

VOYAGES **AFRIQ**

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Travel and Tourism Magazine

(Fitur)

celebrates four decades of travel shows and industry success



FITUR meets Africa, a new tool for discovering Africa's tourism offering pg. 9

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ATHENS

FLY

Ethiopian to the cradle of democracy

*Book via
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Ethiopian
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THE NEW SPIRIT OF AFRICA

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 



Welcome Message by Mr Zurab Pololikashvili, UNWTO Secretary-General on the occasion of the 40th FITUR International Tourism Fair

2020 will mark the beginning of a consolidation process of the *UNWTO Agenda for Africa 2030-tourism for inclusive growth*. Looking back, I am confident that the approval of this blueprint endorsed by all member states at the 23rd UNWTO General Assembly in September 2019 will serve as a key driver of economic transformation and sustainable development in Africa.

The series of regional activities and initiatives implemented jointly with UNWTO in 2019 regarding travel facilitation, women empowerment, tourism strategies, statistics and human resources development clearly underline the importance, sense of ownership and leading role

that African member states are taking in order to drive the agenda forward.

This year for the first time African Member States will have the opportunity to showcase their many attributes under one pavilion during FITUR's 40th Edition from 22 to 26 January 2020. In addition, the 11th edition of the Tourism Investment and Business Forum in Africa (INVESTOUR) scheduled on 23 January and organized jointly with Casa Africa and IFEMA, in collaboration with Côte d'Ivoire, will allow African Tourism Ministers and the public/private sector stakeholders to address issues related to rural tourism development, gastronomy and creative industries.

UNWTO is fully committed to work with the African Member States to build upon these achievements and advance steadily to fully make this strategic agenda a reality with tangible results. Going forward we will focus on other priorities such as brand destination management to promote positive stories about Africa, youth and technology to harness the human capital of the continent and to promote African gastronomy to the world. Sustainability, curbing the impact of tourism on climate change through environmental preservation and conservation of flora and fauna for millions of host communities will also have our full attention towards the realization of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



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VOYAGES **AFRIQ**
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EDITORIAL

Investment promotion and public private partnerships are central to Africa's tourism growth.

The growth of tourism in Africa at the start of the current decade is expected to double. The potential of the sector on the continent is still hugely unexplored and therefore offers the best low hanging fruit option for managers of economies to work hard towards it. Tourism as one of the primary drivers of economic growth and job creation in emerging economies needs capital injection to realize its full potential.

Experts' predict that African countries could increase tourism earnings from protected areas by between four and 11 times in the coming decade.

One area central to this goal will be investments in the sector. From infrastructure to human resource development, technical ability and marketing will require substantial capital infusion to realize the viability of the sector. Again Government institutions must encourage private/ public partnerships to secure the necessary investments inflows into the sector.

We at VoyagesAfriq believe that as is the practice with all corporate

governance, the structure to attract the millions from the corporate world ought to be put in place firmly

It is commonplace that Most African countries lack basic infrastructure a well as capacity (both human and material) to deliver. So as tourists surge on the continent, the urgent need for world-class accommodation facilities, restaurants, transportation and other ancillary amenities become clean.

The high demand for skilled labor also requires the establishment of hospitality institutions to fill the void.

Investors need incentives to encourage them to give of their best. Therefore allurements such as tax holidays and other motivational policies should be put in place to propel targeted investors to respond positively. That will fill the deficit in infrastructure and other provisions such as road, air and water transport not forgetting the simplification of visa requirements among others.

The Government of Cote d'ivoire

should be commended for the roundtable conference in Dubai in 2019 to attract investors to the tourism sector to the West African country. Ghana government 's launch of the beyond the return initiative is also commendable as it seeks to encourage Diasporans to consider investments in tourism as the Ghanaian economy as a whole.

According to a working paper published by Space for Giants and Conservation Capital bringing private sector capital to under-funded protected areas will allow these areas to capitalise on surging interest in nature-based non-consumptive tourism. The resultant increase in revenue and driving of sustainable local and national development would occur without draining state finances.

The working paper goes on to explain that 80% (67 million) of tourists to sub-Saharan Africa visit to view wildlife, and the number of those visitors is set to double to 134 million by 2030, generating \$260 billion. Tourism already drives 8.5% of Africa's GDP and provides 24 million jobs. In addition:

Brookings quote that "The tourism industry offers many opportunities to invest in Africa's rich local communities, generate economic activity, and create employment opportunities for women and young people. By 2030, consumer spending in hospitality and recreation in Africa is projected to reach about \$261.77 billion. In order to capitalize on the tourism potential, policy and business, leaders should work hand-in-hand to prioritize investments

to accommodate entrepreneurial innovations to attract more travelers to their countries. Policymakers should also improve governance with better-coordinated effort across agencies to simplify the regulations and remove barriers to tourism development to attract investors, and promote touristic destinations.

Given the above, it is heart warming to read that the Investment promotion is part of the ten point agenda for Africa and member states are encouraged to open up their economies to investors in the tourism sector. This year UNWTO along with partners IFEMA, and CASA Africa will be holding the 11th edition of the Investment Forum (FITUR) to encourage investments in the tourism sector on the African continent.

Correspondence: Voyages Afriq Travel Magazine Office Location

Accra Tourist Information Centre
Off Liberation Road, Accra – Ghana
Ghana Office line: +233 30 397 2764
Info@voyagesafriq.com
UK Office line: +44 744 849 4933

France Office
6 Impasse Robert Labarre 49300
Cholet - France
+33 753 082 350
e : info@voyagesafriq.com
w : www.voyagesafriq.com

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FITUR celebrates four decades of travel shows and industry success

The Capital of Spain, Madrid will once again open its doors to over 50,000 travel and tourism professionals during the 40th anniversary of the FITUR International Tourism Fair in IFEMA, a suburb of Madrid. From 22 to 26 January 2020, the halls of IFEMA will be the epicenter of tourism activities with more dynamic and innovative programs to celebrate four decades of excellence at the world's third biggest tourism and travel show.

Sustainability, Technology and Specialisation will continue to be the main traction of FITUR 2020, in addition to the fair's higher representation and internationalisation, in alignment with the positive data on the tourism industry. Everything points to FITUR continuing its successful and upward trajectory, as shown by the figures of the last edition, which brought together 10,400 participating companies, with 253,000 attendees.

capability as a factor in tourism competitiveness. FITUR TALENT will again have an exhibition area which will analyse, (through conferences, workshops and meetings) very innovative and dynamic proposals; it will also look at perspective and strategy of tourism, management companies and talent hunting as well as training.

South Korea, FITUR 2020 partner country

South Korea is this year's FITUR Partner Country. This destination has experienced an important increase in the number of foreign visitors; in 2018 it received 15.3 million tourists, 15.1% more than in the previous year. It is also increasingly attractive to Spaniards, as last year it received 27,314 Spanish visitors, 17.2% more than in 2017.

FITUR NEXT

The FITUR NEXT Observatory, the FITUR platform dedicated to detecting good practices in tourism with positive effects that can be replicated, will focus its research on how tourism can contribute to local economic development. This is one of the challenges that the Observatory, after analysing hundreds of good practices throughout the world, has identified as key to enabling tourism boost its positive effects.

FITUR will continue focusing on specialisation and on the growth of some of the recently-introduced sections, such as FITUR CINE and FITUR FESTIVALS and it will again offer its consolidated monographic areas, such as FITUR GAY (LGBT +) and FITUR HEALTH, as well as the sections FITURTECHY and FITUR KNOW HOW, where technology is shown as an essential tool for the growth of tourism and for progress towards the smart tourism concept.



King of Spain, Felipe VI (first from right) arriving at the opening of FITUR 2019 with UNWTO Secretary General, Zurab Pololikashvili (middle)

Promoting the agenda of B2B meetings is one of the key objectives of this edition of FITUR, both regarding the general programme, FITUR B2B Match, and the programme specialising in meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions and business travel, FITUR MICE, (22 and 23 January) will bring together 100 representatives of the offer for meetings with 120 qualified procurement officers from around the world.

This year will also see the introduction of the monographic area FITUR TALENT, which will focus on people's talent, skills and professional



A view from the FITUR 2019 exhibition stands



Group photo of Tourism Ministers with King of Spain, Felipe VI at FITUR 2019



A photo of the UNWTO Tourism Start Competition during FITUR 2019



A cross section of the global media that covered FITUR 2019



A scene from the networking session at FITUR 2019



11th InveStour Business Conference in Madrid, Spain

The structure of this important event is organized in two sessions: One session is devoted to round tables and the other session consists of project proposal presentations. This constitutes a strategic platform that puts African tourism project leaders and potential international partners in direct contact with one another.

- 1. The Round Table session, centered around the following topics:
 - through sustainable tourism practices
 - Session I: Fostering rural development
 - Session II: Promoting Africa's cultural tourism through gastronomy and

creative industries
 2. Project Proposal Presentations:
 Through this platform, it aims to support in the realization of these projects by connecting project leaders from Africa with collaborators and international investors.



• African Tourism Ministers in a group photo with UNWTO Secretary General, Zurab Pololikashvili at INVESTOUR 2019



• Family photo of Investour 2019

FITUR meets Africa, a new tool for discovering Africa's tourism offering

FITUR, the International Tourism Fair, organised by IFEMA and taking place at Feria de Madrid from 22 to 26 January 2020, will have an innovative platform to boost Africa's presence at the Fair. This is FITUR MEET AFRICA, a tool to schedule meetings that will promote knowledge of the tourism offer of the African continent and the generation of business alliances with industry professionals who will meet at FITUR.

Through FITUR MEET AFRICA, exhibitors in the Africa area, which will occupy Pavilion 1 on the fairgrounds, unveil their tourism offer, while professionals interested in Africa will be able to indicate their demand profile. In this way, a direct communication will be established between the destination and the potential investors that will allow them to schedule meetings in their own stands during the celebration of FITUR.

In this edition, FITUR will count with the participation of 31 African countries: Angola; Algeria; Cape Verde; Cameroon; Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo; Cote d'Ivoire; Ethiopia; Gabon; Gambia; Ghana;

Guinea; Guinea-Bissau; Equatorial Guinea; Kenya; Madagascar; Mali; Mauritania; Mauritius; Morocco; Mozambique; Namibia; Senegal; Seychelles; Sierra Leone; South Africa; Sudan; Tanzania, United Republic of Tanzania; Tunisia; Uganda; Zambia; and Zimbabwe.

How to participate in MEET AFRICA

Exhibitors or co-exhibitors from the Africa area in Hall 1, as well as professionals, whether visitors or exhibitors participating in another FITUR area, must register and explain their supply and demand profile. From December 16, 2019, all registrants received e-mails with the user name and password to access the FITUR MEET AFRICA private area, where they were to call the meetings to request confirmation from other parties; the confirmed meetings were to configure an agenda of meetings to be held at the stands themselves.

INVESTOUR, Tourism Investment reference for Africa

FITUR MEET AFRICA is part of the initiatives developed by FITUR to enhance Africa's participation and

visibility at the Fair. FITUR will once again become, as it does every year, an important tourism reference for African countries

The Forum for Investment and Tourism Business in Africa (INVESTOUR), which FITUR organizes jointly with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Casa África will be holding its eleventh edition in 2020 and will take place on Thursday 23 January, within the framework of FITUR.

The main objective of INVESTOUR is the promotion of sustainable development in Africa, favouring at the same time the conversations on investment and business opportunities on the continent. The structure of this important event is divided into two sessions: one dedicated to the celebration of a series of round tables and another in which various investment projects are presented. Thus, the Forum is configured as a strategic platform for African entities to present their tourism projects. The round tables will focus on rural tourism and cultural tourism through gastronomy and creative industries.



• South Africa's exhibition stand at FITUR 2019



First UNWTO Regional Congress on Women Empowerment celebrates women's contribution to tourism growth in Africa

The first ever United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Regional Congress on Women Empowerment in the Tourism Sector - Focus on Africa got underway in Accra on Monday, November 25, 2019 at an event that assembled women practitioners in the tourism industry from Africa and beyond to deliberate on the important role women play in shaping the continent's development through tourism.

Also present was a high-powered delegation from the UNWTO led by its Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili, as well as Ghana's Vice President Dr Mahamudu Bawumia.

For two days, some of the brightest minds in African and global tourism converged at the Accra International Conference Centre to discuss and answer tough questions that women in tourism and business generally are confronted with on the continent.

The host Minister and the Minister of Tourism Arts and Culture in Ghana Barbara Oteng Gyasi, in her welcome address underscored the importance of the theme, "Building the Future Together".

"Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, this theme in my opinion validates the important facts and issues surrounding women in tourism and reflects a symbiotic relationship between women entrepreneurs and women in tourism and by extension, development.

"We need to raise awareness about the impact women are making in the travel and tourism sectors and, more importantly, find pragmatic ways in which their roles can be further deepened to maximize the gains mentioned already" she stated.

The Minister added that the Congress on Women Empowerment has been a concerted effort that will help put tourism at the forefront of gender equality and women's empowerment efforts across Africa.

The First Lady of Zimbabwe, Hon. Mrs. Auxillia Mnangagwa, Chair of the UNWTO Commission for Africa, Zambia's Tourism Minister, Roland Chitotela and the Secretary General of the UNWTO, Zurab Pololikashvili in their respective speeches also touched on the theme for the event and highlighted the need to promote

women in the tourism sector in Africa.

Pololikashvili stated that the "UNWTO is firmly committed to breaking down the barriers women face in the tourism sector so that tourism may stay at the forefront of gender equality efforts here in Africa and across the world.

In her address, the Regional Director for UN Women in Central and West Africa, Oulimata Sarr made a strong case for equal opportunities for women across the broad spectrum of things that are needed to help women succeed.

She mentioned for example that "there is nothing micro about financing women's tourism businesses. We need credit lines, venture capital and a totally new perspective to expand women's access to finance across the sector."

The Vice President of the Republic of Ghana Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, revealed measures by the Ghana Government to streamline tourism related activities for both local and international tourists.



• Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia
Vice President of the Republic of Ghana

These measures include: The launch of the E-visa regime in the year 2020, the introduction of a Universal QR code to enabling the Ghanaian economy to become more cashless; The passage of the Creative Arts Bill (pending parliamentary approval) which will make provision for the establishment of the Creative Arts Fund to give financial support to the Creative Arts, Tourism and Culture Sector in Ghana.

Bawumia opined that it was imperative that women are propped up in the tourism sector if Africa is to make a headway in the attainment of the SDGs through tourism.

"To advance tourism's contribution to the SDGs and achieving our common goal of gender equality,



• Zurab Pololikashvili
UNWTO Secretary-General



• Barbara Oteng-Gyasi
Minister of Tourism, Arts & Culture, Ghana

mainstreaming gender considerations across the tourism sector is extremely important," he stated.

Key events that took alongside the two-day event were a Masterclass on Innovation in Tourism which was presented by UNWTO in partnership with IE Business School and Wakalua and facilitated by Natalia Bayona, the Organisation's Senior Expert on Innovation and Digital Transformation.

The second meeting of the UNWTO Leadership Taskforce for Women Empowerment in Africa was held where the Action Plan of the second Global Report on Women in Tourism which was launched at the opening day was endorsed.

Another highlight of the Congress was

the presentation by three women-led startups at the Women Entrepreneurs Tourism Challenge. These coupled with four panel discussions, a welcome cocktail, Gala Night and a lot more ensured a very successful event.

The First Regional Congress on Women Empowerment in the Tourism Sector - Focus on Africa was organised by UNWTO and the Government of Ghana through the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture with support from the German Development Agency (Giz), Amadeus, the World Bank, UN Women, and IE University.

Photo Highlight from First UNWTO Regional Congress on Women Empowerment in Ghana



UNWTO's Commission for Africa (CAF) Chairperson and Zambia's Tourism Minister, Roland Chitotela



A photo of High Delegates at the Regional Congress on Women Empowerment



Nina Walet Intalou, Minister of Handicrafts and Tourism of Mali



From Right to Left: Ghana's Vice President, Mahamudu Bawumia, UNWTO Secretary General, Zurab Pololikashvili, Mrs. Begoña Gomez, Director, IE Business School, Africa Center, Madrid, Spain and CAF Chairperson and Zambia's Tourism Minister, Roland Chitotela



Mrs. Begoña Gomez, Director, IE Business School, Africa Center, Madrid, Spain



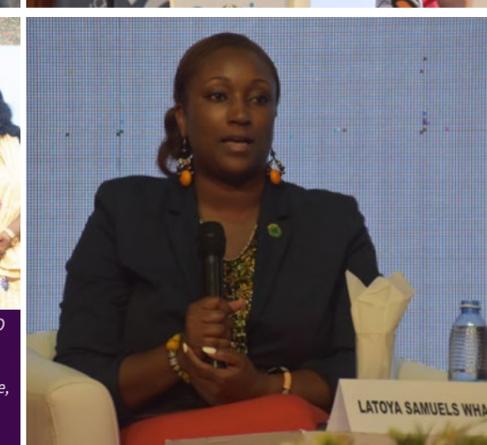
Ghana's Vice President in a tete a tete with South Africa's Minister of Tourism, Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane



Alicia Rico Perez, Spanish Ambassador to Ghana



From Left to Right: Mrs. Anita Mendiratta, Advisor to the UNWTO Secretary General, Nina Walet Intalou, Minister of Handicrafts and Tourism of Mali, Mrs. Barbara Oteng - Gyasi, Minister of Tourism, Arts & Culture of Ghana, Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane, Minister of Tourism of South Africa and Memunatu B. Pratt, Minister of Tourism and Culture of Sierra Leone



Elcia Grandcourt, UNWTO Regional Director, Department for Africa



Zhu Shanzhong, Executive Director, UNWTO



Oulimata Sarr, Regional Director UN Women West and Central Africa



A group photo of participants of the UNWTO, IE Business School & Wakalua Masterclass with Natalia Bayona, UNWTO Senior Expert on Innovation and Digital Transformation (third from right)



Innovation and Rural Development Takes Center Stage For Ministers' Summit at World Travel Market

Tourism leaders from across the public and private sectors came together at the last World Travel Market (WTM) in London for a high-level discussion on tourism's role in rural development, the challenges and the opportunities. The Ministers' Summit on "Technology for Rural Development", hosted by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in partnership with WTM, focused on tourism innovation and technology and their place in empowering rural communities.

The Ministers' Summit was held as the UNWTO works with its Member States and alongside its fellow United Nations agencies to face up to the challenges posed by rising levels of urbanization. According to the UN, 68% of the world's population will live in cities by 2050. In many places, this meant rural communities are "left behind", and tourism has been identified as a key means of bridging the rural-urban divide by creating jobs and boosting economic sustainability.

Given the growing interest in rural development, the 13th Ministers' Summit held by UNWTO in partnership with WTM, attracted a large audience of delegates. Alongside 75 Ministers and Vice-Ministers of Tourism, members of the global media joined senior travel industry professionals for the high-level discussions, which were moderated by Nina Dos Santos, CNN's Europe Editor.

Opening the Summit, Mr. Pololikashvili said: "Globally, poverty is overwhelmingly rural. This means, if we are serious tourism being a driver growth and development, we must look outside of our cities: We need to work together to help even the smallest community enjoy the many and varied benefits that tourism can bring."

Participants from both the private and public sector explored the potential benefits of digital technology, agreeing that innovation and knowledge

dissemination will be vital for bridging the rural-urban divide. Alongside private sector leaders, the public sector was represented by highest-level tourism representatives from Albania, Bolivia, Colombia, Greece, Guatemala, Panama, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone and Yemen, in addition to Gloria Guevara, President and CEO of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili. Both public and private sector participants were united in their commitment to ensuring tourism's contribution to rural development is geared to leaving no one behind.

At its recent General Assembly, UNWTO announced "Rural Development and Tourism" as the theme for World Tourism Day 2020, the global observance day celebrated every 27 September and underscoring tourism's socio-economic relevance.

UNWTO Tourism Online Academy open to all

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) IE Tourism Online academy is opened after the launch of the project in September last year.

The Tourism Online Academy is an online learning platform that will provide self-paced, 100% online courses that mainly focuses on concepts, areas of interest and fundamental principles related to the tourism sector, thus addressing the challenges it faces such as globalization, digital revolution, travel marketing and sustainability, among others.

These flexible courses allow participants to reconcile academic, professional and other personal commitments.

IE University and the World Tourism Organization of the United Nations have partnered to launch the Online Tourism Academy with the support of different partners – and is expecting

many more to join this initiative in the future.

This high-quality learning experience is available for everyone and caters

for those who are looking to improve or supplement their current skillset in order to adapt to this fast-growing and evolving sector. Through these first programs, participants will acquire managerial skills in digital marketing, finance, strategy, operations, innovation and digital transformation.



PREPARATIONS IN FULL SWING AS MOROCCO GEARS UP FOR 24TH UNWTO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Following their most applauded election at the 23rd General Assembly to host the subsequent edition, Morocco has begun earnest preparations to deliver a great event in Africa.

A delegation from the Ministry of Tourism, Air Transport, Handicrafts and Social Economy has held a preliminary meeting with the leadership of UNWTO at the Organization's headquarters in Madrid Spain.

Meeting with the delegation, the Secretary General, Zurab Pololikashvili reiterated his congratulations to Morocco for being selected to host tourism's biggest event in 2021. He assured them of UNWTO's support and commitment to ensure the

delivery of a great event in Marrakech.

Africa will once again be graced with the opportunity of hosting another General Assembly for the third time after the successful hosting of past editions in Senegal and Zambia-

Zimbabwe respectively.

Morocco successfully won the bid over Philippines and Kenya during the 23rd General Assembly in Saint Petersburg, Russia, in September for them to host the event in 2021.



The Moroccan Delegates in a picture with Secretary General Pololikashvili and his team at the UNWTO Headquarters.



Ethiopian Airlines COO talks 2019, ongoing projects and future plans

Ethiopian Airlines, Africa's leading airline group and world's largest by destination saw mixed fortunes during the year 2019. The Carrier's major setback the fatal plane crash of ET310 in March where all 157 passengers and crew on board perished with the controversial Boeing 737-Max.



• Esayas Woldemariam Hailu
Group Chief Commercial Officer of Ethiopian Airlines

The airline was transparent and handled the post crash crisis very well. The accident was the talking point which attracted global interest.

The airline held burial service for the victims and engaged with the families throughout the crisis.

Ethiopian moved on and chalked great feats in the aviation sector and also entered new phases of the Group's bigger vision.

In an extensive conversation with the Group Chief Commercial Officer of the Airline, Esayas Woldemariam Hailu he gives us account of what happened in the course of 2019 and outlook for year 2020.

Esayas joined the airline in 1991 and has served the airline for 24 years in different Senior Management positions including Expert Flight Performance and Yield Analysis, Manager Revenue Management and Central Reservations Control,

Area Manager Greece & the Balkans, Country Manager Nigeria, Director for Germany and Central Europe, Vice President Ethiopian Cargo, Senior Vice President Global Sales, MD Ethiopian International Services, and Group Chief Commercial Officer, the position he holds now.

As MD Ethiopian International Services, he heads and directs the development and coordination of Sales, Services and Operation of all International Flights and field office of Ethiopian Airlines Group activities and objectives, policies, procedures, plans and programs. He directs and Controls the company's individual and corporate passenger sales, ticketing, reservations, and passenger services activities at all overseas locations of Ethiopian Airlines, all over the world. Establishes revenue targets and evaluate its implementation. Oversees the administrative and sales support staff to ensure that the required assistance and support is in place, including customer oriented schedules, products, pricing are established and efficient administrative, promotional and distribution support are provided for sales offices to achieve their revenue target.

He is a holder of Master's Degree in Business Administration MBA from The Open University in UK, and BSc. Degree in Mathematics from Addis Ababa University. He is married and a father of two children.



• Students of Ethiopian Aviation Academy

Here are highlights of some of the various areas of our conversation with Esayas:

Expansion of Skylight Hotels to become largest in Africa ...

The Ethiopian Skylight hotels in Addis Ababa will soon be the biggest in Africa with a room capacity of 1,000. The hotel, which was opened nearly a year ago with 375 rooms, has begun the second phase on the construction of 640 additional rooms as part of the eight and night strategic business units of Ethiopian Airlines Group.

According to Esayas, "This is in a way to accommodate the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events as well as the leisure tourism arrivals into Ethiopia."

"The third phase of the project is to build lodges in Ethiopia's tourism hotspots across the country. This in his opinion will help shape the country's burgeoning tourism sector." In addition to that, will be the building of small hotels in historical, natural and cultural sites of Ethiopia to accommodate travellers to these sites.

Commencement of Hospitality and Tourism Programmes at Ethiopian Airlines Aviation Academy...

Ethiopian Aviation Academy has begun courses in Hospitality and Tourism. This has become necessary as the airline group has ventured into the hotel subsector.

"We are training flight engineers and mechanics, marketing and finance executives, cargo logistics people, air hostesses and now that Ethiopian Airlines has ventured into the hotel sub sector, we have started offering courses in hospitality and tourism".

He believes this will not only serve the Ethiopian Airlines Group but will be a great tourism knowledge base for the country and Africa as a whole.

"The Academy is also up scaling the course offering to meet the manpower requirements of the continent and the country." He added.

South Africa Airways Acquisition...

Recent media reports have linked the star alliance airline to troubled South Africa Airways as a possible new bankroller of the airline.

South African Airways has been going through financial troubles and until the last direction of business rescue route were linked with a number of possibilities to save the carrier.

While Esayas did not dismiss the reports entirely, he said Ethiopian Airline is more concerned about helping other carriers on the continent to succeed.

"South Africa is one of Africa's high quality service airline and I have respect for them. We want a strong South African Airways and we do not want the demise of SAA. We want all African airlines to come up since we do control only 20% of the market share. SAA has been coming with a certain bank to Addis Ababa."

"They took the initiative and brought a request for us to help them and we have given them proposals and are still waiting. The management of South Africa Airways keep changing and we do not know their wishes as at now but we are desirous, capable and willing to help them," Esayas added.



• Skylight Hotel

#IdeasArriveHere

6 - 8 April 2020

Cape Town International
Convention Centre

WTM Africa is Africa's leading and only B2B exhibition for both inbound and outbound travel and tourism markets, presenting a diverse range of destinations and industry sectors to South African, African and International travel professionals. Through its industry networks, global reach and regional focus, WTM Africa creates personal and business opportunities providing our customers with quality contracts, content and communities.

2019 STATISTICS

15%
increase
on all visitors
attended

6,263
unique industry
professional

US\$ 451 000 000
BUSINESS WRITTEN

42%
increase
on overall countries
represented

10%
increase
on Hosted Buyers
year on year

738
exhibiting
companies

Penny Fraser

South Africa
Sales Manager
✉ penny.fraser@reedexpoafrika.co.za
☎ +27 (0) 82 855 4377

Papy Luzala

Sub-Saharan Africa
Sales Manager
✉ papy.luzala@reedexpoafrika.co.za
☎ +27 (0) 11 549 8300
☎ +27 (0) 72 514 0968

Justin Berman

Travel Forward
Senior Sales Executive
✉ justin.berman@reedexpo.co.uk
☎ +44 (0) 20 8439 5417

Jo Marshall

International
Sales Manager
✉ jo.marshall@reedexpo.co.uk
☎ +44 (0) 20 8910 7982

Book Now! Join Travel Professionals in April 2020

GHANA LAUNCHES “BEYOND THE RETURN” INITIATIVE



• Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana speaking at the launch of the initiative

Ghana's President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has launched the “Beyond the Return, The Diaspora Dividend” Initiative, a move to enable Ghana derive maximum benefits from and build on the dividends of the “Year of Return” chatter.

The Year of Return Ghana 2019, a Government initiative, which ends in January 2020, is intended to encourage African diasporans to come to Ghana to settle and invest on the continent.

The initiative has put a positive spotlight on Ghana and attracted many people of African descent, mainly from the Caribbean and the USA to Ghana.

At a brief ceremony in Accra, the President said as the curtain drew on “Year of Return” initiative; it was time to engage Africans in the Diaspora and all persons of African descent to help make Ghana and Africa a place for investment and economic development.



• The President with other dignitaries at the function

He said the launch of the ‘Beyond the Return’ campaign was to assist those who have decided to settle in Ghana and other parts of Africa, assimilate into the society “so we can derive maximum dividends from our relations in mutually beneficial co-operation, and as partners for shared growth and development”.

President Akufo-Addo who cited the contribution of Chinese diasporans to the growth of China's economy, he noted that China's transformation into manufacturing powerhouse in the 1990's was realized mainly because Chinese in the Diaspora shore up the economy with billions of dollars.

He held that just like Chinese Diasporans were critical to the rise of the Asian economic giant, African ought do same for the African continent, saying, “That is why I am excited and keen on this new initiative of “Beyond the Return”, and the renewed enthusiasm around building Africa together.

He called on all people of African descent around the world to make the 21st century count for the continent, by building on the progress made so far to see the growth of modern, prosperous, technologically-advanced nations within a united Africa, to bring dignity and respect to black people all over the world.

Source: Ghana News Agency



The Cabinet Secretary, Najib Balala (middle), and other officials of the Tourism Ministry display the report

Kenya releases Tourism Performance Report for 2019

Kenya's tourism earnings grew by 3.9 percent to Sh163.6 billion as arrivals defied terror threats and global geopolitics to remain above the two-million mark last year.

The earnings improved from the Sh157.4 billion in 2018 but represent a slower growth compared to the previous year. In 2018, earnings increased by 37.33 percent as international tourist arrivals crossed the two-million mark for the first time in history.

The latest statistics, released by Tourism Cabinet Secretary Najib Balala in Nairobi, show there were 2,048,834 foreign visitors compared with 2,025,206 international arrivals in 2018.

Arrivals through Jomo Kenyatta International Airport were 1.42 million or 70 percent of total arrivals followed by Moi International Airport with 128,222.

The slowed growth in earnings came in the period as only eight out of the top 20 source markets posted a growth in tourist numbers.

"The year started with the dusiD2 attack (January 15) and that had an impact to the growth. But it is a resilient performance," Mr Balala said.

"We need to up our game to ensure the sector is vibrant and doesn't live in the past glory but manifests itself for the future."

The United States remained Kenya's

leading source market, growing by nine percent with 245,437 arrivals.

Arrivals from Uganda jumped 5.1 percent to 223,010 leapfrogging Tanzania to the second position. Tanzania, which has had several diplomatic tiffs with Kenya, saw arrivals fall by the same percentage to 193,740.

Other top growing markets were France, China, Rwanda, South Sudan, Burundi, Austria, and Spain. However, tourist numbers from United Kingdom, India, Germany, Italy and South Africa all dipped and so did those from Canada, Ethiopia, Netherlands, Nigeria and Somalia.

Source: Business Daily Africa

The Seychelles Island aims at Africa's leisure and corporate market with its Exotic offerings



David Germain
Regional Director for Africa & Americas - Seychelles Tourism Board

the sheer size of the African consumer segment.

The Seychelles Tourism Board marketing strategy in Africa is aimed at the leisure and corporate travelers from African countries, the expatriate community as well as the international visitors to those countries. As tourism to Eastern and Southern Africa continue to grow, Seychelles remain optimistic and will continue to benefit from its tourism marketing activities and programs involving African countries.

Seychelles conduct ongoing marketing activities in Kenya, Ethiopia, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and South Africa being the largest source market in Africa.

For international visitors to those African countries, Seychelles offer twin-center packages, the (Safari / beach) combination, a safari in Africa and thereafter to the beaches and unique attractions of the Seychelles, a very popular program for the

European & American travelers to Africa as well.

Air Access is available, and Air Seychelles, the island's national airlines operates daily flights (four hours and thirty minutes) between Seychelles and Johannesburg, South Africa, the most direct flights between South Africa and Seychelles.

Flights to Mahe the capital from Africa are also available daily from Nairobi, Kenya and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia respectively.

The Seychelles Tourism Board will continue to promote the island in Africa from the 2020 onwards, in collaboration with our airline and trade partners.

The Seychelles Islands remains one of the purest and most environmentally intact destinations on earth, offering a great diversity of experiences to visitors.



ONOMO Hotels acquires controlling stake in BON Hotels

ONOMO Hotels has acquired a 60.1% controlling stake in BON Hotels.

CEO and founder of BON Hotels Guy Stehlik and his family have a long association with South African and Nigerian hospitality, while ONOMO Hotels is linked to the investment by Batipart Invest - a company founded and owned by the Luxembourg-based Ruggieri family, big private investors in hospitality in Africa.

According to a statement issued about the deal, this strategic partnership reflects their ongoing confidence in economic opportunities in Africa, particularly in tourism.

According to ONOMO chair Julien

Ruggieri, this will consolidate the African hospitality market and will continue to strengthen its pan-African presence.

The acquisition establishes ONOMO as a key player in the Nigerian market and will reinforce its presence in Southern Africa.

The deal positions ONOMO as a pan-African mid-scale hospitality group with a footprint spanning 15 countries and with 4 300 rooms and a pipeline of 3 000 additional rooms. In addition, the new group now jointly employs some 2 200 people.

ONOMO Hotels CEO Cedric Guilleminot expects the company will

benefit from BON Hotels' experience in hotel management.

BON Hotels CEO Guy Stehlik says the deal provides access to a bigger client database, a stronger distribution platform, increased purchasing power and a wider-reaching loyalty programme.

He expects that the merger could lead to the creation of more than 3 000 new work opportunities on the continent as it offers potential growth opportunities for all stakeholders.

Source: Compiled by Carin Smith-Fin24



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Photo highlights from the World Travel Market London



The Secretary-General of UNWTO Zurab Pololikashvili with Spain's Minister of Tourism, Reyes Maroto (second left) and WTTC President Gloria Guevara Manzo



A photo of participants from Sri Lanka with the WTM London team



A scene from the African Hall



Sierra Leone's Minister of Tourism and Culture in a photo op with team members at their stand at WTM London



Memunatu B. Pratt, Minister of Tourism and Culture of Sierra Leone



President & CEO of World Travel and Tourism Council, Gloria Guevara



Revellers at the Ghana Day were treated to traditional dance and music



The Speed Networking Session provided opportunity for buyers and providers to conduct business



Staff of Reed Exhibitions, organisers of WTM London



A photo from the Cape Town stand

RWANDA TO HOST 2020 AFRICA TOURISM LEADERSHIP FORUM & AWARDS

13 - 15 July, 2020
Kigali Convention Centre



Rwanda's capital city of Kigali is set to host Africa Tourism Leadership Forum 2020 (ATLF) and Awards from 13 to 15 July, 2020 in Kigali. The theme for this 2020 gathering is "Shaping a better future for intra-africa travel together".

The July 2020 Forum, an intra-Africa game-changing event will be held at the Kigali Convention Centre, Kigali, Rwanda. The Forum is expected to bring together over 500 industry leaders from across the globe. Building on its remarkable progress in the past three years, the Forum aims to boost the efforts of industry leaders in transforming intra-Africa travel. This is in accordance with the outcomes of ATLF Accra 2018, Ghana and Durban 2019, South Africa respectively.

Organized by the African Tourism Partners and BDO South Africa, ATLF is the largest Africa travel and tourism Thought Leadership, multi-

stakeholder, multi-disciplinary and collaborative platform for real action and to accelerating increased continental tourism growth. Also, it has become a distinctive vehicle for action on increased intra-Africa travel, modernised visa policies, increased airlift for "Destination Africa". It affords the opportunity for attendees to exploit new opportunities for the good of all.

Among the focus areas identified for deliberations are Thought Leadership; travel technology and innovation; transformation of intra-Africa travel; destination marketing and showcases; MICE/business events strategies, African aviation routes and airlift; modernization of visa policies; rural tourism development; start-ups; youth in tourism and tourism investment funding. The youth demographic that participated in the 2019 Durban, shows that it has

become a platform for African youth in tourism and start-ups to develop to fulfil their respective potential.

"We are enthused that the event has become a blue-print for actionable collaboration among African tourism stakeholders and service providers over the past three years." Says Kwakye Donkor, CEO, Africa Tourism Partners. "Like ATLF 2018 and ATLF 2019 in Accra, Ghana and Durban, South Africa respectively, we wish to urge all industry stakeholders across the continent to make time to join the Kigali Forum, and also submit their entries for the 2020 Africa Tourism Leadership Awards accordingly," he stressed.

In addition to Youth In Tourism Innovation Summit, CEOs/Executives Dialogue, MICE Masterclass, this year's Forum 2020 will include bespoke exhibition for sponsors, partners and suppliers, thereby providing an additional platform for suppliers, destinations and Brand engagements

Register, enter awards or submit an innovative project proposal for Youth Innovators competition by visiting - <https://www.tourismleadershipforum.africa> now to avoid missing out on the biggest intra-Africa gathering of global and pan-African industry experts. **Kindly contact us at info@africatourismpartners.com or +27 (0)81 303 7030 if more information is required.**



Ethiopian Group CEO Named 'Airline Executive of the Year' by CAPA

Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Mr. Tewolde GebreMariam has been recognized as 'Airline Executive of the Year' at the annual Global Aviation Awards for Excellence organized by Centre for Aviation (CAPA) in Malta on 5th December 2019. Mr. Tewolde GebreMariam won the title for his commendable individual influence on the aviation industry, demonstrating outstanding strategic thinking and innovative direction for the growth of Ethiopian Airlines and the aviation industry at large.

Commenting on the accolade, Mr. Tewolde GebreMariam said, "I am honored to have received the award and I sincerely thank CAPA for the recognition. We at Ethiopian have achieved greater milestones as one family. I want to dedicate this award to my colleagues: more than 16,000 brave men and women around the world who always challenge themselves to soar higher with the mind-set that every step they take can become new history and milestone in today's 21st century aviation business."

CAPA Chairman, Emeritus Peter Harbison on his part remarked, "Tewolde GebreMariam has become a giant in African aviation over the past decades. He has guided a marginal airline into becoming a major global force, with a modern fleet and a world class operation. This past year he has been most strenuously challenged following the MAX accident, and emerges with an even stronger reputation. We are proud to present him with this award and look forward to him continuing to lead the airline to even greater heights."

Having served Ethiopian Airlines in different capacities for decades, Mr. Tewolde took the helm of Africa's leading flag-carrier as Group CEO in January 2011. He has received a number of prestigious accolades in the aviation industry for his outstanding leadership that propelled Ethiopian to the top of Africa's aviation.

Regarded as the pre-eminent awards for strategic excellence in aviation, CAPA first established the awards in 2003 to recognize successful

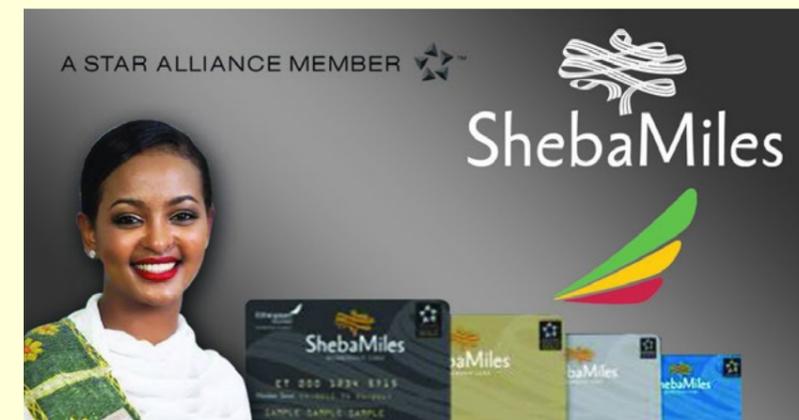


Tewolde GebreMariam

airlines and airports based in the Asia Pacific region. The awards later expanded to the global stage in 2012 to acknowledge aviation excellence worldwide.

Mr. Tewolde has also been listed as one of the 100 Most Influential Africans in 2019 by New African Magazine this week.

Ethiopian celebrates 20th Anniversary of ShebaMiles in Style



Ethiopian Airlines, the Largest Aviation Group in Africa and SKYTRAX Certified Four Star Global Airline has colourfully celebrated the 20th anniversary of its loyalty program, ShebaMiles, and Customers' Day on 12 November 2019 at Ethiopian Skylight Hotel. The grand anniversary event brought together high ranking government officials including Ministers, Ambassadors and the Diplomatic community,

ShebaMiles members /management and board members of the airline and aviation stakeholders.

On the occasion, Ethiopian Airlines awarded its ShebaMiles platinum members and cargo customers for their continuous support and patronage to the airline.

Airlines Group CEO Tewolde GebreMariam said "We are excited to

offer our members with more ways to earn miles over the years. Throughout these years, our customers have immensely contributed to the development of the loyalty program. Our Frequent Flyer Program has teamed up with several airlines and non-airline partners to create a world of choices for members to accumulate miles. Going forward, we will continuously strive to offer enormous privileges for our customers underpinned by our digital solutions. We sincerely thank our loyal members and partners for their continued support throughout the years and for inspiring us to constantly enrich their travel and overall travel experiences."

Originally named after the Queen of Sheba of Ethiopia who gave generous rewards to King Solomon, according to Ethiopian mythology, ShebaMiles was launched in February 1999 and the loyalty program has now more than 3 million members.

Air Seychelles commences Tel Aviv flight

Air Seychelles, the national airline of the Republic of Seychelles has welcomed its first non-stop flight from Tel Aviv, linking Israel to the Seychelles.

Flight HM021 which landed at the Seychelles International Airport at 8.15am was greeted by a traditional water canon salute, in the presence of key dignitaries, government representatives, and travel trade members as well as media partners.

To celebrate this momentous occasion the Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Ports and Marine, Didier Dogley, Chairman of Air Seychelles Board, Jean Weeling-Lee, Air Seychelles Chief Executive, Remco Althuis together with the Chief Executive of Seychelles Civil Aviation Authority (SCAA), Garry Albert and Seychelles Tourism Board (STB) Chief Executive Sherin Francis participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the commencement of the new service.

Addressing the guests during the welcoming ceremony, Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Ports and Marine, Didier Dogley said: "The launch of the new service between Seychelles and Tel Aviv will further enhance the tourism and economic

ties between the two countries, in addition to making a significant contribution towards the growth of tourism in the Seychelles which has been targeted between 3 to 5 per cent for 2019.

"As part of our marketing efforts to bring the Seychelles Islands to the world, we will continue to work with Air Seychelles to build our presence within the Israeli market, to further increase our visibility and establish Seychelles as the preferred holiday destination in the Indian Ocean."

Remco Althuis, Chief Executive Officer of Air Seychelles added further: "We are tremendously excited to have added Tel Aviv unto our network and delighted to welcome the first guests on our new scheduled non-stop flight from Tel Aviv to Seychelles today.

"Being on board this first flight which was 100 per cent full with 120 passengers, the maximum capacity for this route, I must say that since we made the announcement to fly on the Tel Aviv route, the feedback from the Israeli market has been very positive.

"The extremely strong bookings, exceeding the 90 per cent load factor for the upcoming two months has definitely surpassed our expectations,

and we are confident that with the support of our partners both locally and abroad, we will continue to bring more visitors from Israel to the Seychelles.

"The successful arrival of flight HM021 would have not been possible without the support of our stakeholders and colleagues at Air Seychelles. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who has been heavily involved in this project including the STB, SCAA, Department of Foreign Affairs, travel trade partners as well as our dedicated staff members for the effort and invaluable support throughout."

The flight between Tel Aviv and the Seychelles operated on Wednesdays has been carefully timed to provide business and leisure traveller's seamless onward connections to Mauritius and Johannesburg.

Operated by the modern Airbus A320neo aircraft 'Veuve', the inaugural Tel Aviv service was commended by Captain Mervin Sicobo and First Officer Russel Morel whilst the guests were looked after by Cabin Manager Mervin Arrisol, Cabin Senior Kelpha Dailoo including Flight Attendants Janette Croisee and Lauren Loze.

Africa World Airlines to launch services to Abidjan next year

Ghanaian carrier Africa World Airlines has confirmed the capital of Cote d'Ivoire Abidjan as its next destination from February 2020.

The inaugural flight is scheduled for 14 February 2020 and will fly six times to the Ivorian capital. This brings the Airlines regional routes to five destinations Lagos, Abuja, Freetown, Monrovia and Abidjan

The latest move forms part of the airline's strategy to grow its presence in West Africa.

Africa world Airlines has been operating in Ghana since 2012 with Embraer 145 and currently have 8 seven fleet.



Experts Forecast: African Tourism Priorities for 2020

Tourism has seen some growth and continues to make its way in order of Government priorities. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) through its Commission for Africa (CAF) meeting adopted the Agenda for Africa-2030 for inclusive development. The Agenda captures the pressing needs of the continent when it comes to making tourism the positive driver for economic development. This

blueprint got underway in earnest with the regional congress on women empowerment in the tourism sector and the recommendations are expected to be adopted by member states.

The African Union Commission in partnership with the African Development Bank released the visa openness report which indicated

some success in AU's Agenda 2063 goal of open borders and the expectation to spur economic growth in the continent.

In the light of the above, VoyageAfric solicited the opinions of experts, policy leaders and media on Africa's tourism outlook in 2020. Below are the excerpts.....



Kwakye Donkor

CEO African Tourism Partners South Africa

The Global Tourism forecast for 2020 looks is positive. Key trends that will drive these will include increased demand for travel technology, sustainable products and meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) as well as Business Events. African stakeholders will, however, have to go beyond the status quo of traditional tourism development and destination marketing. Innovation and clear focus on a destination's distinctive competencies and comparative advantages will be extremely critical



Oulimata Sarr

Regional Director of UN Women, West & Central Africa

Tourism is a driver of economic growth in Africa. Anchored on our UN principle of no one left behind, we must ensure that women are not confined to low paying jobs in the industry. We would like to see them in positions of leadership at the policy level, entrepreneurs providing goods and services to the sector, and a well remunerated work force.



Prof. Wolfgang Thome

Publisher of ATC News- Uganda

Africa Tourism in 2020 will be full of opportunities and hope.

Tourism is often described as a people business and one which unites people more than anything else. Provider of 1 out of every 10 jobs around the world - is it time for the industry to stand up and reclaim the high ground. Tourism like no other industry unites people, brings them together and by doing so creates opportunities and gives hope to other economic sectors in the entire world.



Elcia Grandcourt

UNWTO /Regional Director for Africa

A major milestone has been achieved with the endorsement and adoption of the UNWTO AGENDA FOR AFRICA 2030 - Tourism for inclusive growth at the 23rd General Assembly in St. Petersburg, Russia in September 2019. UNWTO's commitment in the years ahead is to continue to work alongside our member states to facilitate travel movements, eliminate known visa and air access restrictions to step up change and traveler movement. Again Africa should reduce time and expenses and encourage a more unified approach in unlocking the huge tourism potentials that exists on the continent.



David Gonahasa

Director & Founder, Roundbob.com

"I predict increase in intra Africa tourist numbers driven by the easing of visa restrictions, the implementation of the continental free trade area, and increased interest in tourism for development by the continental APEX political organizations. I also foresee growth driven by technology, an increase in online bookings and a stronger reliance on online marketing by tour agents. These can drive the advancement of platforms, technologies and payment solutions."



Judy Kepher-Gona

Executive Director, Sustainable Travel & Tourism Agenda

Tourism in Africa enjoys continuous growth, partly made possible by prevailing peace conditions in many countries, air accessibility and diversity of attractions supporting investments. However, the strides in this growth outpace community wellbeing in destinations. To optimize tourism impacts on community wellbeing, Africa should take advantage of the increasing awareness of need for sustainable development through the SDGs, and steer the sector towards sustainable management of resource dimensions.



Nunurai Ndawana

Public Relations and Corporate Communications Officer

Civil Aviation Authority of Zimbabwe

2019 saw a turbulent time for both tourism and aviation in African. Amid the turbulences we saw some signs of growth and stability. In 2020 I am expecting to see more African States opening up their borders to fellow African states. This as we have seen in Ghana and Mauritius has correlation to stimulating both trade and commerce. In aviation I hope to see African carriers implement more sustainable business models and far more African cities to be interlinked to one another.



Anita Mendiratta

President Anita Mendiratta & Associates & Special Adviser to UNWTO Secretary-General

As we all know, demand for 'Brand AFRICA' is embedded in strategies and agendas continent-wide. Its absence is blamed, repeatedly and widely, for negative perceptions that damage tourism potentials. But "Brand Africa" already exists - Africa is a known entity. Known, yes. Owned, no. In 2020 it is dearly hoped that African nations take ownership of articulating and activating the, "1 continent and 54 destinations, is Africa" slogan- by narrative, not by logos - enabling leaders to finally make Brand Africa a shared communications movement championing our true stories, not stereotypes.



Thomas Muller

CEO- Rainmaker Africa- South Africa

"The African Hospitality and Tourism sector is facing huge challenges. Value chains have dramatically changed, distribution channels significantly increased and technology is changing daily. The cost of distribution increased and is no longer sustainable. 2020 is the year of economic sustainability. 2020 is the year destinations gain back control of visibility, digital-presence, reputation, and distribution. 2020 is the year to keep more tourism spend in destinations for sustainable tourism development."



Mohammed Hersi

Chairman Kenya Tourism Federation

Africans must open the borders to each other. Visa between Africans should be eradicated. If 10% of our population was to travel we are talking of 120 Million travellers which double the international numbers that came to Africa.



Franck Olivier Kra

Editor, Ebiz- Africa

Having travelled the African Continent, one discovers its potential, its varied and wild beauty (which constitutes a comparative advantage), its originality and the dynamism of the sector. From north to south and from east to west, this part of the planet never ceases to surprise because Africa is what I will call the "Africas" due to its speaking and expressive diversity in the pure sense of the word. For 2020, my battle horse will be to show the dynamism of the sector and how innovation in sustainable, inclusive tourism can change the daily lives of those involved in the sector.



Lou Ann Daniels

Travel Editor, IOL- South Africa

In 2020 I will be shifting my focus away from soft tourism stories and concentrate on the bigger picture. It's not enough to drive tourism to African countries. We need to play our part in holistically addressing the economic plight of our continent. Where necessary, our stories need to reflect the impact of Western sanctions or changes in aid policies. It's time to tell the stories that really matter.



David Desta

A graduate of the world-famous Cornell University School of Hotel Administration, David is passionate about hospitality, travel, and tourism on the African continent.

I would like to see the efforts of SAATM materialize and the improvement of visa facilitation for inter-African travel. The benefits of an open-skies policy would not only increase intra-regional mobility, trade, and tourism but also lay down the path for continental integration. SAATM will help improve flight schedules and routes, but most importantly, provide travelers with more choices and cheaper fares. Hopefully, in time, Africans will no longer be viewed as migrants, but as tourists within their own continent.



Richard Kyereh

Head of Commercial -Africa World Airlines

Entering 2020 with the "year of return", we should reorient our mindsets to develop, boost, repackage domestic and intra africa tourism to generate and contribute positively to the economies of Africa!



Zina Bencheikh

Regional General Manager Europe, Middle East and North Africa

Peak DMC

My main resolution for 2020 is to look at more ways to combat gender stereotypes and focus on creating more openings for African women trying to break into the tourism field. Having seen the power of the tourism industry to create long-term change for women - and having been part of it myself - I am optimistic for the future of African tourism and women in particular.



Dr. Adun Okupe

Senior Advisor -Red Clay- Nigeria

I am looking forward to a stronger focus on tourism education in Africa for 2020.

At Red Clay, we resolve to further develop advanced tourism education, making the industry attractive for our best minds - the people we need to ensure Africa achieves its tourism potential. Africa is such a wonderful and beautiful continent with talented and dedicated people they can attain their highest professional ambitions in the industry and contribute to sustainable tourism development in Africa.



Susan Muumbi

Sub-Editor-The EastAfrican

Tourism in Africa is looking up in 2020. As the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement comes into effect, borders and skies will be open to greater movement of people. Africans can travel easier. They need to know where to go depending on their interests, beach, safari, food, culture... What to do when they get there and how to enjoy their experiences responsibly. As a journalist, my aim is to inform and educate on new developments in tourism and to see Africans leave their comfort zones and discover the continent and indeed the world.



Jon Howell

CEO and Founder, AviaDev

For African governments to recognise the impact of the aviation sector and then support and nurture it accordingly. Airlines should be treated as valued partners and not simply a source of taxation revenue.



Dr. Carmen Nibigira

Tourism Policy Analyst, Burundi

I expect tourism boards and players paying a little more attention to the African market. This market has been neglected in the past. Product development geared to respond to the needs of this market, marketing efforts that promote Africa for Africans. Governments to foster and implement inter and intra regional tourism and trade more vigorously. Let's make 2020 a year we all at least discover one African country we didn't know.....



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• UEFA President, Aleksander Ceferin with Officials of the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority

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Hilton Nairobi marks Golden Jubilee



• Front view of the Hotel

The Hilton Nairobi began operations in Nairobi on December 17th, 1969 and was officially opened by His Excellency the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta - first President of the Republic of Kenya. At inception, the hotel was the tallest building in Nairobi and was soon a haven for Kenya's leading businessmen, leisure tourists and government officials who were its loyal patrons.

The hotel in its early years was the leading central base for inbound tourists seeking wildlife adventures within Kenya's famed game parks and reserves. Hilton soon expanded its portfolio and opened the Hilton Salt Lick Safari Lodge and the Hilton Taita Hills Lodge in 1973 (both located within the Taita Hills Sanctuary). Later in 1990 it opened the Hilton Safari Camp also located within the Taita Hills Sanctuary.

The lodges and camp were sold off in the new millennium ushering a new era for the hotel as it prepared to position itself as a leading business hotel catering to the ever growing population of mushrooming corporates and businessmen in the city. The hotel underwent an extensive 3 year \$11 million dollar renovation program to mark its silver jubilee anniversary and has over the years undergone various structural improvements and changes keeping in line with preserving its rich vintage charm and elegance.

The hotel has hosted various celebrities over the years including the famous US actor Sydney Poitier, the sixth UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, famous Hollywood actress Angelina Jolie, musician Sean

country – the renowned safari rally driver known as Patrick Njiru.

As Kenya celebrates the return of the safari rally in Kenya in 2020 it is worth noting that Hilton was the home of the Kenya Safari rally for many years as the legendary Kenyan driver - Patrick Njiru would regularly park his famed Subaru rally car at the Hilton lobby during Easter season as an exhibition showpiece for guests.

The hotel was also the first property in the city to introduce the executive lounge concept for its V.I.P guests in 1994 (having conducted its extensive \$11million renovation) and it was also the first hotel to create a leading pastry shop in the city known as the "Hilton la Patisserie". This famous small outlet located at the Hilton arcade was renowned for its classic custom-made sandwiches.

The Hilton Nairobi today boasts 287 guest rooms, 3 restaurants, an American themed coffee shop, 2 bars (both indoor and outdoor) and a fully equipped gym facility with a spa and heated pool to cater for its enrolled members and in-house guests.

As you plan your next visit embrace the magic of Kenya, make it a point to experience this historic hotel.

Paul amongst many others.

Over the 5 decades of its existence, Hilton Nairobi has been known as a pioneer in the hospitality industry having set the standards for hospitality in the city. The hotel was the first hospitality company in Kenya to sponsor a leading sportsman in the



• Kenya's First President, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta in 1969 inaugurated the Hilton Nairobi

Malawi receives 17 black rhinos from South Africa

In one of the largest international rhino translocations to date, 17 Endangered Black Rhinos have made the historic journey from South Africa to Liwonde National Park in Malawi

In a unique collaboration between WWF South Africa's Black Rhino Range Expansion Project (BRREP), African Parks, Malawi's Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, 17 black rhinos were translocated from Imfolozi Game Reserve in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, to Liwonde National Park in Malawi where they were successfully released into their new wild home.

Subsequently, African Parks also moved two of Liwonde's rhinos from its existing population to Majete Wildlife Reserve, and another rhino from Majete to Liwonde. Based on a custodianship agreement signed between the Governments of Malawi and South Africa, this incredible project aims to boost Malawi's rhino population, support regional efforts to conserve the critically endangered

species and increase the genetic diversity of existing populations in Liwonde and Majete.

Due to the relentless persecution of the species for its horn, black rhino populations have plummeted across Africa resulting in fewer than 5,000 left in the wild today. Effective park management, law enforcement and community engagements are essential in conserving wild rhino populations across their range. This translocation provides the opportunity to move this incredibly endangered species to well-protected areas which are essential to giving rhino populations a chance for growth and survival, and allowing future generations of people to benefit from their natural heritage.

The 17 rhinos were captured in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, and quarantined for six weeks in Imfolozi Game Reserve, after which they were flown from King Shaka airport in Durban to Lilongwe in Malawi. Every precaution was taken to ensure their wellbeing throughout the process. From Lilongwe, they were then driven

to their new home in Liwonde National Park, where they were released to the wild on November 12, 2019.

Since their release, African Parks has intensively monitored the rhinos to ensure their health and successful adaptation to their new environment and all appear to be settling in well. Rangers conduct patrols daily and innovative technology has enabled the rhinos to be tracked on a live-time basis. Liwonde has been managed by African Parks in partnership with the DNPW since 2015. Since assuming management, the authorities have overhauled law enforcement and have worked extensively with communities to secure the park, and not a single rhino or elephant has been lost to poaching in two and a half years.

17 black rhinos have made the historic journey from the Imfolozi Game Reserve in South Africa to Liwonde National Park in Malawi in one of the largest international rhino translocations to date spanning over 1,788.21 km (1,111.14 miles).



RWANDA INKS THREE-YEAR TOURISM PROMOTION DEAL WITH PSG

Rwanda Development Board has announced a three-year-deal with PSG of France meant to promote the country's tourism, art and culture as well as brands.

Rwanda already have a similar deal with Premier League side Arsenal in which the club's jerseys bear "Visit Rwanda" logo on the sleeves.

The deal with the French side will see local fashion and design, Rwandan art and culture, coffee and tea and well as tourist attractions gain visibility through the club.

Rwandan tea and coffee will exclusively be sold at Le Parc des Princes, the home stadium of PSG with a capacity of close to 48,000.

According to Rwanda Development Board Chief Executive Clare Akamanzi, the new deal also provides visibility



opportunities showcasing Rwanda and 'Visit Rwanda' on backdrop banners and stadium installations, 'Visit Rwanda' on the women's team as well as the training kits for men.

Other brand visibility opportunities will include a week-long display of Rwandan brands.

The deal will also cater to football development in the country with avenues to nurture and mentor emerging talents.

Read: Italy's Roma Ban For Life Fan Who Racially Abused Defender Juan Jesus On Social Media

Akamanzi says that the deal seeks to

build on the current partnership with Arsenal FC to further boost the brand awareness on the global scale

The greatest beneficiaries of the partnership include tea and coffee producers as consumption of their products in the stadium is expected to further drive demand in the European market.

"The other is Fashion, we are going to be working with PSG to select players in the Rwandan Fashion industry to elevate them and showcase them to the world using PSG platforms," Akamanzi said.

Source: www.kahawatungu.com

Suspended CEO of SAT cleared of any wrongdoing and set to return after festive season

The substantive CEO of South African Tourism (SAT), Sisa Ntshona is expected to return to office after the festive season break.

The SA Tourism Board announced this after an independent and disciplinary committee acquitted him of any wrongdoing.

In a statement to the media, the Board said " Following a thorough process which saw a forensic investigation and a disciplinary hearing take place, Mr Ntshona has been cleared of all charges brought against him. The board is pleased that the process has finally been concluded and that the organisation can return to normality."

The Board thanked Ms Sthembiso Dlamini, the COO who acted as CEO during the nine-month absence of Sisa Ntshona.

Below is the full statement

"The independent investigation and disciplinary enquiry into the

allegations made against South African Tourism (SA Tourism) Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mr Sisa Ntshona, has been completed.

The SA Tourism Board received the final adjudication on 13 December 2019 from the team working on the disciplinary hearing, and the Minister of Tourism, has been apprised of this outcome.

Following a thorough process which saw a forensic investigation and a disciplinary hearing take place, Mr Ntshona has been cleared of all charges brought against him.

The board is pleased that the process has finally been concluded and that the organisation can return to normality.

The Board welcomes back Mr Ntshona and looks forward to continue working with him as we seek to grow tourist arrivals in our sector and to build a stable organisation.



Sisa Ntshona

Mr Ntshona returns to his position as CEO of SA Tourism immediately and will resume his office duties after the festive season vacation.

The Board would also like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Sthembiso Dlamini for the sterling work that she did as acting CEO.

Issued on behalf of the South African Tourism Board



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FITUR International Fairs

Date: 22- 26 January 2020

Venue: IFEMA, Madrid –Spain

FITUR is the global meeting point for tourism professionals and the leading trade fair for inbound and outbound markets in Latin America. At its staging, FITUR broke all previous participation records with 10,487 companies from 165 countries and regions, 142,642 trade visitors and 110,848 visitors from the general public



Meetings Africa

Date: 24-26 February 2020

Venue: Sandton Convention Centre- Johannesburg, South Africa

Meetings Africa showcases Africa's diverse offering of services and products where African associations and African meetings industry professionals can partner to help transform our continent.



WTM Africa

Date: 6-8 April 2020

Venue: Cape Town International Convention Centre, South Africa
World Travel Market Africa delivers the leading global events for the travel industry. One of six shows in the WTM portfolio, the Africa show was launched in 2014 to bring the benefits and opportunities of the global industry expertise to travel professionals in the region.



63rd UNWTO Commission for Africa Meeting

Date: 25- 27 March 2020

Venue: Seychelles

The Commission of Africa (CAF) Meetings are held every year as part of UNWTO's statutory events. The UNWTO Regional Commission for Africa is the major institutional platform where ministries in charge of tourism discuss the latest trends of the sector at the continental and global level and the implementation of their program of work.



Africa's Travel Indaba

Date: 12-14 May 2020

Venue: International Convention Centre, Durban- South Africa

Africa's Travel Indaba is one of the largest tourism marketing events on the African calendar and one of the top three 'must visit' events of its kind on the global calendar. It showcases the widest variety of Africa's best tourism products and attracts international buyers and media from across the world. Africa's Travel Indaba is owned by South African Tourism and organised by Synergy Business Events (Pty) Ltd.



ITB Berlin

Date: 04-8 March 2020

Venue: Berlin, Germany

The ITB Berlin is the world's largest tourism trade fair. The companies represented at the fair include hotels, tourist boards, tour operators, system providers, airlines and car rental companies. The ITB Berlin takes place annually in March at the Messe Berlin.



Malawi International Tourism Expo

Date: 23 -25 April 2020

Venue: Bingu Wa Mutharika International Convention Center (BICC)

Malawi Tourism invites you to the 4th Edition of the Takulandirani Malawi International Tourism Expo to be held from 23rd to 25th April, 2020 at the Bingu Wa Mutharika International Convention Center (BICC) in Lilongwe

Nigeria offer

Visa on Arrival

to African

travellers



• Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari

Any African visiting Nigeria will be able to get a visa on arrival, President Muhammadu Buhari has announced.

He told a meeting of African leaders that it was part of a commitment to ensuring freedom of movement on the continent.

Citizens of countries that belong to the regional group Ecowas already have visa-free access to Nigeria, but the measure announced by the President should mean other visitors will not need to fill out paperwork before they arrive.

A notice on the immigration service website earlier this year appeared to show that visa on arrival for Africans was already in place, but the authorities have told the BBC that African visitors will no longer have to fill out an application form before they leave their home country.

Although Nigeria's President was promoting the freedom of movement currently the country is not applying the same rules to goods coming into the country.

In August, all land borders were closed in order to tackle smuggling. The measure has brought once-bustling border crossings to a standstill.

Source: BBC.COM

Marriott International inks a deal with Landmark Sabbour to open a W Hotel in Cairo



• Amr Sultan, Managing Director of Landmark Sabbour and Alex Kyriakidis, President & Managing Director, Middle East & Africa, Marriott International at the signing ceremony of W Cairo

Marriott International, Inc. has announced it has entered into an agreement with Landmark Sabbour to bring the W Brand's bold design, signature *Whatever/Whenever*® service and innovative programming to Cairo, underscoring the growing demand for luxury hotels in Egypt. Expected to open in 2024, W Cairo will be situated in 1-Ninety - a 300,000 sqm mixed-use development area in the emerging New Cairo district featuring retail space, commercial and residential components.

To be located just 25 kilometres from Cairo International Airport, the new hotel will add its own vibrant W experience to the ultra-modern urban landscape of New Cairo. Known for seeking out new destinations in buzzworthy markets around the globe, W is poised to welcome guests and locals to the new-build locale as the city's reputation for groundbreaking design grows as fast as its skyline.

When W Cairo opens in 2024, the hotel will embody W Hotels' work hard, play hard philosophy with a signature WET Deck (pool deck), AWAY® Spa and FIT® Fitness Centre alongside 350 stunning rooms and suites. The hotel is also expected to offer multiple food and beverage venues, plenty of spaces to mix and mingle, plus meetings and events space which will include a 500-square-metre Great Room.

"New Cairo is a burgeoning, dynamic lifestyle destination in Cairo, and we are excited to collaborate with Landmark Sabbour to redefine modern luxury in one of the most awe-inspiring travel destinations in the world," said Alex Kyriakidis, President & Managing Director, Middle East & Africa, Marriott International. "This signing not only illustrates our commitment to Egypt but also reinforces the increasing demand for the W Hotels brand in this region and around the globe." He added

Eng. Amr Sultan, Managing Director of Landmark Sabbour, added, "We choose to work with those who share our development standards, innovative perception of luxury community building, and whose objectives align with our own. Our collaboration with Marriot International represents another milestone in our growth; it further demonstrates our commitment to collaborate with industry leaders and stands as a chance to integrate the unique customer-centric services of W Hotels into our line of upscale products in 1-Ninety."

Landmark Sabbour recently launched 1-Ninety. With a total investment of EGP 28 Billion (\$1.75 Billion). 1-Ninety covers 300,000-square-metres and has a built-up area of 450,000-square-metres including administrative, retail, commercial, and residential components.

Somali Cabinet approves National Tourism Policy

The Federal Government of Somalia has approved the country's National Tourism Policy. This comes after 11-months of engagements by the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism with key stakeholders of the sector. The policy provides the framework needed to leverage the benefits of tourism to support the social and economic development of the country.

The policy outlines the development and enhancement of tourism across Somalia over the period 2019-2030 and aims to promote the ecotourism, growth, inclusiveness, sustainability, innovation and partnerships in the mainstream economy, while recommending institutional and regulatory frameworks in order to achieve its intended goals.

Senior Tourism Advisor to the Cabinet of the Somali Government Yasir Baffo mid last year (2019) presented a summary of the policy to the



government to appraise itself well with the document.

One of the main highlights in the policy was the establishment of academic institutions, tourism vision 2030, and rehabilitating the Ministry building and having a fully functioning Ministry.

Deputy Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism Hon. Adan Isak Ali recalled the importance of the

document and said it forms a bigger plan of making tourism a key driver of the economy of Somalia. He added that, Somalia joining UNWTO was part of a bigger picture to ensure the country learn from best global practices when it comes to tourism.

Approving the tourism policy means the sector now has the policy framework that will allow it to develop further and attract more investment.

Hilton Signs Partnership with Groupe Alliance in Tunis

Hilton will once again be welcoming guests to the Tunisian capital city of Tunis after a landmark deal was signed with Groupe Alliance. The new management agreement confirms a flagship Hilton Hotels and Resorts Property in the coastal suburb of Gammarth.

An extensive renovation of Le Palace hotel will now see the property rebranded as Hilton Tunis Gammarth in 2023. A phased renovation of all guest rooms, suites and public spaces (including F&B outlets) will begin in 2021. Once completed, the hotel will boast 296 guest rooms and 25 suites, seven F&B outlets and ample meeting facilities including a 635sqm ballroom.

Carlos Khneisser, VP, Development, Hilton, MENA said: "This is a Hotel we have been interested in for some time and we are delighted to have found the right partner, with the Groupe Alliance. We are very confident in their ability to take the project forward and bring Hilton back to the Tunisian



market in style. I look forward to working with Samir Jaieb and his team to deliver an exceptional Hilton product."

Samir Jaieb, CEO of Groupe Alliance said: "This hotel is the start of a partnership with the Hilton Group, we are excited to work with the hotel chain to bring the Hilton name in

one of the most prestigious hotels in Tunis."

Hilton, which has more than 5,100 hotels globally, recently marked its return to the Moroccan capital with the opening of Hilton Rabat and has a total of 35 properties open or under development in North Africa.

Limpopo looks to sports Tourism to consolidate tourism growth

The Northernmost Province of South Africa, Limpopo is preparing feverishly to host the second edition of the International golf championship from 30 January to 2nd February 2019.

Organisers of the event are determined to use the event to shore up tourism in the province.

The Limpopo Championship is a premium golfing event identified as a strategic platform to position Limpopo's tourism brand nationally and internationally. It is sanctioned by both the Sunshine Tour and the European Challenge Tour, and will involve 204 professional golfers from around the world. It is a holistic lifestyle golfing spectacle that appeals to a broad audience beyond traditional golf fans.

The Limpopo Tourism Agency which is the destination partner for the Championship is keen to take advantage of the august event to promote the region as "A must visit" destination in South Africa.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Limpopo Tourism Agency Nomasonto Ndlovu says the upcoming tourney will help market the wonders of Limpopo.

"It positions Limpopo as an African entertainment venue, showcasing the wonders of Limpopo Province through sport, live entertainment, excursions, leisure activities and vibrant hospitality. It positions the Waterberg District as a good tourist destination

capable of hosting major sporting events. It is the perfect combination of sport and safari showcasing some of the top Golf resorts in the region"

She added that the event would bring positive economic benefits to Limpopo and South Africa in terms of job creation and GDP contribution.

In terms of sports tourism development Ms Ndlovu said, "Sports Tourism is right at the centre of our tourism marketing strategy for Limpopo. This is because Limpopo is an outdoor and eco-tourism destination, it is very popular for many sports fanatics".

"The plan is to create a sustainable sport tourism culture through a successful hosting of this tournament, as well as attracting other major sporting events to the province. Hosting the Limpopo Championship adds onto the basket of international sporting events we already have, including the UCI cycling race and the Tour de Limpopo. We see a greater value as such events contributed to increasing tourism spend and the number of bed nights in the province.

On the benefits of the event the CEO said, the tournament gives opportunity for increased tourism numbers and economic impact including the much needed job creation. We also expect the tournament to promote social cohesion and stimulate partnerships among key stakeholders. Through the hosting of this tournament we are able



• Nomasonto Ndlovu
CEO - Limpopo Tourism Agency

to profile tourism experiences within the Waterberg region and surrounding areas bringing more awareness about the diversity of the province.

On the prospects for tourism in the province the Chief Executive said "our aim is to continue on the momentum we have built about destination Limpopo in the past couple of years. We want to further grow the number of tourists visiting the province, provide more experiences that encourage them to spend more as well achieve longer stays. Limpopo has been at the top of domestic tourism in South Africa, and second in international visits and this position we are determined to maintain" she observed.

"Through this tournament and other events like Marula Festival, Mapungubwe Festival, Royal Heritage Festival and many others, we aim to cement our position and offer greater alternatives for domestic tourism. However there will also be greater focus on bidding for and hosting of international association meetings for the province. We are excited that there is an increased awareness about Limpopo as viable Business Events destination. More business events have chosen Limpopo as their host destination, including IFES World Assembly 2019, IASIA 2020, GFS 2020 and many more" Ms. Ndlovu concluded.





GHANA TOURISM AUTHORITY SET FOR VAKANTIEBUERS & FITUR TRAVEL SHOWS

The Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) is set to participate in the upcoming 42nd Vakantiebeurs in Utrecht, Netherlands from 10-15 January 2020.

The Vakantiebeurs, which is an annual event in the Netherlands, is a combined consumer and trade fair for tourism, organized by VNU Exhibitions Europe.

The event has been running for over three decades and has grown to become the largest consumer holiday fair in the world.

Vakantiebeurs offers a perfect platform for promoting destinations tourist product to consumers.

This is the first of the selected International fairs this year that the

GTA will be participating to showcase Ghana's unique historical, cultural, ecological attractions and conference facilities. Ghana's attire, cuisine and traditional dances will feature at the stand to attract potential visitors especially those from the Scandinavia.

The GTA also hopes its participation will help encourage Dutch tour operators to highlight Ghana in their tour circuits by providing them with publicity and promotional materials and competitive tour packages on regular basis.

This fair will also afford Ghana the opportunity to inform and sensitize investors about investment incentives and opportunities available in the tourism sector.

In a related development, the GTA will also participate in the Spanish International Tourism Trade Fair (FITUR) scheduled for the 22-26th January 2020 in Madrid, Spain. The Authority intends to market Ghana as the most preferred tourist destination in Africa to the Spanish speaking and European markets.

FITUR is a meeting point for tourism professionals, who meet to establish lines of action, strategies and business alliances to energize and consolidate tourism business, globally. Tourism promotion agencies, operators, hotels, travel agencies, consultants and experts in International tourism management and development will also be present in Madrid for the fair.



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Zimbabwe excites UEFA President

Aleksander Ceferin, President of UEFA has described the continued and unsubstantiated reports by international news organisations that Zimbabwe was an unsafe tourist destination as unfortunate.

Ceferin and his family left the country after having been in the Southern African nation for more than a week. While in Zimbabwe, Ceferin and his family visited the Victoria Falls, Hwange National Park, Binga, Great Zimbabwe, Vumba, Harare and the Matopos National Park.

In an address at his send off dinner in Harare, Ceferin said he would not hesitate to advise anyone to visit the country as the perception that the country was not safe for tourists was untrue.



• UEFA President, Aleksander Ceferin (second right) with Officials of the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority

Trip Loop awarded 'Best Travel Technology Product' by the World Youth & Student Travel Conference 2019

Trip Loop, the innovative travel management software trusted by leading global tour operators, has been awarded the 'Best Travel Technology Product of 2019' at the World Youth and Student Travel Conference (WYSTC). Organised by the WYSE Travel Corporation, WYSTC is a worldwide conference for global leaders and stakeholders in the youth and student travel industry. The prestigious Global Youth and Travel Awards (GYTA) are presented annually to recognize outstanding performers in the youth, student, and educational travel industry.



• Diego De Stefano
Trip Loop co-founder and CEO

"We're humbled to have Trip Loop recognized as a game-changing solution for the youth travel industry," said Trip Loop co-founder and CEO, Diego De Stefano. "This award is a recognition of our commitment to innovate the experience of travel providers and travelers," he said.

Trip Loop was created from De Stefano's experience in leading group travel in more than 20 countries in his early college days. Trip Loop helps boost productivity and revenue opportunities for multi-day tour operators, and helps group travelers easily access their itineraries and communicate with their guides and one another, keeping them safer and better organized. Tour leaders

can focus more on creating life-transforming experiences for the students, because Trip Loop helps automate daily tasks.

Darryl Newby, who is a member of the panel of judges for GYTA and co-founder of Welcome To Travel said, "When I was judging at the GYTA, Trip Loop immediately stood out. They have tour operators and safety at the heart of their product."

This award helps Trip Loop position itself as the leading platform for group travel management, especially when it comes to student and youth travel. Earlier this year, Trip Loop solidified a commercial partnership and strategic investment from Japan Travel Bureau (JTB), one of the largest tour operators in the world. JTB seeks to increase company wide productivity and revenue by servicing their travelers through Trip Loop. Since its founding in 2017, Trip Loop has experienced international growth with dozens of international leading tour operators. As Newby said, "Communication is key to running any successful tour, and Trip Loop has created the perfect platform for this."



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WTM Africa 2020 - Big & Better for Africa's Bustling Travel and Tourism

World Travel Market Africa just keeps getting bigger and better – and a host of exciting innovations promises to make WTM Africa 2020 even more exciting. The 7th edition on WTM Africa is once again marked by exciting growth, with expanded areas for Travel Forward (formerly the Travel Technology Show), Equal Africa and the introduction of the WTM Africa Travel & Tourism Industry Awards which will shine a global spotlight on African tourism success stories – and so much more.

Launched as a platform to inspire the travel and hospitality industry with the next generation of technology, Travel Forward focusses on future-proofing travel businesses for the digital age, helping ensure relevance, improving revenue-generating opportunities and providing the opportunity to do one-on-one business with innovative tech providers. Travel Forward will take place in a dedicated space on the show floor at WTM Africa at the Cape Town International Convention Centre, giving participants the opportunity to join sessions focusing on topics pertinent to technology and its influence on the industry, get involved in the interactive exhibition and get their hands on the industry's latest tech.



The inaugural WTM Africa Travel & Tourism Awards seek to reward individuals as well as small and large organisations, for powerful and compelling work in promoting tourism across Africa. Themed “Under African Skies”, WTM Africa seeks to celebrate the success of national, regional and city tourist boards and recognise outstanding private sector companies and individuals. Entries for all 12 categories – from Most Compelling National Tourism Board Story to Most Compelling Foodie Story – are currently open, for campaigns executed in the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019, eligible for the 2020 WTM Africa Travel & Tourism Awards.

For more details on each category, visit africa.wtm.com/Awards1. This year, we are thrilled to introduce EQUAL Africa to our show floor. EQUAL Africa stands for EQUAL Love, Rights, Experiences & Opportunities. This new Pink Travel event will be a bolt-on full day conference on 06 April 2020. Attendees can also look forward to other trending topics and content shares by over 150 speakers from around the globe in six different theatres on the show floor.

Our WTM Africa Festivals will once again return allowing visitors from around the globe to experience the cultures, cuisine and customs of some of our 780+ exhibitors. Megan Oberholzer, Portfolio Director: Travel, Tourism & Sports Portfolio for Reed Exhibitions South Africa says that WTM Africa continues to track the latest trends and topics which affect the international travel & tourism industry. “WTM Africa also has a history of being a breeding ground for ideas which have a tremendous positive impact on the international industry – and we’ll continue to find ways to provide the best possible platforms for the debates and experiences that drive the future of the industry,” she says. For more information – including how to register for WTM Africa 2020 – visit africa.wtm.com. #WTMA20 runs from 6-8 April 2020 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre.



2020: A New Year of opportunities for African Youth in Tourism

It's the beginning of another decade and as the phenomenon has been for some time now, global tourism trends are fast changing. Travelers are becoming more choosy and smarter about the kind of experience they want to have at destinations; their tastes and preferences are gradually shifting and at the heart of it all, technology is playing a significant role in simplifying traveller's choices.



Beyond this however, the human component that ensures that the traveller gets real experiences at their destination of interest cannot be overlooked. It's good to have information about destinations and sites online which can be accessed by anyone who wishes to visit these attractions. However, once they are on the ground, they require human interactions to fully enjoy the experiences and appreciate the stories and history around them. The latest estimates published on International Youth Day by the UN last year puts the population of youth in Sub-Saharan Africa at 211 million, a figure expected to increase by more than 89% by 2050.

The World Travel and Tourism Council assert that tourism is responsible for one out of ten jobs globally, and with the increasing numbers in the youth population, the sector is surely the continent's trump card for economic transformation. When all the oil is dried up, the mines depleted and other resources exhausted, with its high multiplier effect, this sector will create millions of additional jobs in other sectors like agriculture, logistics, ICT, and banking.

The challenges of today's Africa especially within the employment space can be resolved by actively engaging the teeming youth in the sector that guarantees an

inexhaustible source of livelihood. While the bigger goal is to rope in as many as possible into the tourism sector, the few who are engaged in tourism need to empower themselves with skills and build their capacities to ensure they remain relevant. In these times, when conversations on sustainable tourism have become rife and highly pertinent, it is important that young people engaged in tourism are drawn into these discussions to solicit their input; given that they are the future – they make sustainability germane in the first place.

Goal one and eight of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) seek to eliminate poverty and ensure decent work and economic growth respectively by 2030. These are goals that will require the expertise of the youth in Africa to achieve. These goals can only be realized with a youth population that is empowered, gainfully employed, financially secure and knowledgeable about their environment well enough to contribute to its growth and sustainability. Again, tourism provides a fertile ground for all these to thrive. With various developments over the past year in the various segments of the tourism sector, especially within MICE (Meetings Incentives Conferences, Exhibitions), there is an armada of opportunities for employment in this

sub-sector alone and is one the youth can take advantage of. Lately there are many programmes out there to help upgrade one's knowledge and capacity in the tourism sector. Notable among them is the unique platform the UNWTO World Tourism Students League for human capital development. According to the organization, The UNWTO World Tourism Students League, run within the UNWTO Academy, seeks to create an innovative environment to empower and motivate travel & tourism students to get involved with happenings within the industry. Participants in this programme will get real-time experience from the tourism industry by creating and presenting innovative solutions for the challenges that the sector is facing nowadays. Challenges will be aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, placing an emphasis on Goals 8, 12 and 14, in which tourism is featured and will match the SDGs requirements. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to bring young people together and build their capacities in the tourism sector as they go through monthly challenges to determine a winner. Nonetheless, a myriad of opportunities exist in other fields whether one has acquired formal education or not.

Whether one is involved in the clean environment campaign, making souvenirs or providing informal tour or sight guide services by virtue of one's acquaintance with the destination, one is a part of the larger circle of youth who are helping shape Africa's tourism

The challenge this year is to double efforts in whatever field one finds oneself as a young person to push the worthy agenda of promoting tourism and encouraging travel on the continent. Current efforts will not just benefit the present day generation, but also create a more livable and vibrant Africa for the younger generation who will come after the current generation.

Samuel Obeng-Appah
Content Editor/VoyagesAfric



f t i @VoyagesAfriq

Travel & Tourism Media Insight Forum - a journey into navigating media partnerships

A new decade for travel and tourism will bring trends that will impact how destinations market themselves and how media will contribute to these transitions. How destinations respond to these trends is crucial and media will play a far wider reaching role in the changing narrative.

Branding will be driven by contradictory influences - it may be more targeted but it will reach larger key target audiences. The world of media is also becoming more multifaceted, offering not just the traditional advertising platforms but a variety of other mediums which destinations can utilise in their marketing strategies. Two elements will define this new decade - technology and relationships.

Technology is the engine driving existing media and new players such as global influencers, social media networks and niche media channels are offering new ways to promote a destination. Traditional mediums are also affected by technology, with live streaming, real-time and embedded reporting and more infotainment options that are both interactive and targeted. Yet despite the drive of technology, the platform between media and destinations will be defined on the basis of relationships and not just the commercially driven opportunities.

The value of content and the constant requirement for up-to-date information will lead media to reach

out to destinations more. In turn - driven by story telling - destinations will look to reach new and existing audiences, who are more accessible, with increasing tourism products and the cost of travel decreasing. A destination, especially when faced with budgetary restraints, rebranding exercises and perhaps most importantly how to navigate and respond to a crisis, will look towards media as a "co-conspirator". Even in their darkest hour, recovery from crisis can be accelerated or hampered depending on the relationships built with the media.

Destination management organisations and government supported tourism authorities have also had an unfortunate history of having an inconsistent relationship with the media. There can be a misunderstanding of what a media offering entails - the potential return on investment and the costs involved are understood while the biggest issue is the expectation that media should provide obligatory good news coverage, especially at times when destinations are facing challenges to their brand image.

Here is where there exists a knowledge gap between destinations and the media. This problem of misconceptions and unrealistic expectations has led to the under-utilisation of one of the most tried and tested models of destination marketing - national brand awareness

and crisis recovery. From a destination perspective there is a need for better understanding of current trends and assisted decision making, especially when faced with budgetary restraints, complex and technologically driven rebranding exercises and, perhaps most importantly, how to navigate and respond to a crisis that will impact destination tourism. An opportunity lies within better, transparent partnerships and the understanding of the intrinsic value and role of the media relationship - not only during times of need but as a continuous partnership that benefits both sides while retaining credibility for both.

Hosted on the first day (6th April, 2020) of the World Travel Market - Africa, in Cape Town, South Africa, the Travel and Tourism Media Insight Forum will bring together key decision-makers from destinations -both global and regional - media players, public relations agencies and influential thinkers. Expert panel discussions will provide a crucial insight into the grey area that currently defines media and destination relationships. Quantifiable value can further be derived after the session with scheduled one-on-one meetings - where media can prepare and personalise opportunities based on pre-posed questions by destinations.

For more information please contact :
Jillian Blackbeard at
blackbeardjillian@gmail.com or Ailsa Pringle at
apringle@sevencherry.co



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Adaye Kessie Festival in Cote d'Ivoire

The 2019 Adaye Kessie Festival came off in Ivorian town of Bonduku in style filled with pomp and pageantry. Led by high ranking Officials of the Government of Cote d'Ivoire, the festival got underway with the display

of rich Brong culture which have their roots in the Ivorien and Ghanaian cultures.

The President of the Adaye Kessie Foundation Bini Outarra in an address

to the gathering at the event appealed to state officials to help make the festival a great culture asset which can also create employment in the catchment area.



South Africa and Ethiopia sign visa waiver for Diplomatic and Service Passport holders

South Africa and Ethiopia have signed an agreement on the waiver of visa requirements for holders of diplomatic or official/service passports.



• Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed Ali and President Cyril Ramaphosa shake hands after signing the Agreement

President Cyril Ramaphosa and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali said in a joint communiqué, which is expected to ease the travel of officials, and will contribute to further strengthening bilateral relations.

The signing of the agreement emanates from the official visit by Prime Minister Ali to South Africa. The two-day visit was the first State level exchange of visits between the two countries.

Prime Minister Ali was also a guest at the 108th anniversary of the founding of the African National Congress on 11 January 2020.

President Ramaphosa was accompanied by the Ministers of International Relations and Cooperation; Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development; State Security; Home Affairs; Trade, Industry and Competition; Higher Education, Science and Technology, and for the signing ceremony, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Tourism.

Prime Minister Abiy's delegation comprised of Ministers of Social and Labour Affairs, Mines and Petroleum and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.



• Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Hirut Zemene & South Africa's Minister of Tourism, Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane signing the Agreement

Strengthening Trade Relations

On matters of trade, the principals welcomed the presence of South African companies and business entities in Ethiopia, including investment and trade links, and it was agreed to enhance bilateral investments between the two countries.

At the same time, the principals affirmed their commitment to expanding cooperation in trade and investment between business entities in South Africa and Ethiopia, as well as agreeing to cooperate in the field of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) due to their important role in job creation.

“There was also agreement to strengthen cooperation in the area of mining, deep mining and mineral beneficiation to strengthen agricultural cooperation so as to enhance food security and to work towards addressing skills development through the exchange of best practices, among others,” the communique said.

Migration

The two Heads of State also discussed the issue of Ethiopians residing in South Africa and agreed that the two countries need to cooperate on this matter. They further agreed on the need for both countries to work together to address illegal migration, human trafficking and smuggling.

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