and what opportunities and careers are available in this industry.

To elaborate further, I now have the pleasure to introduce the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms Tokozile Xasa.