

Tourism Growth Partnership Plan yielding results

By **Bongani Mdakane**

Sustainable tourism and conservation are essential to South Africa's goal of bringing in 15-million foreign tourists by 2030 – and the South African National Parks (SANParks) has positioned itself as an important conduit between the private sector and communities where it operates across the country.

Speaking at the 2026 Africa's Travel Indaba, SANParks CEO Hapiloe Sello said it was important to get business on board as partners in uplifting small and medium-sized enterprises, especially in the more remote areas of the country. The agency oversees South Africa's premier conservation areas – 21 national parks and 10 marine protected areas – covering more than 44 595km² across the country.

"SANParks prides itself on being a great agency aimed at presenting the country's tourism to the world. We are at the forefront of making sure that our tourism clients get the most amazing experience when they visit our establishments.

"We are also proud to state that during the financial year ending March 31, 2026, SANParks welcomed 6.8-million tourists across all its sites. We believe that we have fully recovered now from the pandemic, and we are going strong to build a great legacy in the conservation space," she said.

Every year, Africa's Travel Indaba brings together industry players such as exhibitors, tour operators, small-, medium- and micro-sized enterprises, hospitality and accommodation businesses, and specialised environmental and conservation enterprises to showcase their offerings to international and local buyers and leisure tourism services partners.

This year was no different. The Inkosi Albert Luthuli Convention Centre in Durban again provided a platform for stakeholders in the sector to come together and map a way forward as the deadline of 2030 looms.

President Cyril Ramaphosa officially opened the conference themed "Unlimited Africa" on Tuesday, where he noted the role of tourism in creating economic opportunities across various value chains in communities across the country.

"We take pride in the partnerships that have carried us through some of the most challenging years the global tourism industry has faced. It is the



President Cyril Ramaphosa opened this year's Indaba.



The 2026 Africa's Travel Indaba brings industry players together.

Driving tourism to unlock sustainable economic growth



SANParks welcomed 6.8 million tourists at its sites in the past financial year. /Photos Supplied

tourism aspect that can showcase our continent, to show the beauty and the sophisticated cultures of our continent and the heritage, the very rich heritage, of this continent. We are the continent from which humanity originated. That's what we need to showcase," said Ramaphosa.

Ramaphosa also noted that the country welcomed 10.5 million tourists, pointing out that this is a great milestone and economic spinner for South Africa.

"When tourists travel, they do not travel empty-handed. They come with foreign exchange, create tax revenues and encourage investment inflows. We are also working to expand our one-stop border posts and develop cross-border itineraries that showcase the richness of our region. When Africans travel within Africa, we strengthen our economies, deepen our cultural ties, and build a more integrated continent," said Ramaphosa.

Tourism Minister Patricia de Lille reported that the cabinet-approved Tourism Growth Partnership Plan from last year was beginning to yield results.

"We are already seeing investment in tourism products, including the R24-billion expansion of the V&A Waterfront; R10.5-billion is being injected into Winelands Airport, while here in KwaZulu-Natal, the R2.1-billion Club Med Beach & Safari resort, which opens in July, stands as a bastion of successful public-private partnership," said De Lille.

Over the years, Africa's Travel Indaba has positioned itself as a platform for exposure for SMMEs.

Elvis Swart from Khomani San, a small business of the indigenous hunter-gatherer community in the Southern Kalahari Desert, Northern Cape, also came to showcase crafts created there. Cultural objects that are pivotal to the commu-

nity's survival and heritage, such as bows and arrows; hunting spears; jewellery; and water-storing containers, were on display as part of the education for visitors.

"Our business belongs to the Khomani Communal Property Association, owned by the members of our community. When tourists visit Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, as Khomani San, we do great business based on the number of tourists coming," said Swart.


Another small business owner, Tshepo Nake from Tinyiko Kruger Lodge, a private 4-star accommodation located in Marloth Park, right on the southern border of the Kruger National Park, said that for him to be at Africa's Travel Indaba was a big deal.

"Since we started our business in 2017 with only eight rooms, we have managed to expand, and we now have 16 rooms," said Nake.

For Nake and others, the marketing opportunities presented by exhibiting at Africa's Travel Indaba are priceless.

• Mdakane travelled to Africa's Travel Indaba as a guest of SANParks.

“We are going strong to build a great legacy in conservation**”**



Mafube Local Municipality
OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER
64 J.J Hadebe Street, P O Box 2, FRANKFORT, 9830

INVITATION TO TENDER

BID No	Bid Description	Points System	User Department	Tender Document fee (Non refundable)	Compulsory Briefing	Closing Date	Contact Person
MAF142/2025/26	Appointment of Service Provider for Preparation of Annual Financial Statements (AFS) and GRAP Compliant Assets Register	80/20 Preferential points System	Financial Services	R614.36 (cash or direct deposit with a proof of deposit) Alternatively, www.mafubelm.co.za for free.	No Compulsory Briefing	04 June 2026 at 11:00am Mafube Local Municipality Main building in Frankfort No 64 JJ Hadebe Street	SCM Unit-082 887 1445 Mrs. ML Mosia

Requirements: Valid Company Tax Clearance Certificate or Pin supplied. Certified Company Registration Certificate. Central Supplier Database (CSD) latest Summary Report. Proof of Municipal Services LATEST Statement or Lease Agreement of Landlord Municipal Rates and Taxes, or Affidavit with Landlord Municipality Rates and Taxes. All compulsory forms contained in the bid documents must be completed and signed (MDB 1,4,6,1,8 and 9 amongst others)

Please Note: Sealed Bid Documents should clearly indicate the bid number as provided. Document availability date: 18 May 2026 Bid Documents are available from Supply Chain Management Office (No.4); Mafube Local Municipality; 64 JJ Hadebe Street; Frankfort; 9830 from 07:30am to 15:30pm. No bid will be accepted from the persons in the service of the state. No emailed or late bid will be accepted. Mafube Local Municipality is not obliged to accept the lowest bid. Failure to comply with the above mentioned conditions will invalidate your bid. Bids will remain valid for period of 90 days. All bids will be evaluated in terms of preferential points system as prescribed in the Preferential Procurement Policy Regulation of 2022.

All completed Bid Documents to be submitted on or before the closing date at the following address:
Mafube Municipal Tender Box. Mafube Local Municipality, 64 JJ Hadebe Street, Frankfort; 9830

Dr. J.B Mhlongo
Acting Municipal Manager
Mafube Local Municipality

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