

VOYAGES **AFRIQ**

ISSUE 014 | December 2020 Edition

Travel and Tourism Magazine

Explore Africa again from Namibia, the land of Endless Horizons



UNWTO's first mission to Africa
since onset of Covid-19 - p.4

A Good Year for
Kelly Khumalo - p.50



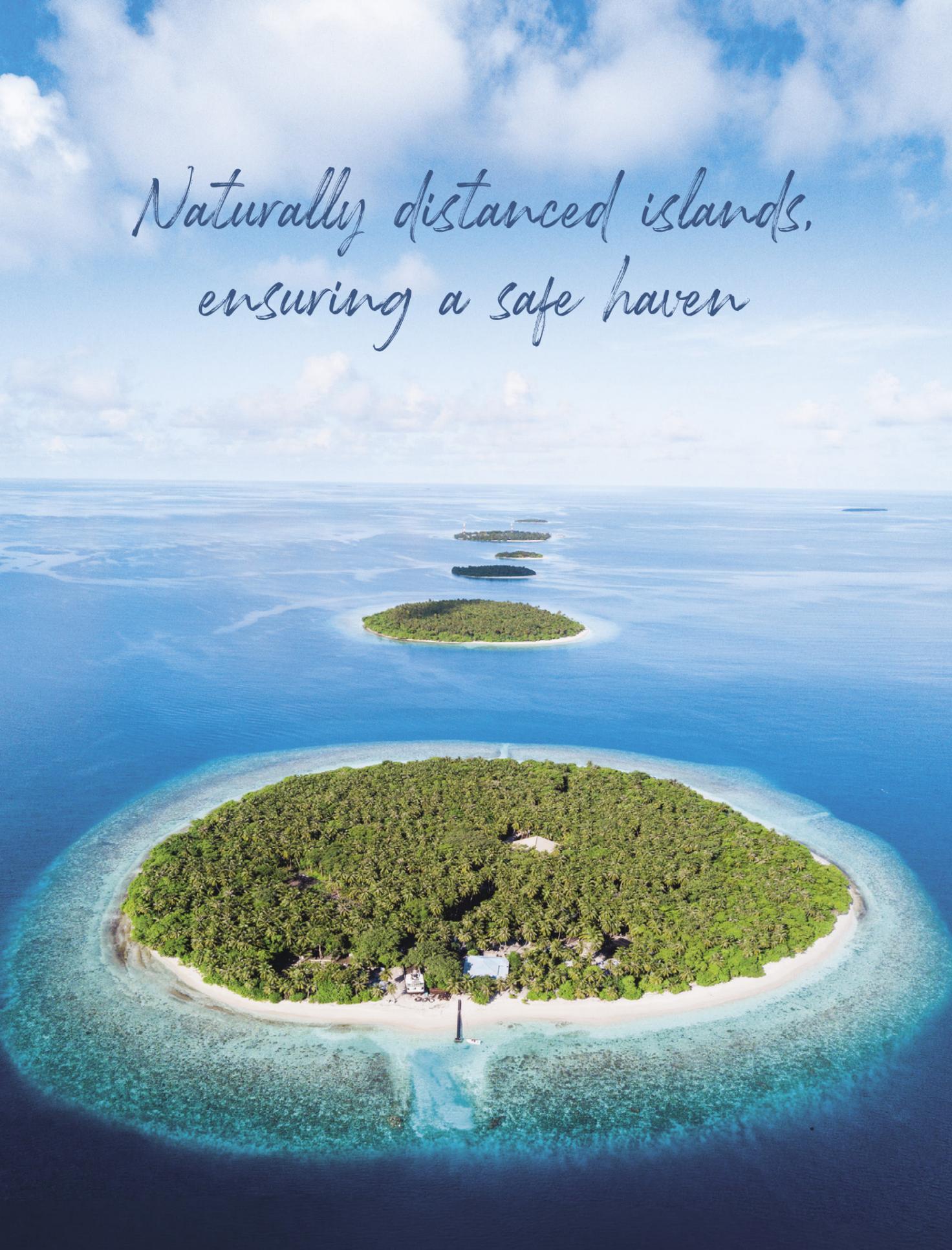
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COVID-19: TOURISM MUST BE PART OF RECOVERY PLANS



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EDITORIAL TEAM

Managing Editor
Kojo Bentum-Williams

Consulting Editor
Ben Ohene-Ayeh

Content Editor
Samuel Obeng Appah

Editor at Large
Ridwan Ibrahim Asante

Contributing Writers
Joseph Kafunda
Franck Olivier Kra
Jason Amoo
Marian Ansah
Kim Crowie

Administration/Marketing
Jennifer Nyavor
Glaou Eddie Fortune
Symphorien Kouabile
Michel Kouassi

Creative Lead
Nana Yaw Ofosuhene

Photo Credit
UNWTO
Gilbert Amankwah Ampofo
Innocent Ishimwe

The Presidency- Namibia
Image Rwanda
Joseph Kafunda
Prince Charles Affum
Ghana Tourism Authority
South African Tourism
Michel Kouadio Kouassi

Publisher

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Editorial

Dear Readers,

As we produce our final issue for the year, we look back at what has been the tourism sector's most challenging year with the coronavirus pandemic as its nemesis.

The unprecedented economic and social turmoil occasioned by the ferocious coronavirus pandemic on the travel and tourism sector cannot be overemphasised however, it has also helped the industry to build back tourism well with inclusion and diversification as its core touch points.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has never let their guard down and has proactively led the process of making tourism resilient and much prepared to travel again. From market intelligence to engaging national governments to make tourism part of the recovery and also go beyond words and let action speak.

The UNWTO's first mission to visit Africa since the start of the pandemic was very significant and ignited confidence and hope for the tourism world. Namibia's President H.E Gage geingob's commitment to tourism restart needed to be applauded during the visit.

Leadership in this time has been crucial and we cannot lose sight of Zurab Pololikashvili's led UNWTO's pulse on the tourism sector.

It is in the same light that we applaud Organizers of the Africa Tourism Leadership Forum (ATLF) for staging the continent's first in-person tourism / hybrid event. VoyagesAfriq was there and a detailed report is featured in this edition.

During the pandemic, VoyagesAfriq Travel Media introduced another information layer to our offering, the tourism news wrap and the VA Tourism Podcast. These two innovations have further offered Africa's tourism trade avenue to reach out to the market.





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Intra Africa was one of the topical subjects in the heat of the pandemic and it is imperative that we commit ourselves to ensuring that this becomes a reality thus helping in the drive towards a resilient tourism sector.

In our ministerial corner, Republic of Congo's Minister of Tourism and Environment Arlette Nounalit opens up on the support the government has instituted to help SMEs recover well.

This edition delves deep into some of the new things happening in the sector. The President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa opened Radisson's latest property which forms part of the Aerodrome city.

Asky Airlines' launch of daily direct flights to Johannesburg brings a sigh of relief for travelers especially hoping to connect seamlessly between the two regions.

New addition to this edition is the wellness tourism where Lifestyle coach Marsha Parcou looks at the prospects of wellness in Africa.

Our Cover and featured image of Namibia offers a diverse experience for travelers. Our report looks at what Africa's hidden treasures has to offer.

Even though expert's prediction of recovery is pegged at 3-4 years from now, We optimistic of a better and more inclusive tourism sector.

Let us conclude with the partnership with Business Events Media, a MICE dedicated news outlet in South Africa. As featured in this edition, they will offer MICE industry highlights to our readers.

Please have a great read and look forward to a better year in 2021.



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Correspondence:
Voyages Afric Travel Magazine
Office Location

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

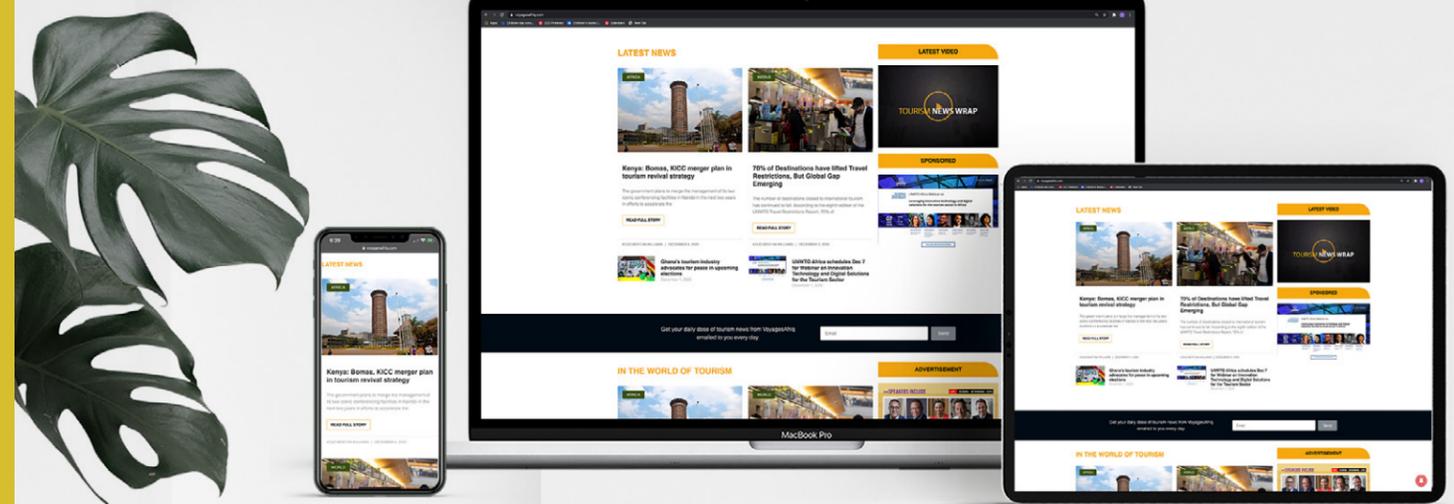
France Office

6 Impasse Robert Labarre 49300
Cholet - France
+33 753 082 350

UK Office line: +44 744 849 4933



e : info@voyagesafriq.com
w : www.voyagesafriq.com



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UNWTO IN NAMIBIA –

First Visit to African Member State since start of Pandemic



• L-R (UNWTO Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili and Dr Hage Geingob – President of Namibia in an elbow shake during their meeting in Windhoek.

The Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has paid his first visit to an African Member State since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The three-day official visit to Namibia reaffirms UNWTO's commitment to the continent and featured a series of high-level talks aimed at strengthening existing partnerships and looking to a sustainable, resilient future.

As the United Nations specialized agency for tourism, UNWTO has been actively guiding the sector's recovery and restart from this unprecedented crisis. To reflect the new challenges, it has worked directly with its African Member States, including Namibia, to adapt the 2030 Agenda for Africa: Tourism for Inclusive Growth, the landmark roadmap for the responsible growth of tourism across the continent. This official visit offered the UNWTO team a first chance to follow up on virtual meetings and advance the preparations for the restart of a sector upon which millions of African livelihoods depend.

Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili met with His Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia for talks on realizing the potential of tourism to drive sustainable development, including the youth, women and rural communities. In addition, the Secretary-General commended the head of state for his leadership, particularly with regards to the international tourism revival initiatives which include the key Health and Safety protocols drawn up by UNWTO. Alongside this, a meeting with Vice President H.E. Nangolo Mbumba allowed the UNWTO leadership a further opportunity to express support for African Member States as they use tourism to recover and grow. Additionally, the UNWTO delegation met with Honourable Pohamba Shifeta, MP and

Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism to identify ways of growing the country's tourism sector, including a greater focus on gastronomy tourism, rural and community-based tourism.

'UNWTO Committed to Africa'

"UNWTO is committed to working closely with our African Member States to realize the potential of tourism to help societies recover from the effects of the pandemic and enjoy long-term sustainable growth," Secretary-General Pololikashvili said. "The UNWTO Agenda for Africa maps our collective way forward, and am pleased to see at first-hand the commitment shown by the Government of Namibia to support tourism at this vital time and embrace the sector as a driver of positive change for all."

Highlighting UNWTO's determination to lead by example, show travel is safe and be active on the ground when conditions are right, the delegation visited several of Namibia's leading tourist sites. These included the Namib Sand Sea, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that is ready to welcome tourists again, and also historical Swakopmund and the up-and-coming Walvis Bay tourist destination. Secretary-General Pololikashvili met with Honourable Neville Andre, Governor of the Erongo Region of Namibia, to offer UNWTO's strongest support for local tourism, including businesses.

Additionally, the Namibia Tourism Expo provided an opportunity for UNWTO to engage with public and private sector leaders from across the region and sent a clear message to the world that Namibia, "The Land of the Brave" is open and ready to welcome tourists again.



• Director, Department of Africa UNWTO Elcia Grandcourt, Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili with Vice President of Namibia-H.E Nangolo Mbumba , Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, Pohamba Shifeta and Namibia's Ambassador to France and UNWTO Albertus Aochamub



• UNWTO Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili and Deputy Prime Minister of Namibia and Minister Responsible for International Relations and Cooperation Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah pose for the cameras after the former called on him

UNWTO's visit to Namibia in Pictures



The Visiting UNWTO Delegation and officials of Namibia's Tourism Ministry In a group photo at the sand dunes in Sossivlei



Director of Africa Department-UNWTO Elcia Grandcourt and Namibia's Ambassador to France and UNWTO Albertus Aochamub



The UNWTO Team at the desert



The Governor of the Erongo region Neville Andre presenting souvenir to the Secretary General



The Governor of the Erongo region Neville Andre



UNWTO Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili and CEO of Namibia Tourism Board Digu Neobe



Group picture by the delegation at the Namib sand sea



Hon Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, Pohamba Shifeta



The Secretary General pose with some Kids in Swakopund



Zurab Pololikashvili presenting a copy of the Namibian Gastronomy book to Chef



The Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, Pohamba Shifeta and Zurab Pololikashvili during the launch of the National Tourism Expo



Staff of the Sossivlei dune Lodge



Management and staff of Sossivlei dune lodge pose with the UNWTO delegation



A Visit of the UNWTO delegation to the UN House in Windhoek, Namibia



L-R: Jaime Mayaki, Deputy Director at the Africa Department UNWTO and Director of Africa Elcia Grandcourt



UNWTO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL BACKS STRONG, UNITED PLAN FOR GLOBAL TOURISM

The Executive Council of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has met in-person and virtually for its 112th session. This was the first major in-person event involving tourism and the United Nations held since the COVID-19 was declared a pandemic. The Executive Council was able to gather 170 delegates from 24 countries, who agreed to support the Tbilisi Declaration with its commitment to making international travel safe again. The Council also decided to open a new UNWTO Regional Office for the Middle East.

The Executive Council of the United Nations specialized agency ensures that the Organization fulfils its programme of work and adheres to its budget. After the session was opened by the Prime Minister of Georgia, Giorgi Gacharia, UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili outlined the accomplishments of the past 12 months. These included the provision of technical support to Members as well as tourism advocacy at the very highest political level, and furthering the sector's contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals from within the wider United Nations system.

Tourism during and beyond COVID-19

Opening the meeting, the Prime Minister of Georgia Giorgi Gacharia said: "The post-crisis era presents an opportunity for our tourism sector to showcase the uniqueness of Georgia and make the country into a leading destination, with the many social and economic benefits this will bring".

In his welcoming remarks, Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili underscored "that the restart of tourism must be properly managed and that our sector lives up to its unique potential". He added that "this crisis has made clear the important role tourism plays in every part of our lives", laying the ground to "work together to build a tourism sector that works for everyone, where sustainability and innovation are part of everything we do".

Further proving tourism's global recognition, for the first time ever the UN Secretary-General António Guterres sent a message of support to the Executive Council, remembering tourism's key role for people and planet. He said that "tourism can be a force for good in our world, playing a part in protecting

our planet in its biodiversity, and celebrating what makes us human". He further stressed that "this Executive Council is an important platform for collaboration, to explore the way forward and to support the future of tourism".

Saudi Arabia to host UNWTO Regional Office in the Middle East

The Members of the Council warmly welcomed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's offer to establish and host a UNWTO Regional Office for the Middle East. As the Kingdom works to increase tourist arrivals, through the relaxation of visa rules for visitors, the new office will provide UNWTO with a base to guide tourism's development across the whole region.

His Excellency Ahmed Al Khateeb, Minister of Tourism for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, commended UNWTO for "its leadership during this challenging period. We are honoured that Saudi Arabia has been approved as the location for the UNWTO Regional Office for the Middle East. This collaborative approach will help drive growth and build resilience across the tourism sector at national and regional levels." He announced that the Regional Office for the Middle East will be opened between the end of 2020 and 2021.

The Tbilisi Declaration for Sustainable Tourism

The Executive Council agreed to the 'Tbilisi Declaration: Actions for Sustainable Recovery'. The Declaration recognizes tourism as one of the worst-affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and identifies the global standstill as a chance to realign the sector towards a more sustainable and inclusive future.

Members also unanimously accepted Spain's proposal to host the 113th session of the Executive Council, during which the elections for the Secretary-General for 2022-2025 period will be held (19 January 2021).

To conclude the Session, UNWTO held an Investment Forum, bringing together experts from across the public and private sector to explore opportunities and challenges for investments in tourism in the post-pandemic landscape.

112th UNWTO Executive Council in Pictures



• Prime Minister of Georgia – Giorgi Gacharia



• Secretary General of UNWTO Zurab Pololikashvili



• L-R: Ministers of Tourism (Najib Balala-Kenya, UNWTO Secretary General, Al Khateeb- Saudi Arabia & Haris Theoharis - Greece



• Najib Balala - Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife Kenya & Chair of Executive Council



• The Minister of Turkey who connected to the council via zoom



• Namibia's Ambassador to France, Spain and UNWTO Albertus Aochamub



• Ministers of Tourism of Brazil, & Algeria



• Secretary to the Executive Council Elcia Grandcourt

MOROCCO REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO HOST 24TH UNWTO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Government of Morocco has avowed its commitment to hosting the world in 2021 when the tourism fraternity converge in Marrakech for the 24th World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) General Assembly.

Speaking at the recently held UNWTO 112th Executive Council session in Georgia Capital Tbilisi, Morocco's Minister of Tourism, Handicrafts, Air Transport and Social Economy Nadia Fettah Alaoui said the kingdom of Morocco is in pole position to host the world next year. She reiterated boldly measures her government has instituted to get tourism restarted in the Maghreb country.

Ms Alaoui also had a meeting with the Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili on the side lines of the executive council meeting where the UN Tourism Boss hailed the North African country for the progress made in restarting tourism.

The Kingdom of Morocco won the bid to host the 24th session General Assembly during the last assembly in St. Petersburg, Russia. The exact dates are yet to be confirmed.



UNWTO Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili and Morocco's Minister of Tourism, Handicrafts, Air Transport and Social Economy Nadia Fettah Alaoui

The General Assembly is the supreme organ of UNWTO. Its ordinary sessions are held every two years and is attended by delegates from UNWTO Full and Associate Members, as well as representatives from UNWTO Affiliate Members. It is considered the most important global meeting of senior tourism officials and high-level representatives of the private sector.

LIBERIA'S COASTAL TOURISM RECEIVE BOOST FROM UNWTO/ITC PARTNERSHIP

One of the main attractions of Liberia is its coastal tourism product. In recent years, several initiatives have been undertaken to develop and diversify Liberia's tourism product, based on the country's natural and cultural heritage. In particular, surf tourism has been identified as a niche market that has a high growth potential in the country, with the destination of Robertsport as a site with excellent geographical features for surf tourism development in West Africa.

The International Trade Centre (ITC) and UNWTO are collaborating in a project on developing the tourism sector in Liberia with a focus on surf tourism in the Robertsport destination. The project is funded with a contribution from the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF), and implemented by ITC as lead agency and UNWTO as associate partner, providing technical assistance for the project components on sustainable tourism governance and marketing and promotion.

One of the project components focuses on the marketing and promotion of surf and coastal tourism, including the development of a promotional video, a website, facebook page, and other (e-)marketing activities. In October 2020, the project will undertake a rapid assessment of the constraints

and opportunities to market tourism in Liberia with a view to providing guidance on the planning and development of promotional activities for tourism in Liberia.

Project stakeholders understand that the development and promotion of tourism in Liberia can only be successfully achieved if there are proper governance and management mechanisms in place for the sustainable development of tourism in coastal areas of Liberia. UNWTO has developed a methodology to assess the level of sustainable tourism governance and management in coastal destinations and to make recommendations on how to strengthen governance and management mechanisms. Based on this methodology, in the past years UNWTO fielded advisory and capacity building missions to nine coastal destinations in Africa, and published a report, titled "Sustainable Tourism Governance and Management in Coastal Areas of Africa", documenting the main findings and recommendations from the field missions. The methodology developed and the lessons learned from the missions will be used to help evaluate and direct sustainable tourism development in Liberia. The report will also include advice to tourism stakeholders to strengthen governance and management mechanisms for a sustainable development of tourism in the Robertsport destination.

Preparations for the project in Liberia started before the COVID-19 pandemic hit the global tourism sector. To take into account the recent developments, the project activities will also provide guidance to tourism stakeholders in Liberia on mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism sector and accelerating tourism recovery.



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Tel: +265 1 775 499
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Email: info@visitmalawi.mw

In South Africa
Malawi Consulate General
4 Dodge Street, Woodmead 2157
PO Box 3881, Rivonia 2128, Johannesburg
Tel: +27 (0)11234 8577/8 or +27 (0)11803 4919
Email: tourism@malawi.consulate.co.za

In United Kingdom
36 John Street, Holborn,
London WC1N 2AT
Tel: +44 207 421 6010
Fax: +44 207 831 9273
Email: malawihighcommission@btconnect.com

Africa Tourism Partners Honoured at 42nd UNWTO Affiliate Members Plenary Session



- UNWTO Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili presenting a plaque to Ms GSM Motlhamme, an official of the South African embassy in Madrid

South African based tourism company, Africa Tourism Partners have been recognized by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Affiliate Program for its exemplary and outstanding initiatives in promoting the UN Tourism body's affiliate program.

The event was to celebrate the efforts of deserved Affiliate Members for their valuable contributions towards the efforts of the Organization and the whole sector to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and boost the restart of tourism.

The Director of the Affiliate program Ion Vilcu said, it was important to recognize entities helping to grow the affiliate program in Africa.

He added that, "We are convinced that, in the current difficult circumstances, the annual meeting of our entities affiliated to the UNWTO provide us with an excellent opportunity to

send to the sector a clear and strong message on the crucial importance of the public-private partnership, as well as a platform to showcase projects and good practices of the Affiliate Members.

The citation accompanying the recognition read, "I am pleased to inform you that, after an exhaustive analysis of the most relevant initiatives and projects received by our Affiliate Members in the last months, carried out by the UNWTO Affiliate Members Department, we consider that Africa Tourism Partners deserves the distinction award for your continue efforts on the Promotion of the UNWTO Affiliate Membership in Africa"

The organisers further reiterated the valuable work and distinguished contribution to the tourism sector in these difficult circumstances by ATP.

South Africa's Counsellor (Political) in Madrid, Ms GSM Motlhamme said, South Africa is a dedicated member of UNWTO and my government is proud to contribute to the sterling works UNWTO does to sustain livelihoods in developing countries

"The award that is bestowed on Africa Tourism Partners is the symbol of the value that UNWTO adds to South Africa and consequently the African tourism sector. I wish to express my gratitude on behalf of the South African government, and the South African embassy in Madrid expresses appreciation to UNWTO for the outstanding recognition" Ms GSM Motlhamme added.

The 42nd UNWTO Affiliate Members Plenary Session, the most important annual meeting for affiliate membership took place on the 5-6 of November 2020, in Madrid, Spain.

UNWTO launches #MyAfrica campaign to promote unique tourism stories on the continent

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has launched the #MyAfrica campaign to share travel and tourism stories from all over the continent.

The social media campaign aims to highlight the rich diversity of African tourism through powerful storytelling. At the same time, #MyAfrica will highlight the immense potential of the tourism sector to foster the sustainable economic growth of local communities. All this will help better position the region as a competitive, attractive and safe tourism destination.

UNWTO Chief of Communications Marcelo Risi says: **"#MyAfrica was conceived to be a grassroots campaign. We are looking for inspiring first-person accounts of those working in tourism in Africa. They are the best ambassadors for the continent's huge diversity - from culture to nature, from businesses to wildlife - and why it matters to enrich the narrative about Africa, just as those of us who have been lucky to travel there have been enriched by so many experiences."**

This new initiative is a unique opportunity to promote African diversity, restore market confidence and build trust to restart tourism. The #MyAfrica campaign is part of the wider "Advocating for Brand Africa" initiative, one of the ten priorities of the UNWTO Agenda for Africa – Tourism for Inclusive Growth.

Guidelines

Participants should answer these 3 questions:



1. Why did you choose to work in tourism or in a field related to tourism?
2. How has tourism helped you grow?
3. In three words, describe Africa as a diverse tourist destination.

STEPS

1. Record a video answering those questions.
2. Write your voice! Send us the transcript of your story.
3. Look into your camera, click and share with us your favourite portrait-pic.
4. Send it to comm@unwto.org with the subject #MyAfrica, stating your name and country of residence.

Tips



- Secretary General of UNWTO Zurab Pololikashvili and Director for Africa, Elcia Grandcourt



- Jean-Michel Abimbola, Benin's Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture



GOVERNEMENT
DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE
DU BÉNIN

Benin signs \$1.2 Million deal with World Bank and UNWTO to boost tourism

The Government of the Republic of Benin through the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Arts, the World Bank and World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) have signed a 1.2 million agreement to help build the capacity of Benin's tourism sector in the area of statistics and data.

In a virtual signing ceremony to announce the agreement, the Secretary General of UNWTO Zurab Pololikashvili and the Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Jean-Michel Abimbola, were optimistic the project will help develop the tourism sector in Benin.

The project will specifically enable the West African country's tourism sector develop a system for granting licenses and classification of tourism establishments and Tourism statistics and TSA.

The agreement is a major testimony of the importance of the tourism sector in the national development agenda of Benin especially in the current context triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic which has hit hard the travel and tourism sector.

The projects will be financed through a World Bank (WB) fund and implemented by UNWTO. Activities are foreseen to be implemented both through a combination of technical assistance combined with missions on the ground as and when possible.

This project aims to support the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Arts to update the system for granting licenses and classification of tourism establishments. The Project will include the following activities:

Review and draft new texts of licenses for tourism trades and activities.

Update the hotel classification system (the classification system and the classification criteria).

Develop IT platforms to facilitate the governance (i.e. all administrative procedures) of the licensing and hotel classification processes through a single window.

EXPLORE AFRICA AGAIN IN NAMIBIA; THE LAND OF ENDLESS HORIZONS



• Travellers exploring the sand dunes of Sossusvlei

Namibia, a country in southwest Africa, is distinguished by the Namib Desert along its Atlantic Ocean coast. The country is home to diverse wildlife, including a significant cheetah population. The capital, Windhoek, and coastal town Swakopmund contain German colonial-era buildings such as Windhoek's Christuskirche, built in 1907. In the north, Etosha National Park's salt pan draws game including rhinos and giraffes.

The Southern Africa country always leaves its visitors with some panache and awe that many have always promised to come back and never to return. It's indeed Africa's best kept secret.

Namibia is one of the most fascinating and diverse countries in the world and Africa's hidden gem. The country is famous for some of the most magnificent dunes in the world at Sossusvlei and for the Etosha National Park, one of the world's greatest conservation areas.

Namibia offers space, silence and the chance to really get away from it all: it's the second least densely populated country on

the planet, with only two people per square kilometre. You can drive for hours under huge blue skies without seeing another car, surrounded by landscapes so vast and empty that at times you feel like you're on the edge of the planet. In an overpopulated world, there aren't many places left where you can immerse yourself as deeply in remote wilderness areas as in Namibia.



• The Canyon



• The Spitz Arch

Namibia is home to the second largest canyon in the world, the mighty Fish River Canyon in the south which is breathtaking and a place of discovery and wonders, the roaring of the Epupa Falls in the far north of the country as the Kunene River come down from Angola to create one of the most amazing waterfalls. Epupa Falls is one of those many waterfalls that can leave you wanting for more.

Fish River Canyon - The world's second largest canyon

The Fish River Canyon is the second largest canyon worldwide after the Grand Canyon in the USA. The Canyon forms part of the state-run Ais-Ais Richtersveld.

The Fish River Canyon is located in the south of Namibia. It is the largest canyon in Africa, as well as the second most visited tourist attraction in Namibia. It features a gigantic ravine, in total about 100 miles (160 km) long, up to 27 km wide and in places almost 550 meters deep.

The Fish River is the longest interior river in Namibia. It cuts deep into the plateau which is today dry, stony and sparsely covered with hardy drought-resistant plants. The river flows intermittently, usually flooding in late summer; the rest of the year it becomes a chain of long narrow pools. At the lower end of the Fish River Canyon, the hot springs resort of Ai-Ais is situated.

The landscape around the western side of the canyon is vast, empty and ancient. Perfect for both solitude and adventure. Explore the canyon and its surroundings by foot, safari vehicle or mountain bike and experience the drama of this 500-million-year-old geological wonder. The unique landscape has provided inspiration to many visitors who have come to Namibia as a must-place to come and visit.

Epupa Falls (also known as **Monte Negro Falls** in Angola) is a series of large waterfalls created by the Cunene River on the border of Angola and Namibia, in the Kaokoland area of the Kunene Region. The river is about 0.5 kilometres (1,600 ft) wide in this area and drops in a series of waterfalls across a length of 1.5 kilometres (0.93 mi), with the greatest single drop being 37 metres (121 ft) in height.

One can reach Epupa Falls from Opuwo via a normal road or a four-wheel drive vehicle which is recommended from Swartbooi drift, Epupa Falls is Namibia's major attraction in the regions because of the largely unspoiled environment, with fig trees, baobabs, Makalani palms, and colored rock walls framing the falls.

The **Himba** (singular: **OmuHimba**, plural: **OvaHimba**) are indigenous people with an estimated population of about 50,000 living in northern Namibia, in the Kunene





• Adapted elephants in the desert



Region (formerly Kaokoland) and on the other side of the Kunene River in southern Angola. There are also a few groups left of the **OvaTwa**, who are also OvaHimba, but are hunter-gatherers. However, the OvaHimba do not like to be associated with OvaTwa. Culturally distinguishable from the Herero people, the OvaHimba are a semi-nomadic, pastoralist people and speak OtjiHimba, a variety of Herero, which belongs to the Bantu family within Niger-Congo. The OvaHimba are semi-nomadic as they have base homesteads where crops are cultivated, but may have to move within the year depending on rainfall and where there is access to water.

The OvaHimba are considered the last (semi-) nomadic people of Namibia.

Desert

Desert dwelling adapted elephants are not a distinct species of elephant but are African bush elephants that have made their homes in the Namib and Sahara deserts in Africa. It was

believed at one time that they were a sub species of the African bush elephant, but this is no longer thought to be the case

The Kunene Region in the northwest of Namibia is an area of mostly sandy desert, rocky mountains and stony plains which covers about 115,154 square kilometres (44,461 sq mi). Elephants have traditionally lived in this area and in the earlier part of the 20th century there were about 3,000 in the Kunene Region.

In the Hoanib River area male elephants have tusks, but about a third of the female elephants there are tuskless. Adult bull desert elephants are usually solitary and roam over large areas. One was recorded as travelling between the Skeleton Coast National Park and the Etosha National Park in a few months. Other bulls have occasionally moved into the area from better-watered regions to the east.

There lies in Namibia, a world of wonders and great adventure for anyone who is seeking to explore Africa for the first time or rediscover the continent as the world continues to battle Coronavirus.



• A display of the Himba Culture

3rd Hybrid Africa Tourism Leadership Awards ends successfully in Kigali

TOURISM LEADERSHIP FORUM 2020
 LEADERSHIP FORUM
 19-21 October 2020 | Kigali, Rwanda

Shaping a better future for intra-Africa travel together through a shared vision



• Panelists on the First Day of ATLF

The 3rd and 2020 Africa Tourism Leadership Forum (ATLF) has ended successfully in Rwandan Capital, Kigali. The ATLF which was originally scheduled to take place in July this year had to be postponed as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

The event was the first major African tourism event to be held in person and virtual (hybrid). It assembled over 150 physical delegates, 500 virtual delegates and 60 renowned speakers from over 40 countries including the UNWTO Secretary-General.

This year's forum was held under the theme "Shaping a better future for Intra Africa travel together through a shared vision". Topics discussed at the conference included the opportunities that the coronavirus pandemic presents.

The CEO of the Rwanda Development Board, Clare Akamanzi was the guest of honour and officially opened the Forum. She praised the organizers of ATLF for the bold initiative to start events and conferences in a safe and responsible way.

"This is the time for us to devise new initiatives to rebuild market confidence that might have been eroded because of the effects of covid-19. Tourism has been and will continue to be a powerful vehicle for economic growth all over the world." She said.

"Here in Rwanda, tourism has been the number one foreign

exchange earner and has grown steadily in the last ten years at an average of 10% in 2019 before covid-19 we recorded 17%."

Delivering his speech at the Forum through a video message, the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization Zurab Pololikashvili said that the COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the importance of leadership and the way forward. "Both at government and private sector level we need to make difficult decisions and lead by example to restore confidence in travel and restart tourism in a safe and responsible way", he stressed. The UN Tourism Boss underscored the need for high-



• Clare Akamanzi, CEO of the Rwanda Development Board



• Makeda Mahedeo, Anchor of CNBC and MC for the event

level cooperation to help restart tourism and recover from the impact of tourism and emphasized that ATLF 2020 is a good example of leadership in this regard.

The CEO of Africa Tourism Partners, Kwakye Donkor said “We are very proud to be hosting an all-inclusive and the first biggest hybrid tourism event in Africa in this changed-world. We are therefore express our appreciation to the Government of Rwanda, Mastercard Foundation and partners, our strategic partners, renowned speakers and delegates from across the globe for making this first hybrid forum a great success”.

Awards

The prestigious Africa Tourism Leadership Awards (ATLA) took place on the margins of the Forum.

The awards recognize and reward individuals, businesses and institutions that are changing the Africa travel and tourism narrative through their work. 25 nominees were shortlisted for nine (9) categories out of 110 nominations. These include Leading in Progressive Policies, Outstanding Entrepreneurship, Women in Leadership, Most Innovative Business Tourism Destination and Outstanding Accommodation Facility/Group.

The rest are Outstanding Tourism Transportation, Outstanding Tourism Media and Marketing, Championing Sustainability and Destination Africa –Lifetime Award. Full list of Winners are displayed below;

1. Leading in Progressive Tourism Policy Award

- Winner – Rwanda Development Board
- Kenya Tourism Board – 1st Runner-up

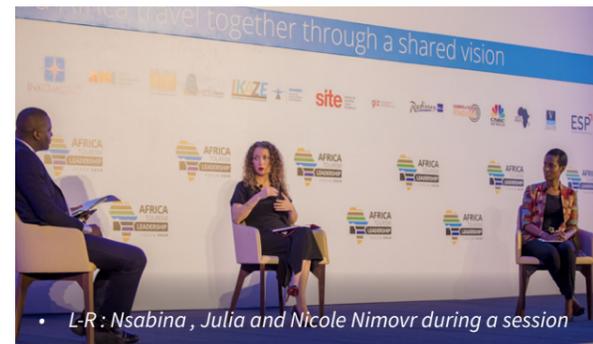


• A socially distanced Group family Photo after the event

- Egypt – 2nd Runner-up
- 2. Outstanding Entrepreneurship Award**
- Flawless Events, Ethiopia -Winner
 - Anthea Rossouw, South Africa – 1st Runner-up
 - Lateranga BnB, South Africa – 2nd Runner-up
- 3. Women in Tourism Leadership Award**
- Anthea Rossouw, Founder of Dreamcatcher, South Africa- Winner
 - Mrs. Amanda Kotze-Nhlapo, Chief, National Convention Bure South African Tourism – 1st Runner-up
 - Stella Fubara-Obinwa, Director Africa, DTCM Dubai – 2nd Runner-up

4. Most Innovative Business Tourism Destination Award

- Cape Town and Western Cape – winner
- Rwanda – 1st Runner-up

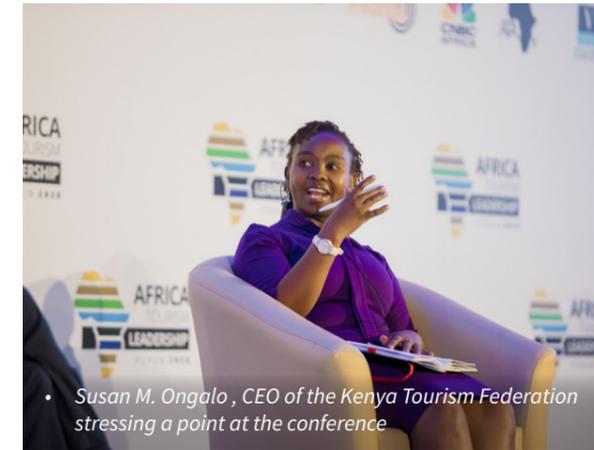


• L-R: Nsabina, Julia and Nicole Nimovr during a session

- Kigali City – 2nd Runner-up
- 5. Outstanding Accommodation Facility/Group Award**
- SABI Private Game Reserve – South Africa – Winner
 - Six Senses Zil Pasyon, Felicite, Seychelles – 1st Runner-up
 - Bisate Lodge, Rwanda – 2nd Runner-up
- 6. Outstanding Tourism Transportation Award**
- Ethiopian Airlines – Winner
 - Rwandair – 1st Runner – up



• Kwakye Donkor, CEO of Africa Tourism Partners and Convener of ATLF



• Susan M. Ongalo, CEO of the Kenya Tourism Federation stressing a point at the conference

- TransMagnific, Eswatini – 2nd Runner-up
- 7. Outstanding Tourism Media and Marketing Award**
- VoyagesAfric, Ghana – Winner
 - Umurage Wacu Group, Rwanda – 1st Runner-up
 - John Oluwatosin Akinribido, Nigeria – 2nd Runner-up

8. Championing Sustainability Award

- Anthea Rossouw, South Africa – Winner
- Africa Sustainable Tourism Care Foundation, Uganda – 1st Runner-up
- Local Female Guides Uganda – 2nd Runner-up

9. Destination Africa –Lifetime Award

- H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo – President of Ghana



• Team IKAZO the Conference, Organizer's for the event

We'll focus on Homegrown Events to revive MICE Industry in Rwanda – RCB CEO

The MICE industry is reeling from the devastating effect of the Coronavirus pandemic. Major events in Africa have either been cancelled or postponed leaving the once promising industry very vulnerable. And with the second wave of the pandemic in Europe and feared to rear its head in Africa any time soon, the MICE sector might take a while before it bounces back to profitable ways.

But for the CEO of the Rwanda Convention Bureau (RCB), it is important that irrespective of the many restrictions that hinder large physical gatherings, the event's sector stays afloat. Taking her turn on the VA Tourism Podcast, Nelly Mukazayire said RCB's strategy is to redirect attention to homegrown events. “We see that now, there is a need to even come up with what we call homegrown events. We've seen so much impact of domestic tourism and domestic conferences which has now opened our eyes in terms of saying that how can we reinvent or come up with events that speak to our context or reality; not only Rwanda but also Africa,” she said.

Mukazayire added that while her outfit would continue to promote Rwanda as a preferred MICE destination, they would adopt innovative ways of attracting events that maximize the best results for delegates in the current era.

She averred: “We'll keep our Convention strategy of branding the destination because the destination has a message of attraction and MICE is more of delegates, gatherings, conferences; people need to come to your destination. So the first one is still pushing and branding the country but not only as a destination with facilities, tourism and all but also as a hub for innovation. So the end thinking of the delegates you bring to the destination is about what you are going to give them and how is that beneficial. Because now people are going to think twice before they travel.”



• Nelly Mukazayire- CEO, Rwanda Convention Bureau

Beyond this however, Mukazayire said, RCB will team up with other convention bureaus on the continent to bid for events while keeping their competitive urge.

“...and it is also a strategy we have now of working together with other Convention Bureaus and other partners especially in Africa to brand the whole continent and the different products you can get on the continent so that we attract more and more people to come. So we are going to focus on being competitive of course, but how do we remain competitive and also collaborative with others because we've seen that also to be a strength,” she stated.

Kigali is currently ranked the second most popular destination in Africa for hosting international conferences and events by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA).

The city hosted the recent Africa Tourism Leadership and Awards, a first-of-its kind hybrid event that RCB is adopting in order to ensure their relevance in the MICE industry as Coronavirus ravages on.



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WTM Africa will go ahead from 07-09 April 2021 in the format of a hybrid event, delivering a significant ROI for exhibitors and providing a much-needed platform for live and virtual connection between tourism industry stakeholders engaged in bringing business to Africa, and Africa to the world.

Carol Weaving, MD Reed Exhibitions Africa, unpacked the decision taken following a robust study amongst exhibitors and buyers which indicated strong support for holding a live event in April 2021. This was followed by a virtual round table discussion with key stakeholders earlier today.

"We are delighted to be able to inform our industry partners that we will be going ahead with WTM Africa as a hybrid event, incorporating the best characteristics of a live and virtual showcase of Africa.

"Our sentiment survey revealed that 88% of buyers confirmed they wanted to attend WTM Africa in 2021 and within this, a further 96% confirmed they would travel provided the regulations allowed them to do so. I'm pleased to say our king buyers have also confirmed their attendance, so it's full steam ahead as far we are concerned," says Weaving.

During the virtual discussion, the Reed Exhibitions South Africa team provided two scenarios for WTM Africa, both relevant to a hosting date of 07-09 April 2021.

Plan A will see meetings take place over three days, face-

to-face, at the Cape Town Convention Centre (CTICC), with a fourth day dedicated to virtual meetings, explains Megan Oberholzer, Portfolio Director – Travel Tourism & Sports for Reed Exhibitions South Africa.

"With an extra virtual event day, we will cater for any international buyers who may not be able to attend the physical element of the show. The benefit to buyers and exhibitors is a greater ROI of connecting exhibitors and additional international buyers that would not have been able to attend the live event, meaning that even more meetings will be set to take place" says Oberholzer.

In the event of a COVID resurgence, the Reed Exhibitions Africa team presented a Plan B which will see the event go fully virtual over three days on the same dates, with an adjusted offer of various tailor-made event packages for exhibitors.

Thorough research and preparation has been made to ensure that the live/hybrid event adheres to all stringent safety protocols and regulations. The venue will be able to accommodate 5000 visitors per day in order to allow the necessary physical distancing.

"The live/hybrid WTM Africa will be the first of its kind in Africa. We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back to the show after a tough year. The time is ripe for us to make travel happen together and WTM Africa is just the platform to reignite it," Oberholzer concludes.

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South Africa's Tourism Minister appoints Expert Panel to help review Tourism Policies

The Minister of Tourism, Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane, has appointed a panel of experts to help review the current tourism policies and develop a new policy direction for the tourism sector.

The seven-member Advisory Panel, comprising of experts with diverse knowledge in the sector and the economy, will review all existing policies, provide guidance to the Minister over a twelve-month period, with a view to developing a new comprehensive and overarching tourism policy framework to guide the sector to new heights.

As part of its work, the panel will bring into sharp focus transformation, travel facilitation and regulatory barriers, tourism safety, quality assurance, tourist guiding, tour operators and travel agencies, technological development, product or infrastructure development and conference bidding and support. Other focus areas include knowledge management, best practices, responsible tourism and sustainable tourism.

"The panel will ensure alignment between proposed policy and government plans and through this policy review, we aim to reposition the tourism sector towards a new trajectory by unlocking its full potential. It is my firm belief that this crucial work will go a long way in increasing our sector's contribution to our economy, which finds itself at its weakest since the advent of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic" said Minister Kubayi-Ngubane.

A meeting with the panel was convened recently at which all of the members expressed gratitude and committed to be the anchor in our bid as a government to close the glaring policy gap. The 1996 Tourism White Paper on the development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa, for example, remains the overarching policy framework but it was updated over two decades ago (24 years ago) – this requires some reflection.

Minister Kubayi-Ngubane added: "I'm looking forward to working with the panel members who will help me steer the ship to the right direction. The tourism sector has an intricate value chain which is continuously impacted by global policy developments, necessitating a comprehensive review of tourism policy in South Africa. Most notably, global and local trends have emerged in the past two decades and we need cutting-edge knowledge to thrive and respond adequately to technological development to avoid becoming obsolete."

The Advisory Panel set to embark on this momentous task is comprised of the following members: Dr Bongani Ngqulunga- Advisory Panel Chair,

Ms. Busisiwe Radebe, Mr. Michael Tollman, Ms. Mmatsatsi Ramawela

Mr. Sylvester Chauke, Adv. Mojankunyane Gumbi and Prof Dianne Abrahams



• South Africa's Tourism Minister, Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane

Support for Tourism SMEs part of larger recovery strategy for Republic of Congo - Tourism Minister



• Tourism and Environment Minister of Republic of Congo, Arlette Soudan-Nonault

For Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in tourism the advent of Coronavirus has dealt a big blow to their businesses. Those who haven't already folded up are merely hanging on by the thread.

Taking her turn on the VA Tourism Podcast, Republic of Congo's Tourism and Environment Minister, Arlette Soudan-Nonault said that they have mapped a strategy that takes into cognizance the plight of their local tourism SMEs to provide relief to them.

"Within the framework of the SMEs, we have set up a plan to revive the tourism sector which is in the process of being validated, we are also looking for a lot of financing and we have a place of choice which is reserved for the management of financing for these small and medium enterprises," she said

Tourism, she mentioned is a priority sector for the diversification of the Republic of Congo's economy. The SMEs are therefore beneficiaries of what is called a Business Development and Competitiveness Support Project - a sizeable support financed by the World Bank. It was launched in the course of 2020 and sets up a competition with a business plan to encourage the growth of SMEs in the sector. This requires tourism industry players with projects to bid for support. This project therefore targets Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and provide assistance for the construction, animation and promotion of tourism in Congo.

Soudan-Nonault averred that "Within my ministry, our study and planning departments are therefore in charge of guiding the companies of the tourist sector to have access to funds according to the specifications laid down. The government therefore provides institutional and regulatory support tools, a guarantee and support in terms of research for financing."

The Minister revealed that they would additionally set up a specific instrument for the tourism sector with the aim of creating a guarantee fund to support the entire chain of

companies in the sector.

Besides leading the country's tourism sector, Soudan-Nonault serves as the Technical Coordinator of the Congo Basin Climate Commission with President Sassou Nguesso as its head. The Mother of four and trained journalist said that with her very demanding portfolios she still manages to balance her work schedules with family life. "At the centre of it all is a good family balance. I have been married for more than 20 years with 4 wonderful daughters and the two eldest are already in active life. This little beautiful world around me with the extended family provides balance," she reiterated.

The Minister also cited her employees as a big source of inspiration in carrying out her duties.

She said, "So I made a bet to work with a young team, the youngest of which is 21 years old and occupies a very sensitive position. It's not age that determines competence but rather the quality of work. I therefore base my work on merit. It took me four and a half years in government to set up a dynamic team under my supervision.

I am the twenty-fourth Minister of Tourism and until now there was no regulatory framework in the tourism industry. The perpetual challenges inspired by the president's vision and expectations give us this positive enthusiasm to go further and innovate."

Soudan-Nonault commended Zurab Pololikashvili, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Secretary General for his particular interest in Africa's tourism and for showing leadership since the inception of the Coronavirus pandemic.

"He is doing a great job and due to his determination, he is taking a new impetus that supports African countries. Mr. Pololikashvili has an excellent programme for Africa which we have adopted and my wish is that this programme can become a reality as soon as possible," she posited.

BUSINESS EVENTS SNAPSHOT

The latest news, movements and insights from Africa's meetings, conferencing, exhibitions, incentives and association sectors. Brought to you by Event Africa.



Cape Town is Open for Business

With their innovative hybrid conferencing and meeting facilities, world-class attractions and strict health measures in place, Cape Town and the Western Cape are ready to welcome business travellers back. In 2019, the Western Cape hosted 57 international association meetings with approximately 21,000 delegates and an average of 3,6 days per event with international congresses, and during the 2019 fiscal year, the Cape Town and Western Cape Convention Bureau secured bids with an estimated economic impact of R1 billion for the province.

Venues have welcomed the COVID-19 protocols and have set themselves up with the technology to host hybrid events. World Class venues like the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) are already taking bookings and have secured the 2020 AfricaCom and AfricaTech in November, followed by the World Travel Market Africa in April 2021.

Spier Launches Hybrid Conferencing

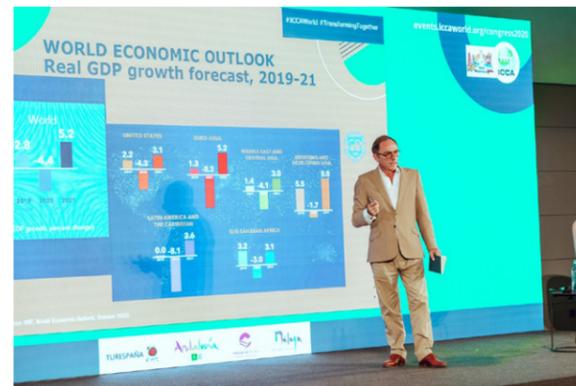
In July, Spier Wine Farm launched its hybrid and virtual conferencing offerings with a glittering evening enjoyed both in-person and by members of the events sector in the comfort of their homes. Attendees were treated to a smorgasbord of treats showcasing the length and breadth of the virtual conferencing experience. These included live music streamed from Spier, a virtual Segway tour, a tutorial by Chef PJ Vadas, and a virtual chocolate and wine tasting where each launch attendee received a box of Spier's new canned Sauvignon Blanc and Merlot with artisanal chocolates.

"Since the start of the pandemic we immediately switched to innovation mode and has been able to re-invent some parts of our business to continue serving customers," says Spier GM, Joep Schoof. "I believe this world-class virtual offering can meet the need for people to connect."

Spier has assembled a team of experienced event producers and technical experts and uses top-notch software to ensure full, seamless support for every aspect of the event. This includes ticketing and registration, email campaigns, and audience participation and analytics. For those attending in person, venues are deep cleaned after each event and used pens and notepads are recycled; sanitising wipes are available for delegates to use and all food and beverage items are individually plated and served instead of traditional buffets. To book your event at this charming conference venue in the Cape Winelands, visit www.spier.co.za.

59th ICCA Congress A Huge Success

The 59th ICCA Congress - a unique global hybrid experience - showcased what the future of meetings might look like. The "hub and spoke hybrid" concept was first created in March 2020 but as a never-been-done-before event, support and collaboration was needed to bring the new and innovative ideas to life. The event saw over 1500 attendees, had over 100 hours of live and on-demand content available, and included 220 speakers, 100 sessions and 6 weeks of programming. Over 200 associations tuned in from 8 regional hubs in 71 countries globally. Cape Town and Western Cape Convention Bureau and South Africa National Convention Bureau were hosts of the African chapter of the event.



Industry Unites for Restart Expo

The exhibitions and events industry in South Africa united in support of the Restart Expo, an event that showcased how exhibitions and events can be hosted safely with all the required COVID-19 health and safety protocols in place. It took place at the Johannesburg Expo Centre in Nasrec, Johannesburg, from 25-26 November 2020.

In addition to the exhibitor stands, there was a seminar theatre, a meeting area and a business lounge on the exhibition floor. The Restart Expo had the endorsement of the Association of African Exhibition Organisers (AAXO), the SA Events Council and its members, UFI - the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry and exhibition industry suppliers.

"The objective of the Restart Expo is to create confidence that an event of this nature can safely take place and that the protocols can be applied to and rolled out across exhibitions, conferences and events," said Gary Corin, Managing Director of Specialised Exhibitions, a division of the Montgomery Group. More on www.restartexpo.co.za.



Africa Brand Summit Concludes on a High

One of the first conferences to take place as the industry reopens was the Africa Brand Summit 2020, which took place on 6-8 October at the Vineyard Hotel and Spa in Cape Town. A range of topics interrogated Africa's brand potential, from the food value chain and social justice to crisis communications, the media's role in shaping perceptions of Africa, the state of African cities, African business, politics and education. 50 delegates attended the hybrid summit in person, while over 900 registered to attend virtually. To read the Africa Brand Summit 2020 Report, visit www.t.ly/1LKc.



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Kenya Tourism Board Launches Kenya Coast Circuit Marketing Brand

The Kenya Tourism Board has unveiled a new 'Magical Kenya' sub-brand targeting the Coast region. The new brand has seven unique sub-brands of its own themed around different areas at the Coast; including Mombasa, Malindi, Lamu, Tana River, Diani, Watamu and Tsavo.

The introduction of the new brands was seen as a boost to the Coast economy which relies largely on tourism. "The differentiation of the tourism circuits is part of our broad strategy to promote Kenya's diverse tourism industry. I commend the private sector especially for playing a great role in this journey" Said Mr. Boinett

He commended all the stakeholders for their commitment to enhancing the visitor experience in the region, especially during the COVID-19 period.

The sleek marketing campaign includes colorful logos modeled around the famous 'Magical Kenya' logo.

Kenya Tourism Board CEO, Dr Betty Radier said the rebrand is key to showcase the diversity of Kenya's tourism offering to the discerning traveler.

"We are here today to revamp and create awareness of the Kenyan Coast and its various brands that make it unique and diverse. This will be crucial in our efforts to market the destination by repositioning the Kenyan Coast as a destination of choice," she said.

Group Managing Director, Pride Group and Kenya Coast Working group chair Hasnain Noorani said the launch would be instrumental in repositioning the coast while also giving a good platform to the trade partners to market their products and offerings at the coast.

Going forward, the rebrands will now market their destination, showcasing their product offerings using all media to ensure that the destinations remain top of mind once travel resumes fully.



• UNWTO Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili in a meeting with Tunisian President Kais Saied

Tunisia's Tourism Minister reveals short term measures to protect sector



• Habib Ammar, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister

President of the Tunisian Hotel Trade Federation Dorra Miled said the hotel industry, which is the least protected sector of the Tunisian economy, was seriously hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

An 85% decrease in the number of European tourists was reported by late October along with an 80% drop in the number of bednights.

Miled called for the implementation of measures recently announced by the government.

The goal is to create a space for meeting and sharing between the various actors of the tourism sector.

It is geared towards public and private hotel trade stakeholders as well as teachers, researchers and students in a bid to foster dialogue and initiate a process of reflection that will help boost the Tunisian tourism sector.

..... UNWTO Secretary General confers with Tunisia Leader

The Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization Zurab Pololikashvili on Thursday 26th November conferred with the President of Tunisia H.E Kais Saied in Carthage, Tunisia.

Mr. Pololikashvili as part of his support to UNWTO member states in the restart of tourism has been making in-person visits to member countries.

In a meeting with the President, the UN Tourism Chief reechoed tourism's role in reinforcing broader recovery efforts. He assured the country of UNWTO's full support as it advances towards the responsible and sustainable restart of tourism.

President Kais Saied on his part emphasized the bilateral cooperation with UNWTO and the support for the tourism sector.

The UN Tourism Chief who visited Tunisia from November 24 to 27, 2020 also called on the prime minister of the country Hichem Mechichi and stressed the important and vital role this sector can play in the Tunisian economy, pointing out that the country must maintain its position as one of the best tourist destinations in the world.

As the Coronavirus pandemic continues to wreck the tourism sector, Tunisia's Minister of Tourism and Handicrafts Habib Ammar has revealed initiatives undertaken by the government to protect the tourism sector from total collapse.

"Currently, our priority is to work in the short term to protect the tourism sector from collapsing and preserve the highest possible number of tourism businesses," said Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Habib Ammar.

The tourism sector, a pillar of the Tunisian economy, endured serious damage due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Speaking at a conference on tourism in the era of the new normal: Transformation or Disruption" held Wednesday 25th November as part of the 4th Tunisia Hospitality Symposium, the Minister said the number of tourists up to November 10, dropped 78%.

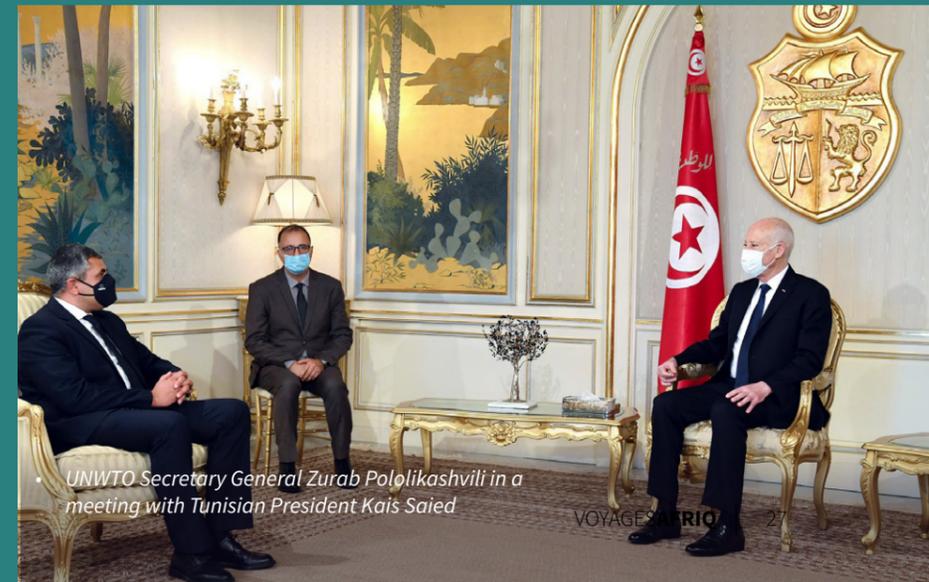
Tourist revenues and the number of bed nights fell 62% and 80%, respectively, Ammar added.

The tourism industry was hard hit in the first wave of the pandemic with peak season (July to September) profits plunging 71%.

Similarly, the number of tourists and bednights fell 88% and 83%, respectively.

"The tourism sector can resume activity as of next summer if the COVID-19 vaccine is made available in Q1 of 2021," the minister said.

The World Tourism Organisation forecasts tourism rebound within 2 to 4 years.



UNWTO Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili in a meeting with Tunisian President Kais Saied

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Seychelles names Seasoned Diplomat as new Minister of Tourism and Foreign Affairs



• The Minister of Tourism and Foreign Affairs, Sylvestre Radegonde being sworn into office

President of Seychelles, Wavel Ramkalawan has appointed seasoned diplomat Ambassador Sylvestre Radegonde as the country's new Minister responsible for foreign affairs and tourism.

Radegonde is a career diplomat who until recently was the chef de mission in France with concurrent accreditations to Monaco and Russia. He has likewise served in the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Belgium and Luxembourg. He also had stint with the Seychelles Tourism Board as its CEO

The Minister was sworn into office by President Ramkalawan on the morning of Monday, 16 November 2020 at the State House in Victoria. Speaking to the press after the ceremony, Minister Radegonde asaid he was not expecting to be appointed as a Minister and that he is nonetheless prepared to impart his knowledge and experience for the benefit of the country.

Radegonde started his diplomatic career in 1976. He served as High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Malaysia and Ambassador to Belgium. In 2005, Radegonde joined the office of President, and became CEO of the Tourist Office. In 2007, he started to work for the DHL Clinical Trials Logistics.

In 2017, Radegonde was appointed Ambassador to France. In 2018, he was also appointed as non-resident Ambassador to Monaco, and in 2019 appointed non-resident Ambassador to Russia as well.

With his latest appointment, Radegonde becomes the first Minster to hold this portfolio following the mergence of foreign affairs and tourism into one ministry.



• Looking on as the Minister took his oath of office is the President of Seychelles H.E Wavel Ramkalawan

VoyagesAfriq bags two awards at Ghana's biggest tourism awards' night

VoyagesAfriq (VA) was the recipient of the "Tourism Oriented Media of the Year (Online)" at Ghana's 2019 National Tourism Awards which took place on Friday, 6 November, 2020 at the National Theatre in Accra. This makes it two in a row for VA as it took the award last year.

The media outlet's Content Editor and Writer, Samuel Obeng Appah also notched up the coveted "Tourism Writer of the Year" award.

The latest accolade comes on the heels of the Most Outstanding Tourism Media and Marketing in Africa award which VA won at the 2020 Africa Tourism Leadership Forum and Awards last October in Rwanda.

A citation accompanying the award and presented by the Ghana Tourism Authority, organisers of the event praised VA's zeal and passion for reporting on tourism, educating, informing and marketing tourism and related activities and products through its various media.

"Your reportage on tourism goes beyond the boundaries and shores of Ghana, and this has marketed Ghana both domestically and internationally as a preferred tourist destination," part of the citation read.

It also lauded VA for playing an instrumental role in "promulgating the Year of Return campaign to its global audience through the flagship VoyagesAfriq Travel Magazine and their numerous digital platforms."

Samuel Obeng Appah was applauded for his writing style which "shows your deep insights and understanding of our domestic tourism landscape which is brought to bear in your stories."



• VA Content Editor Samuel Obeng Appah and Administrative Executive Jennifer Nyavor pose with the award

"Your articles stirred up conversations amongst practitioners and readers that helped change mindsets and affect policy directives," his citation mentioned.

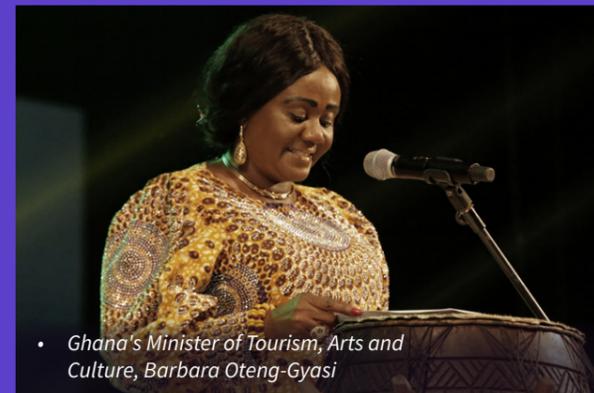
In consistent with promoting Ghana and Africa's tourism to their citizens, VoyagesAfriq continues to churn out innovative products in disseminating information and remaining relevant to the wider tourism agenda.

In the wake of the global Coronavirus pandemic, VoyagesAfriq birthed the "VA Tourism Podcast" and the "Tourism News Wrap" to engage stakeholders on pertinent industry conversations and keep audience informed on key happenings in the sector.



• VA Publisher and Managing Editor Kojo Bentum-Williams receiving the Outstanding Africa Tourism Media and Marketing Award from the CEO of Africa Tourism Partners, Kwakye Donkor

Tourism's resilience celebrated at Ghana's 2019 National Tourism Awards



• Ghana's Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Barbara Oteng-Gyasi

For the 16th time Ghana's tourism and industry players converged to reward and celebrate excellence at the 2019 National Tourism awards at the country's National Theatre in Accra last Friday, November 6th 2020.

The onset of Covid-19 had forced the postponement of the event from March this year.

CEO of the Ghana Tourism Authority, Akwasi Agyeman in his address encouraged the tourism fraternity to look forward to better days ahead as businesses begin to pick up from the ravages of the Coronavirus pandemic. He said with an increase of 18% tourism arrivals in 2019 as a result of the Year of Return campaign, the numbers had been expected to increase this year with the Beyond the Return.

"Although we are not out of the Covid-19 woods yet, latest tourism figures in hotel occupancy, arrivals and visits to tourist sites give us hope that the sector may rebound earlier than expected.

"Tonight we celebrate the reliance of tourism and if we pull together as one industry, we will survive and get our industry back," he said.

The awards' ceremony was interspersed with breathtaking performances from the National Dance Company and the undisputed King of stage performance, Samini who gave several renditions of his popular hit songs. Comedian Foster Romanus also ensured that audience had a great laugh with his stand-up act.

Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Barbara Oteng-Gyasi revealed that Ghana's tourism recorded its highest revenue yet with \$3.312 billion last year with about 1.13 million international arrivals.

She said although the quest to build on these gains had been

hampered by Covid-19, the Ministry and its agencies will seek to identify business models that aim at revitalizing the tourism and hospitality sector to boost post Covid-19.

Oteng-Gyasi urged businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector to keep enhancing the delivery of quality services to customers and tourists at all points of contact to ensure repeat visit. "The key to the success of every business depends on the human resource, therefore I urge business operators to empower their employees and motivate them to always put in their best.



"Government recognizes the challenge regarding retaining staff in these Covid-19 times but is committed to supporting industry players with innovative financing schemes to protect jobs and livelihoods in the sector," she stated.

Highlight of the awards this year included some winners retaining their lead from last year's. They included, VoyagesAfriq as Tourism Oriented Media (Online), Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast City as 5-Star Hotel of the Year, Atlas Rent-A-Car as Car Rental of the Year and many others.



Durban towards a revived Tourism Economy

Durban Tourism has embarked on an aggressive economic recovery drive which puts local economy at the center of its plans for beneficiaries, especially as it goes into the summer campaign. The Mayor Mxolisi Kaunda says Durban and KwaZulu-Natal are ready to welcome the world back to Durban in their ReDiscover Durban summer campaign, aptly themed ‘creating new memories...’

The world over has been hit by the Covid 19 pandemic which affected tourism revenue, a key economic development driver, and Durban and KwaZulu-Natal are no exception.

In response to this, the City rolled out an ambitious marketing campaign, anchored on the economic recovery plan, which is aimed at positioning Durban as the ultimate holiday destination in summer next year.

The Mayor of eThekweni Municipality, Cllr Mxolisi Kaunda said, “this global pandemic has affected the global community in more ways than one and therefore our approach to rebuild the economy must be holistic and accommodate financial, emotional and social distress.

“The eThekweni Economic Recovery Plan estimates that the city lost out on 165,000 Easter holiday visitors; R300-million in direct spending and R600-million less contributed to the national gross domestic product (GDP). This has affected turnovers for the local hotels and restaurants. Most of our entities continue to lose revenue and therefore our priority

now is to retain the jobs that are at risk,” Kaunda added.

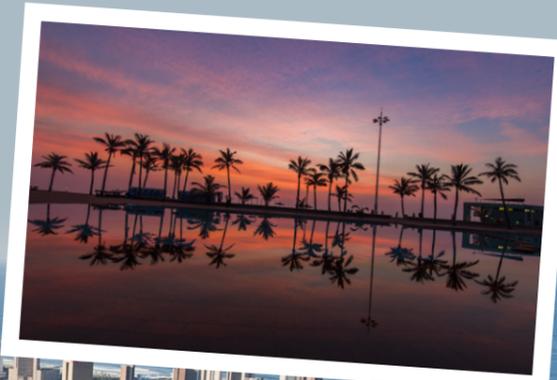
Kaunda went on to explain that as part of the strategies to rebuilding the industry, the City will also invest another R2.25-million into community tourism organisations to market local areas in order to create new tourism packages relevant to the current challenges the sector faces.

Durban Tourism has noted that tourism spending has been gradually growing as international travel opens. However, with Europe experiencing a second wave of covid-19, this could hamper the plans to woo international travelers.

The primary focus is to minimize the damage brought by COVID-19 to the sector, this is to be achieved by capitalizing on the low-hanging fruits, due to their immediate and direct impact. Most importantly, the objective is to encourage stakeholders to comply with national safety regulations to protect themselves and the travellers.

Furthermore, the City has put all measures in place to ensure that our visitors will have a memorable time when they visit Durban.

Some of the measures that the City has put in place to help local businesses to recover include rates rebates, the prioritization of SMMEs in procurement and increased CTO funding.



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African Regent Hotel has consolidated its lead in the hospitality industry by winning

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- The CIMG Hospitality of the Years, 2009, 2013, & 2014
- A top 20 hotel in West Africa – Africa Travel Quarterly

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Simply 'Afropolitan'

Ethiopian is 'Customer Choice Airline of The Year'



Area Manager of Ethiopian Airlines Yemesrach Alemayehu (2nd) receiving the award with her team

“The award will encourage all of us at Ethiopian Airlines to do more, continuously improve our customer service, and remain the leader in customer service in the country. Our Accra-Lomé-New York service launched in October presents another fine opportunity to delight our Ghanaian customers both on-board and on-ground,” Ms. Alemayehu said.

Asky and Ethiopian Airlines, on October 15, 2020 started its Accra to New York via Lomé flights. The service offers the travelling public more options between Accra and the USA.

The new service is operated 3x per week on Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays. This compliments the Asky/Ethiopian existing 4x weekly flights between Accra and Newark via Lomé.

Pan-African carrier, Ethiopian Airlines, has won the 'Customer Choice Airline of The Year Award' at the just-ended National Customer Service Awards held in Accra.

Ethiopian beat off stiff competition from other renowned international airlines operating in the country based on customers' appreciation for Ethiopian's on-board and on-ground service, on-time performance and its key role in helping bring Ghanaians stranded abroad back home at the height of the current pandemic.

Area Manager of Ethiopian Airlines, Yemesrach Alemayehu, noted that the award affirms the airline's high quality of service and shows that Ethiopian is a customer-focused airline with a global service delivery standard.

Ethiopian has also taken delivery of two Airbus A350, one of the new planes from French aircraft manufacturer Airbus, to better serve its passengers in its home region and abroad. This brings to 16 the number of A350 planes in Ethiopian's fleet. The planes are all configured to accommodate 30 business class passengers and 318 economy class passengers.

Ethiopian's commitment to Ghana was evident in its excellent display of courage and determination in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the role the Prime Minister of Ethiopia played in the coordination and distribution of COVID-19 materials across the African continent.

Ethiopian Unveils COVID-19 Global Insurance Cover

Ethiopian Airlines Group, the Largest Aviation Group in Africa has announced that it will cover medical insurance including repatriation, evacuation and quarantine costs related to COVID-19 as of 01st of October 2020 until 31st of March 2021. The coverage is applicable on all Ethiopian's international flights booked with the airline's tickets.

The global cover dubbed Sheba Comfort is part of the airline's extra security measures to protect passengers and ensure that they travel with peace of mind.

Passengers will have their medical expenses up to EUR 100,000 covered if they are diagnosed with COVID-19 during their travel in addition to quarantine costs up to EUR 150 per day for a maximum of 14 days. Sheba Comfort also includes repatriation and evacuation services whenever needed besides 24/7 assistance through the airline's hotline.

Remarking on the global cover, Ethiopian Group CEO, Mr.

Tewelde GebreMariam, said, “We are glad to be among the pioneer global airlines to introduce this extra security measure and provide global cover for COVID-19 with a view to boost passengers' confidence. Our Sheba Comfort insurance scheme is part of the measures we have been taking to ensure the health and wellbeing of passengers on the ground and onboard. As the travel safety continues to evolve by the day, we will always be at the forefront of adopting all necessary changes to ensure the safety of our passengers as our top priority.”

The Sheba Comfort insurance scheme, introduced in collaboration with AXA Partners and Awash Insurance Company, is valid for 92 days for round trip and 31 days for one-way trip.

It is to be recalled that Ethiopian recently unveiled an ultra-modern, spacious passenger terminal which is completed with emphasis on biosecurity and biosafety measures.



Namibia's Westair Aviation set eyes on becoming a major player in Africa



CEO of Westair Aviation
Henri Van Schalywyk

Having started out as an aircraft maintenance facility 50 years ago, Westair Aviation has grown to become the most experienced aviation company in Namibia.

In June last year, it launched scheduled passenger flights after the company was granted Designated Carrier status by the

Namibian Transport Commission. For CEO, Henri Van Schalywyk, Westair's ambitions position them to become a big player in Southern Africa and the entire continent's aviation sector in a few years to come.

This, he said in a conversation with VA Tourism Podcast is aided by their home country, Namibia's own goal to become a regional aviation hub in Southern Africa.

"We have a state-owned Namibian Airport Company that has ambitions of giving Namibia a hub status in the sub-region, they want to provide airport infrastructure that motivates large and long-haul airlines to actually choose Namibia as the destination for Southern Africa. They want to upgrade our main international airport in Windhoek and they have already upgraded most of the domestic infrastructure to a certain extent.

"Given this infrastructural drive that we see from government, our goal is definitely to have comprehensive .. infrastructure in five years, so we would like to have daily flights to Johannesburg, Cape Town, Victoria Falls, Luanda, Harare and Lusaka and also have a very extensive domestic route network," Van Schalywyk revealed.

At the moment, the airline is using the opportunity provided by Covid-19 for a smooth take-off when travel traffic picks up again. He said, "We have quite an extensive network in place that we can start rolling out as soon as the market recovers."

Westair Aviation fleet consists of more than 30 aircraft suitable to conduct any mission across Africa. Offering a wide range of specialized aviation services, Westair Aviation provides tailored aviation solutions of the highest standards to discerning customers.

At the height of the pandemic lockdowns and no flight measures, the airline's operations became restricted to carrying repatriation for stranded passengers and critical ones across the length and breadth of Africa and Europe.

Van Schalywyk added that in the face of the pandemic, Westair is very much committed to giving their customers the best of travel experiences through seamless procedures including the new prerequisite COVID-19 tests.

Asky Airlines introduces seamless connection between West Africa & Johannesburg

Pan African carrier, Asky Airlines has launched its Accra-Lomé-Johannesburg flights.

With just one hour connecting time, the daily service makes ASKY the main airline connecting West Africa with the South Africa capital, Johannesburg post-COVID-19 lockdown.

Country Manager of Asky

Airlines, Mr. Worlanyo Afadzina, told VoyagesAfriq that: "We used to operate via LAGOS and Douala or Libreville to Johannesburg but with the new schedule, the flight is direct for Lomé to Johannesburg thereby reducing the travel time for passengers from other parts of Central Africa and West Africa, particularly Accra. Johannesburg – South Africa will have seamless connection to ASKY's vast network covering all of West and Central Africa markets with daily non-stop flights from Lomé."

The flight departs Accra's Kotoka International Airport at 10:40am arriving at Lomé's Gnassingbé Eyadéma International Airport at 11:45am. The Lomé-Johannesburg flight also departs Lomé at 12:45pm, arriving in Johannesburg at 19:50pm.

The airline has introduced affordable fares to drive demand. Fares from Accra to Johannesburg starts from US\$383 with all taxes inclusive.

Passengers travelling on Asky between now and December 31 will also enjoy 3 pieces luggage with each piece weighing 23KG in economy and 32KG in business.

"What this means is that, passengers are allowed a total of 69KG in Economy Class and 96KG in Business Class. Aside this huge baggage allowance, passengers are also allowed to purchase extra bag at reduced rates," Mr. Afadzina said.

Asky operates B737-700 and B737-800.

ASKY is a commercial company under private law and is managed by experienced African aviation professionals, with Ethiopian airlines as its strategic partner. Its focus is to develop a strong intra-Africa network that fosters regional development, tourism, economic growth and regional integration as a major economic catalyst within the continent with its long-term goal of a sustainable business focused on profitability.

ASKY SCHEDULE TO JOHANNESBURG				
DAYS	FROM	DEPARTURE TIME	ARRIVAL TIME	TO
DAILY	Accra	10:40	11:45	Lome
	Lome	12:45	19:50	Johannesburg
DAILY	Johannesburg	7:00	11:25	Lome
	Lome	12:30	13:25	Accra

Promotional fares are available for Economy passengers (All taxes inclusive; one way - \$383 and return - \$500)



Country Manager of Asky Airlines, Mr. Worlanyo Afadzina

Qatar Airways Launch Four Weekly Flights to Accra

Qatar Airways has launched four weekly flights to Accra, Ghana via Lagos beginning 29 September 2020 thus becoming the fourth new destination launched by the national carrier of the State of Qatar since the start of Covid-19. The Accra service is operated by the airline's state-of-the-art Boeing 787 Dreamliner featuring 22 seats in Business Class and 232 seats in Economy Class.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Akbar Al Baker, said: "We are delighted to be launching flights to the capital of Ghana, one of the fastest growing economies in the region famed for its local hospitality and highly sought after agricultural exports. We first announced our intention to launch flights to Accra in January 2020 and while the pandemic has slightly delayed these plans, it has not stopped us from fulfilling our commitment to passengers in Ghana and around the world. With the strong Ghanaian diaspora especially in Europe, the UK and U.S. we are thankful to the Ghanaian Government for their support in helping us to launch these



flights providing an opportunity to reunite family and friends with their loved ones. We look forward to working closely with our partners in Ghana to steadily grow this route and support the recovery of tourism and trade in the region."

Air Seychelles Recognised as Indian Ocean's Leading Airline at 2020 World Travel Awards

Air Seychelles has won three major accolades including the most coveted title of 'Indian Ocean's Leading Airline' at this year's World Travel Awards. The Seychelles national carrier has also been recognized as 'Indian Ocean's Leading Airline – Business Class 2020' and 'Indian Ocean's Leading Cabin Crew 2020' at the virtual World Travel Awards inaugural Indian Ocean Winners Day held on Tuesday, 10 November, 2020.

The annual World Travel Awards now in its 27th edition, was established in 1993. The annual programme is renowned as the most prestigious and comprehensive in the global industry, celebrating excellence across the travel, tourism and hospitality sectors. Remco Althuis, Chief Executive Officer of Air Seychelles said: "Over the last two years, Air Seychelles has implemented several projects as part of its transformational plans, to further build its reputation in the Indian Ocean and in Africa.

"Some of these projects included the modernization of the airlines' jet fleet which included the acquisition and delivery of Africa's first A320neo in the Seychelles, featuring an

enhanced Business and Economy Class Cabin, as well as the unveiling of a stylish new uniform design for the Cabin Crew members.

"These fantastic achievements have enabled Air Seychelles to enhance its hospitality proposition by offering a fresh and modern look to its guests, thus making travel more enjoyable. "It is therefore a great honour for Air Seychelles to be recognised by the World Travel Awards and as we celebrate this remarkable achievement, I would like to thank all the staff members and partners for their dedication plus continued support during this unprecedented time."

Graham E. Cooke, Founder of World Travel Awards, said: "Despite the unprecedented challenges faced by the aviation industry this year, Air Seychelles has demonstrated unrivalled resilience, allowing it to continue delivering superb customer service.

"Well done to the Air Seychelles team for winning 'Indian Ocean's Leading Airline, 'Indian Ocean's Leading Airline – Business Class' and 'Indian Ocean's Leading Cabin Crew'"



Ethiopian Airlines begins direct flight to US from Lome in West Africa

Africa's largest aviation Group Ethiopian Airlines is leaving no stone unturned in not only be the undisputed market leaders but also make travelling seamless for Africans to their destinations.

The Airline over the last 5 years embarked on an ambitious expansion plans which has seen the carrier open up the continent to the world as well as become the gateway to Africa.

This has seen it develop new routes and networks making it easier for Africans mainly to reach their destinations.

The latest move in the establishment of Lome as a hub for travellers wanting to connect to US and North America and vice versa is to help the African aviation giant to consolidate its market share.

It will jet from home to Newark with the Dreamliner. Ethiopia's partner Asky Airlines will ferry passengers from and within the



environs of West Africa to Lome for onward transfer to the United States.

Emirates partners FlySafair to strengthen travel options in South Africa

Emirates airline and FlySafair has announced an interline agreement, opening up connections for customers to selected routes on FlySafair's network in South Africa.

Through the arrangement, Emirates and FlySafair plan to offer the ease of single-ticket travel and through tagging of baggage for travellers transferring from Emirates' three gateways – Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban to FlySafair domestic points in South Africa such as Port Elizabeth, East London and George.

Customers can also take advantage of connecting to FlySafair's points, without backtracking to their initial destination when catching their flights back to Dubai. Customers can book their travel with EK offices and travel agencies.

Badr Abbas, Senior Vice President Commercial Operations for Africa said: "We are pleased to begin our interline partnership with FlySafair. Their network complements our South African presence, providing an array of connections for our customers, which makes this a natural partnership. Together, we will open up new travel opportunities, and more choice for customers wishing to travel domestically. We look forward to working together and strengthening our relationship into the future."

Kirby Gordon, Chief Marketing Officer at FlySafair said: "Today, we are excited to announce the launch of our interline agreement with Emirates Airline. The superb service and vast route network that Emirates offers is world-renowned, and we are proud to have partnered them in providing customers greater connectivity when travelling."



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Sonto Ndlovu joins Transnet to lead organization's Tourism unit

For several years, she served as CEO of the Limpopo Tourism Agency leading the South African northernmost region into an enviable and competitive tourism hub. Recently, Sonto Ndlovu joined Transnet which is the largest integrated logistics company in Southern Africa and the custodian of South Africa's ports, rail and pipelines as Executive Manager for Tourism, Heritage and Hospitality.

Her new portfolio requires her to lead and manage all of Transnet's tourism and heritage asset preservation activities including sales and marketing in order to grow Transnet's tourism footprint locally, regionally and globally. Sonto feels excited about this new challenge "as the Unit is new and I will have to set it up from scratch."

In an interview with VoyagesAfric Travel Magazine, she said one of her biggest responsibilities and key focus areas will be to strategically position Transnet's flagship tourism product, the world-renowned and iconic, 'The Blue Train'.

"The task at hand is to further grow and strengthen 'The Blue Train' brand locally, regionally and globally, and ensure effective management of the total portfolio, namely the daily running of operations inclusive of marketing, sales, security, safety, maintenance, human resource and financial management.

It will be my responsibility to provide strategic leadership and guidance in ensuring the preservation and effective management of Transnet's Heritage portfolio as its custodian but also valorise these historic unexplored heritage gems in a form of art pieces and paintings possibly through the creation of viewing facilities such as galleries, travel shows and exhibitions. This presents a huge and exciting opportunity to strengthen SA's offering when it comes to rail and heritage tourism."

Sonto said she is looking forward to working very closely with various tourism stakeholders and forging strategic partnerships in ensuring the achievement of their goals.

"I am conscious of the fact that with the advent of Covid-19 pandemic it will be incumbent of me to look for new and innovative ways of building on the existing successes particularly on 'The Blue Train', integrating art and heritage as part of the tourism offerings attractive to both our domestic and international travellers," she stated.

'The Blue Train' remains South Africa's premier luxury train service, operating various destinations in South Africa. An icon



of South Africa for over 70 years, 'The Blue Train' is one of the world's great rail journeys. It was voted Africa's Leading Luxury Train for 11 consecutive years by the World Travel Awards with unique experience and a strong heritage – the ultimate and crowning jewel in a South African holiday experience.

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Radisson Hotel Group debuts bleisure brand in South Africa with the opening of Radisson Hotel & Convention Centre, Johannesburg, O.R. Tambo



• President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa officially unveiled the Radisson Hotel and Convention Centre, Johannesburg O.R. Tambo.

The lifestyle launch of Radisson Hotel Group's fourth brand in South Africa, the upscale Radisson Hotel & Convention Centre, Johannesburg, O.R. Tambo has taken place. The new addition was officially unveiled by President Cyril Ramaphosa on the anniversary of namesake Oliver Tambo's birthday and brings the group's South African portfolio to 16 hotels in operation and under development.

South Africa continues to be a key market for us with a robust pipeline of hotels scheduled to open within the next 24 months. Along with our first convention centre in the country and second in Africa, we believe the new Radisson Hotel & Convention Centre, Johannesburg, O.R. Tambo is the perfect showcase to introduce the Scandinavian-inspired Radisson brand to South Africa."

Located in an exclusive private location in Bredell tucked away from city life, Radisson Hotel & Convention Centre, Johannesburg, O.R. Tambo offers a refreshing stay with an array of exclusive facilities and services to satisfy the needs of both business and leisure guests. The hotel is a short 10-minute drive away from O.R. Tambo International Airport and is conveniently situated close to a range of activities and attractions including the nearby shopping malls, local coffee shops and restaurants and Kempton Park Golf Course.

Tim Cordon, Senior Area Vice President, Middle East & Africa, Radisson Hotel Group, said, "We are delighted to introduce our fourth brand, the fast-growing upscale, Radisson, to South Africa and open the doors of our twelfth hotel in the country.



• Group photo of the Hotel and the Delegation of Prez Ramaphosa

This upscale, full-service hotel features 248 contemporary, spacious, and stylish hotel rooms with all the home comforts. Natural colors and furnishings blend seamlessly to create balanced energy and enhance long-lasting, memorable experiences. Guests can stay connected with free highspeed Wi-Fi throughout the hotel and convention centre.

The hotel boasts multiple on-site dining options for guests to choose from. Guests can try fresh and seasonal dishes with an authentic African feel while basking in serene pool views at the all-day-dining restaurant, the Avenue or enjoy exclusive fine-dining at the premium Level Seven restaurant, located on the top floor. For a more laid-back experience, the Peacock Lounge offers an array of popular comfort foods, delectable sharing platters, and freshly baked cakes. Enjoy a refreshing drink and visual art feast at the Mural Bar or kickback with cocktails at the 3rd and 6th Bar, situated between the pool and lobby. With an extensive and impressive selection of premium teas and coffees, the Deli Café is open 24 hours a day, always ready to serve energy-fuelling drinks from smoothies and milkshakes to flavoured waters and health shots as well as on-the-go nutritious and healthy treats.



• Some of South Africa's top Influencers

The Radisson Hotel & Convention Centre, Johannesburg, O.R. Tambo is the ideal venue for business conferences, private functions, and weddings. Spacious and flexible, it has the capacity for up to 1,260 guests in the main hall as well as six breakaway rooms, various smaller conference venues, translation booths, lounges, board rooms and a restaurant. The hotel's picturesque gardens provide the ideal setting for outdoor parties and wedding photoshoots.

Further promoting the balance of health and relaxation, the hotel offers key wellness amenities including a state-of-the-art fitness centre, two outdoor heated pools and an Amani Spa Centre, the largest freestanding spa of its kind in Johannesburg, featuring a Salt Room and four private treatment areas.

The lifestyle amenities were debuted recently with an influencer stayover that saw local bloggers, YouTubers and social media personalities demonstrating the concept of bleisure. African fashion icon, Thebe Magugu was seen epitomizing the hotel's take of work life balance, sending emails confirming his Paris Fashion Week collection while enjoying the pop-up spa and food tastings. YouTube blogger Zama, known as ZeexOnline, also joined in on the fun, capturing the day's events through her video camera.

Rob Van der Velden, General Manager, Radisson Hotel & Convention Centre, Johannesburg, O.R. Tambo said, "My passionate team and I look forward to welcoming guests to the first Radisson hotel



• President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa speaking at the launch

in South Africa and introducing another highly successful Radisson Hotel Group brand to the market. The Radisson brand inspires the art of being in the moment, a key lesson we've learnt and have come to truly appreciate over the past couple of months. We look forward to providing our guests with endless memorable moments."

Radisson Hotel Group's highest priority is the continued health, safety and security of its guests, team members, and business partners. In May 2020, the hotel group announced its Radisson Hotels Safety Protocol in collaboration with SGS, the world's leading inspection, verification, testing and certification company. Additionally, Radisson Hotel Group played a leading role in the development of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTTC)'s 'Safe Travels' health and safety protocols and stamp to create consistency across the travel and tourism industry.



Accor grows its portfolio in Africa with signing of first three properties in Djibouti



The Accor group is partnering with Kamaj investment to open Pullman living, Novotel and Mgallery properties in Djibouty City

Accor, a world-leading augmented hospitality group, is expanding its footprint in Africa after signing a management agreement with Kamak Investment to manage its first properties in Djibouti.

As part of its ongoing development strategy to expand its presence in sub-Saharan Africa, Accor is setting foot for the first time in Djibouti, with the launch of three hotels under three different brands, namely Pullman Living, Novotel and MGallery.

The group is partnering with Kamaj Investments. Initially created as a real estate agency the founder, Houssein Mahamdouh Robleh diversified his business activities over the years to cover different industries including security, maintenance, temporary work and the press. During the past eight years, the Kamaj Group expanded its real estate focus and invested in the central market of Riyadh of which it is the private concessionaire and acquired two hotels.

"We couldn't think of a better partner than Accor to help us renovate and manage the two properties and the extended stay project in Djibouti City", said Houssein Mahamdouh Robleh, founder of Kamaj Investments. We understand there is an enormous need for new hotel investment in Djibouti and Accor's knowledge and expertise as a global hospitality leader will help us achieve our objectives."

Located in Djibouti city, the properties will share the location with the port of Djibouti, strategically located at the crossroads of one of the business shipping routes in the world, linking Europe, the Far East, the Horn of Africa and the Persian Gulf, making it the busiest waterway in the region.

Claude Blanc is new Portfolio Director of IBTM Events



• Claude Blanc, Portfolio Director of IBTM Events

Reed Travel Exhibitions has announced that Shane Hannam is stepping down from his position as Portfolio Director of IBTM Events after almost three years in the role. As a result, the IBTM Events portfolio will now be managed by Claude Blanc.

Claude Blanc commented: "While the past few months have been incredibly challenging and a huge test of our industry, once again we have proved just how adaptable, resilient and creative we are. I'm really looking forward to continuing to support the IBTM global community on the road to recovery and beyond. I'd especially like to personally thank Shane for the exceptional job he has done leading the IBTM team and wish him all the very best with his future plans."

Claude has spent over 25 years in the travel industry, with extensive experience in both the leisure and business events sectors. His new role will ensure that the current IBTM strategy will continue with its customer-focussed approach for exhibitors, hosted buyers and partners, and he will manage the new portfolio as part of his current role as Portfolio Director for World Travel Market.

Commenting on his move, Shane Hannam said: "While I'm sad to be leaving Reed Exhibitions, it's been a great experience, both professionally and personally, and I'm incredibly proud of what the IBTM team has achieved. I've been lucky enough to work with some incredibly talented and knowledgeable people in an industry I have a real passion for. I'm excited about the new opportunities ahead of me and wish the team, our customers and partners the very best on their path to recovery post pandemic."

Onomo Hotel Group receives Bureau Veritas' Safeguard Certification

ONOMO Hotel Kigali is the latest to be added to the list of ONOMO properties to receive Bureau Veritas' Safeguard certification. ONOMO is one of the first hotel groups to have its properties receive the prestigious safeguard certification. The Safeguard Label is awarded based on compliance with all requirements, following independent verification carried out by a duly qualified auditor. ONOMO's 21 hotel properties across 12 African countries are supported by the Bureau Veritas partnership, with ONOMO Hotel Conakry, Lomé, Douala, Bamako, Casablanca City Center and Casablanca airport already certified, among others.

ONOMO Hotels has partnered with Bureau Veritas, one of the global leaders in conformity assessment services, for the certification of the sanitary system implemented in its hotels, thus preparing the best conditions to host their guests and working conditions for their employees and collaborators. These assessment services are applied to the areas of Quality,



Hygiene-Health, Safety and Environment (QHSE) for the restart of the business since the pandemic.

"This partnership testifies our commitment as a hotel group, to offer the best service to our guests and the best working conditions to our team members. Benefiting from the expertise of a world leader is the best guarantee for our teams, our partners and our customers and enables us to establish a world-level standard in all the hotels of the group" states Cedric Guilleminot, CEO of ONOMO Hotels Group.

IE University selects African Tourism Tech Firm Tripxio for Course study



IE Business School has selected Ugandan and African Tourism Tech Firm Tripxio as part of IE University business school challenge entitled "Covid Resilience in Africa". The challenge is a transversal business impact course imparted across all of IE's five schools, which is designed for students to leverage skills from other disciplines and to leverage these skills into real world solutions for partner organizations.

The idea behind the challenge is to get 3rd year BBA students to take on and ideate around challenges in different companies.

The CEO of Tripxio David Gonahasa in a reaction to this milestone said " The IE Business School challenge around COVID resilience provides the opportunity to support our work as Tripxio in strengthening small and medium tourism operator capacity to digitalize their operations and grow into more resilient businesses. In addition, this process gives us the opportunity to learn about global perceptions of diaspora youth tourism in Africa. This could go a long way in enabling not only Tripxio but also general sector strategy for growth."

Tripxio is building Shopify for tourism in Africa and removing the technological limitations to growth for existing and aspiring businesses.

UTB inks deal with Stanbic Bank to provide financial literacy to tourism SMEs & Start-Ups



• CEO of UTB, Lilly Ajarova (Right) exchanging the MoU document with a representative from Stanbic Bank

The Uganda Tourism Board (UTB) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Stanbic Bank to provide financial literacy support to Start-ups and SMEs in the tourism sector.

The agreement will be facilitated through the bank's Business Incubator subsidiary and is to ensure the development and sustainability of these tourism businesses.

Commenting on the deal in a Facebook post Chief Executive Officer of UTB, Lilly Ajarova said, "this partnership brings a unique platform for both entities to jointly develop and implement a series of financial literacy programmes with the aim of producing competent, financially skilled entrepreneurs in the tourism sector."

She added that as UTB one of their major goals is to continuously develop and grow the tourism industry in Uganda and to achieve this, the private sector plays an important role.

"This is just one out of many partnerships we shall continue to pursue as we try to make sure that we collectively re-start and drive tourism forward," Ajarova said.

Labadi Beach Hotel shines at 31st CIMG Awards



• Sales Manager -George Ayisi, General Manager of Labadi Beach Hotel, Rene Vincent-Ernst (Second from left) flanked by members of the Sales and Marketing of the hotel, Phoebi and David Eduaful Assistant General Manager

Ghana's Premier 5 star hotel, Labadi beach Hotel was honored at the 31st Chartered Institute of Marketing Ghana(CIMG) Awards as the hospitality facility of the year 2019.

The hotel's innovation and leadership in the hospitality sector since its inception in 1991 was celebrated by the organizers.

The hotel has won a number of national and international awards and continues to shape the hotel sub-sector in Ghana and beyond.

A citation that accompanied the award read, "You are highly commended by your evaluators for the usage of in-depth environmental analysis to identify growth opportunities and the impact of threats on your business.

In the year under review, you recorded a market share of 15%. These are the tenets on which you rode to the top.

Today you are being celebrated because you never relented in your efforts to remain relevant as you have always proven beyond doubt that you are currently the best in your line of business."

Reacting to the award, the General Manager of the Hotel Rene Vincent-Ernst said " Winning this prestigious award for the second time running is no mean achievement and I must say this is the result of a hardworking team that I am so proud of here at Labadi Beach Hotel."

He added that, "Of course, this places a lot more responsibility on our shoulders to ensure that we continue to lead Ghana's Hospitality industry but I am confident of our commitment towards our objectives."



• Rene Vincent-Ernst

Labadi Beach Hotel is set to meet the demands of both leisure and business traveler's alike; offering a modern spa with four treatment rooms in the serene ambiance of the beach gardens, a well-equipped gymnasium, an outdoor lap pool as well as a leisure pool, two floodlit tennis courts and an outdoor running space within its expansive gardens filled with coconut trees.

With 164 well-appointed rooms and seven room types including 2 Presidential suites, room size ranging from 30m² to 126m² to choose from, be certain to be pampered, well rested and totally taken care of as you enjoy a combination of opulence and elegance.

African Association of Visitor Experiences and Attractions (AAVEA)

The successful development and management of visitor experiences and attractions, the backbone of the tourism industry, is both a science and an art. Until 2014, no help or network existed for visitor experiences and attractions professionals in Southern Africa. Attractions Africa Conferences filled the gap and became the conference of choice for visitor experiences and attractions professionals, tourism practitioners, and destination management organisations.

Important conversations have been ignited in this area of expertise and that are advancing and growing the visitor experiences and attractions industry (and ultimately contributing to the draw of visitors throughout the region). After five annual Attractions Africa Conferences, the African Association of Visitor Experiences and Attractions (AAVEA) was formed in November 2018.

Mission: AAVEA's mission is to represent the interests of visitor experiences and attractions, to raise awareness of the contribution they make to the broader tourism industry, to enhance discussion and co-ordination among visitor experiences and attractions professionals, and to host an annual conference that provides education, networking, and collaboration opportunities. Our members are visitor experiences and attractions professionals, tourism industry stakeholders, and suppliers to visitor experiences and attractions.

WHAT DOES AAVEA DO?

Data Gathering and Benchmarking

To understand the scope of the sector and the magnitude of the contribution that attractions and visitor experiences make to domestic and international tourism. Compare and contrast metrics against peers locally and internationally. Promote research on visitor experiences and attractions.

Advocacy

Placing the issues that affect visitor experiences and attractions firmly on the agenda: with the Department of Tourism, fellow representative bodies in tourism, regional destination management organisations, and the media. Promoting policies and action on issues that affect visitor experiences and attractions. Firmly guiding the conversation and ensuring a seat at the table. Enhancing discussion and co-ordination among visitor experience and attraction professionals.

Training and Education

Visitor experiences and attractions management is an art and a science. The annual conferences, masterclasses, regional seminars, and member communications provide the tools and conversations to ensure that our members are up to date, well informed, and operating at international standards. Continuing Professional Development through our accredited events.

Community

Sharing challenges, solutions, and best practices among peers contributes to higher standards across the sector and a greater cohesion of outlook among members, highlighting issues for advocacy and areas of concern. To facilitate and provide a forum for all stakeholders for effective communication, formation of opinion, and public debate concerning visitor experiences and attractions.

Host the Annual AAVEA Conference

In fulfilling the Training and Education, and Community pillars of our mandate, AAVEA host the annual AAVEA Conference. The programme of sessions and networking is attended by more than 100 visitor experiences and attractions professionals from around South Africa.

Sabine Lehmann
Founder and President



South African Tourism announces campaign to inspire travellers to do Summer Differently

South Africa has an unbelievable diversity of things to do and places to explore in all its nine provinces and this week South African Tourism kicks off a campaign to showcase this wide variety of tourism attraction and experiences across the country.

For most of this year, South Africans' movements have been restricted and now through this campaign, South African Tourism aims to inspire them to go out and enjoy their country and summer, differently.

Starting in the Northern Cape, the **Summer Different** convoy will travel through each one of South Africa's nine provinces to shine a spotlight on some of the most spectacular parts of the country and unearth the **hidden gems** in every province.

This is all in an effort to encourage people to go out and discover their country and join a nationwide journey to celebrate South Africa's rich and diverse landscapes this summer.

"After an incredibly challenging and uncertain year, everything is different, so shouldn't we all holiday differently, too? We need to refresh travel experiences for people in South Africa, explore the **hidden gems**, take the road less travelled and go **off the beaten track**. Nothing is what it used to be. We need to show them a better and different way to experience tourism in the long-term, but most importantly, show them how to do summer differently in the short-term," says Sisa Ntshona, CEO of South African Tourism.

Since the easing of lockdown restrictions, South Africans have been craving quick getaways to celebrate, and as summer draws closer, they need the choice of many small-nyana experiences that are different in every way possible.

A Sho't Left to the next village or town or a few hours' drive to the next province; experiencing the best of the beach or the bush, or visiting fascinating landmarks that are rich with history – people in South Africa are spoiled for choice with the options available to them in their backyard.

Ntshona notes that in addition to highlighting and encouraging local travel this summer, supporting SMMEs within the travel space who have been hard-hit by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic is vital. It is for this reason that an SMME Workshop



• Sisa Ntshona, CEO of South African Tourism

will be hosted in each province the **Summer Different** road trip visits.

"We all know that the tourism sector was one of the hardest hit by the pandemic, so we need to carve an inclusive way forward. It's about expanding in all directions, connecting all corners, and drawing all tourism elements and products together in a cohesive, robust and sustainable way. One that leverages every endeavour and enterprise for a singular vision of growth. This includes all players within the sector; particularly the SMMEs, to ensure inclusive and sustainable growth, as well as transformation," Ntshona adds.

SMMEs will also have the opportunity to load their deals and products onto the Sho't Left platform.

The **Summer Different** road trip will run between 23 November 2020 and 15 February 2021, visiting all nine provinces.

South Africans can find inspiration to experience summer differently via the hashtag **#ShareSouthAfrica** and can follow the journey online:

- Facebook - @LoveSouthAfrica
- Twitter - @MeetSouthAfrica
- Instagram - @MeetSouthAfrica

Experience Zimbabwe

Under the African Sun

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AFRICAN SUN
 HOTELS AND RESORTS

Increasing employment opportunities for young people in the Tourism and Hospitality industry through TVET and upskilling activities



The Tourism and Hospitality sector has a significant part to play in uplifting Rwanda's economy and creating employment opportunities for the youth. Therefore, growth in this sector is a key national priority.

There are numerous opportunities in the Tourism and Hospitality sector. Yet, several challenges hinder young people from accessing these opportunities, for instance, limitation in the quality of TVET curricula to respond to the needs of the private sector, inadequate placements, internships, and upskilling opportunities. Hence, to address these challenges, in collaboration with Rwanda Polytechnic, RDB, Workforce Development Authority and the Chamber of Tourism, GIZ/Hanga Ahazaza initiative aims to improve skills and employability for youth in Rwanda's Tourism and Hospitality sector.

Since 2018, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH has been partnering with the Mastercard Foundation Hanga Ahazaza initiative to implement the TVET and training component of the initiative. This partnership brings dynamic approaches in enhancing the capacity of TVET schools, private sector, companies and associations to achieve sustainable, inclusive, and competitive growth.

GIZ/Hanga Ahazaza builds on its international experience, expertise, and lessons learnt, to close the service quality gap that exists in the sector through its different interventions. For instance, in order to ensure that at least 5,000 TVET students benefit through TVET education, GIZ/Hanga Ahazaza supports in the development of 9 new and the revision of 12 existing demand-led and competency-based TVET Tourism and Hospitality curricula as per regional and international standards. Thus, ensuring that there is long term sustainability in the quality and standards of education that students receive, thereby making them competitive. Likewise, 206 Tourism and Hospitality TVET trainers have received training of trainers training to improve their pedagogical methods. This ensures that students benefit in receiving up-to-date industry-based theoretical and practical knowledge, thereby increasing their competitiveness as per the needs of the labour market.

Also, to improve workplace learning in the industry, 239 in-company trainers have received training. Here, the benefits are two-fold. It ensures that interns or trainees receive better guidance and enhance their skills to be job-ready, and companies understand their relevance while cost-effectively benefitting through their services. Meanwhile, more than 2,400 young professionals have received short courses training developed in Culinary Arts, Food and Beverage services, Front Office Operation, and Housekeeping Operations in seven districts of Rwanda. Likewise, Tourism short courses for Tourism Product Development, Digital Marketing and Avi-



Tourism are being developed that will benefit more than 1,000 young professionals. Furthermore, GIZ/Hanga Ahazaza also supports the development of Recognition of Prior Learning framework and quality assurance measures for the Tourism and Hospitality TVET, while also offering career guidance in IPRCs.

Rwanda, through various initiatives, is placing the human capital at a pivotal aspect in tourism planning and development at the heart of its 2050 vision. Rwanda's education system is being geared to be market-driven and competence-based. Tourism and hospitality will be leading creators of net employment with an estimation of 10,000 net jobs (average) in this sector per year between now and 2050 (NSDEPS, 2019). Therefore, building the capacities of and ensuring employment opportunities to students, young professionals and trainers in the Rwandan Tourism and Hospitality industry is the impetus driving the work of GIZ/Hanga Ahazaza in Rwanda.



An adventure lover's guide to Seychelles

By Glynn Burridge

Hop the islands

Nothing puts you in touch with adventure and the grand diversity of this archipelago like island hopping.

Mahé, Praslin and La Digue are the principal islands, each with their own satellites, but there are many others to enjoy as well. In contrast to the mountainous Inner Islands, Bird (www.birdislandseychelles.com) and Denis Islands (www.denisland.com) to the north are flat coral island outposts offering wild nature at its finest while Frégate (www.fregate.com) to the east and the Outer Islands of Desroches (m.fourseasonsdesroches) and Alphonse (www.alphonse-island.com) are the ultimate remote tropical getaways.

Island hopping around the Seychelles archipelago, especially to the Outer Islands, introduces you to the incredible diversity of these islands. Like members of a family, each island is different and has its own distinct character and story to tell. Seychelles has 41 tall granitic islands and 74 very contrasting low-lying sand cays, reef islands and shimmering atolls. While accommodation ranges from rustic lodges to exclusive hotels, they all enjoy the common denominator of adventure in the form of fishing, world-class swimming, snorkelling and diving, trekking, cruising and nature watching.

A network of air and sea connections places these islands within easy reach, with excursions by local operators offering the chance of day trips to the closer islands where you can enjoy nature walks, swimming, snorkelling and traditional Creole food which is a delicious fusion of old French kitchen and Indian and Chinese culinary traditions that produces such masterpieces as freshly baked fish basted with garlic, ginger and chillies; coconut curries; terrines and fruits used as vegetables in a variety of piquant satinis.

(www.seychelles.travel/en/explore/island-hopping)



www.seychelles.travel


the seychelles islands
another world

Wellness Tourism and its prospect in Africa; A conversation with Marsha

• Marsha Parcou, Health & Life coach



Marsha Parcou is an experienced Health and Life coach. Accredited by the Health Coach Institute, USA, she coaches using International Coach Federation (ICF) tools and exercises whilst delivering her own unique framework for transformation.

What is Wellness Tourism?

Wellness Tourism is travelling with the purpose of promoting health and well being through activities that are physical, psychological or spiritual. For me, wellness tourism is travelling to learn lifestyle practices that can improve one's life health. People are travelling and looking for peace and finding their purpose.

Why is there a need for Wellness Tourism?

I believe that people are becoming more understanding of the need for their mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. The majority of us live a very hectic life and stressful life, we have responsibilities, work, business, family, kids etc. As a result, our lifestyle pushes us towards mental burnout and may cause health complications. Because of that there is:

1. A desire to look for an escape that can bring peace & calm to a person
2. Improve different aspects of our lives, some of us want to be drawn into nature, some of us want to find our purpose and true meanings of our lives.
3. To have a detox from the digital and social world
4. While others may want to experience & adapt to a healthier way of living.
5. Need to have a healthy balance of mind, spirit, and body that results in an overall feeling of well being.

How do life coaches help people to heal their trauma /distress and espouse more on life coaching?

First of all, it's important to know that Life Coaches/wellness coaches do not provide the same service as a Psychologist, therapist. They work with clients to resolve traumas and issues and work towards changing problematic beliefs and behaviours.

WHEREAS Life coaches

- focus on the present and future,
- action oriented and help clients to create a game plan for the goals that they want to achieve,
- help improve clients performance
- empowers the client to make their own decisions
- help you stay more accountable for your goals
- help you find your passion and purpose.

To sum up, a life coach is more analytical and action-oriented.

As you know I am a Life coach and the title of my program "BE THE STAR" -how to succeed whilst still loving your life. I help my clients in finding the right balance and making time to do the things that you love whilst maintain your responsibility. I provide tools and techniques by helping them taking care of their wellbeing, adopting a healthy lifestyle, nourishing their body, mind and soul. My main purpose is to empower you to become more successful in what you do BUT not to the detriment of your health. How to love and accept yourself as everything begin with self-love. Help you reclaim your personal power.

How do I help clients unlock their personal power?

First I help them to get clear on their vision, and values. Then I assess the current circumstances and try matching it with their purposes and values. Thereafter we develop a game plan and set the course of actions and tools to help them to achieve their goals. I provide necessary techniques and principles and teach them how to apply in their lives to last a lifetime both in their personal & professional lives.

We have often associated wellness/spa with south east Asia, middle east, as an expert how do you see the prospect in Africa?

I believe there is huge potential to promote wellness tourism in Africa.

Africa itself is a brand, the natural beauty and vast African wilderness offers a diverse range of wellness activities such as safaris, meditating in the wildlife, retreat, and yoga along the beach etc. Overall wellness tourism offers tremendous economic, social conservation and branding benefits in Africa.

Tell me more about yourself and business

I started my career with the Seychelles Tourism Board (STB) in 2015. During my tenure I was privileged to be based at the Seychelles High Commission in South Africa. I was responsible for marketing Seychelles Tourism in Southern Africa. Also, I was based in London for almost 1 year. After moving back to Seychelles in 2016 my husband and I opened the very first coffee shop on Mahe, Chatterbox Seychelles. I am proud to say that we are well established and very well known in both the local and international markets. We are going on our 4th year of operation.

Apart from being both a career-driven and business woman I am a health and fitness fanatic, 'healthy living is who I am'. I believe that it is important to look after our wellbeing not only physically but our mental and emotional state is equally important. This passion has led to my own brand, 'Fasinasyon'.

Fasinasyon means Fascination in English.

Why the brand? I believe that every person should become fascinated with themselves by accepting who we are, through self love and self care. In a time when the world shifts its focus on wellness, Fasinasyon is a lifestyle brand promoting a healthy and holistic approach body, mind and soul.

Fasinasyon has been a very personal one as healthy living is who I am, it's my passion... I want to continue to inspire especially professional and business woman through my own experiences finding the right balance without losing themselves in the process.



Tourism News Blitz

Hospitality Professionals Network of Ghana Inaugurated



• CEO of HPNG, Rosalin Abigail Kyere-Nartey

The CEO of the Ghana Tourism Authority, Mr. Akwasi Agyeman, has noted that in spite of difficulties faced by the hospitality sector, the emergence of a voice that helps to push its agenda through advocacy is always welcome as it only sets to improve on standards which rubs off the entire tourism ecosystem.

Mr. Agyeman made the remarks last Tuesday evening during a virtual zoom event where he officially inaugurated the 'Hospitality Professionals Network Ghana' (HPNG), a formal guild for professionals whose vision is to enhance the human capital within Ghana's hospitality industry

Bringing together hospitality practitioners from all levels of the professional pyramid, HPNG is poised to help in building the capacity of people working in the industry to enable them to provide world-class services, and grow in their professional career.

Focused on promoting education, essential connections, advocacy and support, HPNG, seeks to actively manifest this through its networking activities, and make a commitment to foster a coordinated front for professionals in the hospitality industry.

These practitioners are the foundation management team for the network and include, as Chief Executive, Rosalin Abigail Kyere-Nartey, a hospitality and educational consultant, Head of Marketing & Events, Mrs Wilhelmina Bruce-Appenteng, a business development and marketing consultant and Head of Professional Development, Sylvia Efuia Bartels-Asiamah, a training & development consultant.

The rest are Head of Membership & Relationship, Brenda Larbi, a human

resource consultant, Head of Finance; Percy Kuma, a hospitality and finance consultant, Head of Partnership & Affiliates,

Mr Samuel Obiri Aduama, a hospitality professional and Head of Legal & Communication; Mrs Jacqueline Obeng Ansong, a hotelier.

They are assisted by Ms. Margaret Ampere, an aesthetician, and Mrs. Elizabeth O. Olympio-Manuel, a restaurateur, who are subject experts on spa and eateries respectively.

"Our overriding objective is to project the role of the hospitality industry as a contributor to employment creation and sustainable economic development," says Chief Executive, Mrs Kyere-Nartey.

ITB Berlin 2021 goes virtual

The Organizers of the World's Leading Travel Trade Show® Messe Berlin has announced that next year's ITB Berlin will be entirely virtual event. This decision was taken after weighing all the circumstances. ITB Berlin 2021 and the accompanying ITB Berlin Convention will be open to trade visitors only. The trade visitor days will take place from 9 to 12 March 2021, adding an extra day to the event.

"The situation surrounding the pandemic remains difficult, particularly for the travel and tourism industry. Our decision to hold ITB Berlin 2021 as an entirely virtual event now provides exhibitors and trade visitors with maximum planning certainty," said David Ruetz, Head of ITB Berlin,

Among other features, the virtual concept of ITB Berlin 2021 will include numerous live-streamed high-level panel discussions and lectures as well as digital networking opportunities, an intelligent matchmaking event and a virtual exhibition area.



Senegal Extend Tax Relief for Tourism Sector



The President of the Republic of Senegal Macky Sall has announced that Government will extend tax reliefs for the tourism sector till 2021. The Government as part of mitigating measures to assuage the plight of the badly hit tourism sector in the wake of the pandemic granted tax reliefs such as waiving off corporation tax, withholding tax among others to revive the country's tourism sector. Speaking at a Presidential Council on Economic Recovery, the Head of State said, it was imperative to support the sector to accelerate its recovery.

International Tourism down 70% as travel restrictions bites

Restrictions on travel introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic continue to hit global tourism hard, with the latest data from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) showing a 70% fall in international arrivals for the first eight months of 2020.

According to the newest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, international arrivals plunged 81% in July and 79% in August, traditionally the two busiest months of the year and the peak of the Northern Hemisphere summer season. The drop until August represents 700 million fewer arrivals compared to the same period in 2019 and translates into a loss of US\$ 730 billion in export revenues from international tourism. This is more than eight times the loss experienced on the back of the 2009 global economic and financial crisis.

"This unprecedented decline is having dramatic social and economic consequences, and puts millions of jobs and businesses at risk," warned UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili. "This underlines the urgent need to safely restart tourism, in a timely and coordinated manner".

Hemingways Nairobi picks up Prestigious Award



Luxury boutique hotel Hemingways Nairobi has been awarded the 'Mystery Inspectors' Award in the Small Luxury Hotels Awards 2020. The property emerged top from over 550 member hotels.

The award was one among 17 categories featured with others including, Hotel of the Year, Travel Agents' Hotel of the year, Most Liked Hotel, Digital Excellence Award and Best Gourmet Experience among others with Lefay Resort & SPA Lago di Garda in Italy, Hotel Relais Christine in France, Triumph Hotels in USA and The Seminyak Beach Resort & Spa in Indonesia ranking top in the respective categories above.

Speaking after receiving the news, Group Operations Director, Ross Evans said it was heart warming for Hemingways Collection to receive the award at a time the hotel industry locally and internationally is still battling against the damaging effects of the Covid-19 pandemic

FITUR 2021 will be held from 19th - 23rd May



The organizers of FITUR International Tourism Fair has announced that next year's exhibition has been moved from January to May 2021. IFEMA and the organizing committee confirmed that the travel show which kick start the annual

tourism calendar will be held from 19-23 May 2021. The event has traditionally been held in the 3rd week of January.

For its part, IFEMA is focusing all its efforts on presenting an edition aimed at contributing to the recovery of tourism at a time when FITUR's role as a driving engine is critical and decisive under threat from Covid-19. Therefore, it is especially important to focus on optimising its rallying power, in addition to enriching its specialised content and new business niches, as well as promoting knowledge areas that contribute towards relaunching both the national and international tourism activity as one of the world's main growth engines and especially for Spain, where tourism is the main sector, both in terms of GDP and employment.

FITUR has unanimous support from Spain's tourism industry and it is currently the world's second major trade fair, especially regarding its impact on the Latin American market. Each edition brings together over 11,000 companies from 165 countries, as well as official representatives from a large number of nations from around the world.

Marriott International Names Satya Anand President of Europe, Middle East and Africa



Marriott International, Inc. has announced that Satya Anand has been appointed President of Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA), a division within Marriott International that encompasses over 75 countries and territories. Anand was most recently the company's Chief Operations Officer, Luxury & Southern Europe and Global Design for EMEA. He will replace Liam Brown, who has been appointed Group President, U.S. & Canada for Marriott.

"I am delighted that Satya has taken on this role to lead our business across Europe, Middle East and Africa at such a fundamental time for the hospitality industry," said Craig S. Smith, Group President, International, Marriott International. "As a 32-year Marriott veteran, Satya has a remarkable knowledge of the industry and our business, as well as outstanding relationships with associates, guests, owners and franchisees. His ability

to engage and inspire will serve him well as he takes on this important position."

In his new appointment, Anand will spearhead Marriott International's post-COVID-19 recovery approach across the region, working with his team to inspire travel again. Under his leadership, the region's 998 hotels will deliver enhanced cleanliness and sanitization levels to ensure guests have total peace of mind when staying at a Marriott International property.

Eurowings to operate 5 times a week flight to Windhoek

The Lufthansa Group has hinted that its subsidiary unit Eurowings will operate 5 times a week flight to Namibian capital Windhoek from March 2021.

This has come as a boost to the southern African country's tourism revival. Its main source market Germany and Europe in general at present has difficulty connecting seamlessly to the land of the Brave.

From 28 March 2021, the airline will start a scheduled 5 times a week passenger service from Frankfurt. This latest development will mean an addition of 2 flights to their existing schedule.

Flight days for FRA-WDH are planned to be: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday. It has since uploaded on the system on Tuesday and bookings are now open for Frankfurt -Windhoek.

The Lufthansa Group is composed of the segments Network Airlines, Eurowings, and Aviation Services.

Ethiopia set up National Convention Bureau

Ethiopia has become the latest African country to set up a national agency dedicated to the promotion of the meetings, incentives Conferences and Exhibition (MICE)

In an interview with Tourism News Wrap, the Director General at Ethiopia convention Bureau, Alemayrehu Gebretinsae said the establishment of the office is to help Ethiopia consolidate its foothold as a diplomatic hub.

He added that, the country's status as gateway to Africa with Ethiopian Airlines and a burgeoning tourism sector will help them become a preferred destination for the business events.

A GOOD YEAR FOR KELLY KHUMALO!

South Africa's award-winning Singer and Songwriter Kelly Khumalo is basking in all the grace and goodness of what is a great year for her, with the recent nominations at the Crown Gospel Awards for her song Esiphambanweni featuring Dr Hlengiwe Mhlaba. The beautiful, emotive song was nominated for Song of The Year. She is also charting at number 1 on Metro FM's Top 40 chart show for her single Empini.

Her new album The Voice of Africa (TVOA) was co-written and produced by Mondli Ngcobo, who is also a featured talent on Ngathwala Ngaye. Kelly has been recording and performing her music for almost two decades with a string of successful albums over the years. This year, she released her debut season of her reality show Life With Kelly on Showmax.



Visit to discover the unique diversity of 115 islands.

The Seychelles is home to some of the most rare and beautiful fauna and flora in the world. The archipelago - comprising unique granite islands and glimmering coral isles - is scattered across the crystal clear waters of the Indian Ocean. Some believe that one of them - the island of Praslin was the original Garden of Eden.

The desirable climate, and balmy breezes that persist for most of the year, provide the perfect setting for a tropical sailing holiday. Indulge your sense of adventure with a customised sailing experience in this infrequently visited part of the world... just the way you want.

See the World Differently
THE SEYCHELLES ISLANDS IS A "COVID-SAFE" DESTINATION.



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