



LIMPOPO TOURISM OVERVIEW

I. INTRODUCTION

Limpopo is the most northerly situated of the nine South African provinces. It is named after the Limpopo River that flows along its northern border and is associated with a wealth of historical and cultural treasures. It has many geological sites, some of which are caves containing some ancient rock art. The eastern parts of the province include the Kruger National Park, which is the largest game reserve in South Africa. The Tropic of Capricorn runs through this province just north of Polokwane, the Capital City of Limpopo.

The province covers 125 454 square kilometers, and has a population of 5.2 million people. The majority of the people live in rural areas. One of the Limpopo's main assets is the wilderness areas, rich habitat diversity provide potential opportunities for eco-tourism development. Limpopo is in certain quarters associated with legends, myths and ancient civilization. Tourists in search of history can find many places of archeological significance that date back millions of years.

1.1 Limpopo province is divided into four Tourism regions:

- Capricorn Region
- Bushveld region
- Valley of Oliphants and
- Soutpansberg

1.2 Among these there are several tourist attractions and activities including:

- Mapungube- a World Heritage Site
- Makapans valley
- Baobab trees
- Magoebaskloof
- Kruger National Park
- Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park
- Rain Queen (Modjadji)
- Hunting
- Cultural Dances
- African Ivory Route
- Venda Myths and Legends
- Religious Tourism
- Bushveld
- Game Reserves
- Nature/ Game viewing

2. TOURISM'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL GDP

According to the Study conducted by Grant Thornton on the National Tourism Performance for the year 2005 to 2006 the following facts were revealed:

Measure	2005	2006	% change
Tourism's contribution to GDP (direct and indirect)	R 122,49 bn or 7,96%	R 141,86bn or 8,30%	16%
Tourism's contribution to GDP (direct impact only)	R50,04bn	R57,30bn	15%
Direct employment in Tourism	393,650	425,930	8,2%
Indirect employment in Tourism	470,810	521,600	10,8%
Total employment in tourism	864,460	947,530	9,6%





3. OPPORTUNITIES

Based on the Feasibility Study report, the following are proposed Flagship Tourism Project Development Concepts.

Makapan Valley Resort: a 3 to 4 Star self-catering and catered facility targeting the leisure and business market. The resort will be themed around the cultural and heritage theme of Makapans itself.

Dzata Ruins: the Ruins can be positioned as a niche cultural and heritage product central to the creation of Venda and its people's.

Greater Nwanedi Conservancy: to create a Resort targeting the budget market from Limpopo and Gauteng.

Nandoni Dam: the concept driven by the Mulendze Development Trust consist of the creation of major tourism destinations that approximates a 'Sun City/ Fancourt' of Limpopo.

Xakadzi Safari Lodge: It is proposed that the lodge be established as a 2 to 3-Star establishment offering a wildlife and nature experience to domestic and international tourist as its core business.

Drakensberg Escarpment Project: the location of the Lekgametse nature reserve, activities as well as the natural and man made attractions offer an attractive mix to develop it into key tourism destination in the escarpment area.

Tjate: the proposed concept seeks to better establish Tjate as the major cultural heritage attraction in Greater sekhukhune District Municipality and indeed in Limpopo.

4. KEY CONTACTS

- Trade and Investment Limpopo: www.til.co.za
- Limpopo Tourism and Parks: www.golimpopo.com
- South African Tourism: www.southafrica.net
- South African Tourism Services Association: www.satsa.com
- South African National Parks: www.sanprks.org
- Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism: www.environment.gov.za

