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Conservation and Tourism  
North West Provincial Government  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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### **North West Tourism Stakeholders unite to revitalise the industry**

MEC Bitsa Lenkopane today hosted a Provincial Tourism Stakeholder Engagement with industry leaders, associations and product owners at Sun City Resort. The engagement formed part of the Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism's (DEDECT) Tourism Month programme, held under the theme: "Tourism and Sustainable Transformation."

The session brought together captains of industry, community leaders, traditional leadership and key stakeholders in a robust dialogue aimed at strengthening collaboration to sustain and advance the tourism sector in the North West. The resolutions arising from the engagement will play a critical role in positioning the province as a competitive and distinctive tourism destination of choice, with inclusion and transformation at the centre of these resolutions.

In her address, MEC Lenkopane reflected on the department's determination to engage with both domestic and international stakeholders on key issues of tourism in the province. This also includes benchmarking with other provinces in aspects of systems and innovation that would benefit the tourism industry in North West. She highlighted the North West Provincial Tourism Media Launch earlier this month at the Mphabatho Cultural Museum in Moruleng, an initiative underscoring the province's rich cultural heritage as one of the foundations of its tourism offering.

The MEC further highlighted several initiatives underscoring the need to collaborate directly with tourism stakeholders toward shared goals. Taking lessons from the previous Stakeholder Engagements with the industry, MEC noted that the memorandum of understanding previously signed between the department and industry players needs to be revived. Complementing this is the need to understand the collective views of the tourism industry. To this end, MEC directed that the department and the NWPTB will begin profiling each tourism establishment in the province to ascertain the collective strength that lies within the industry and how best government can assist in the development thereof. The MEC made a clarion call for industry standards to be improved and called on accommodation owners to take advantage of star grading of tourism establishments to advance their businesses.

Most importantly, MEC called on the private sector to partner with government on key initiatives that complement visitor attraction to the province. This is especially the case with direct air connection to the province, currently being explored by the department.

“These engagements are not about ownership but about how our people, especially the unemployed, can benefit from opportunities created through tourism and related sectors’ collaborative efforts. By working together with industry, government can do more to uplift communities and transform the industry,” said MEC Lenkopane.

During the engagement, Sun City Resort was given an opportunity to showcase their transformation objectives and localisation efforts which directly benefit communities and businesses within the province. These efforts toward localisation are a direct result of government and Sun City partnership towards uplifting small businesses within the tourism industry. Mr Tebogo Mokgejane of Sun City presented facts around their procurement which should be a benchmark for other established resorts in the province. Fifty-six percent of Sun City’s total budget was spent on procuring goods and services from local suppliers. From this amount, it was reported that 517 million rand was spent on contracts with black women-owned enterprises.

In her conclusion, the MEC appealed to stakeholders to shift focus from challenges and work with the department to strengthen collaboration, moving together in one direction for the growth of the tourism sector. She emphasised that communities are not only looking to government to improve their living conditions, but are also depending on industry leaders as the key drivers of the economy, toward job creation.

The department will consolidate inputs from this engagement and the industry at large, to develop a business proposal that benefits all industry players. MEC Lenkopane was accompanied by Kgosi Nyalala Pilane of the Bakgatla Ba Kgafela, DEDECT HOD Relebohile Mofokane, CEO's of entities and a visiting delegation from Limpopo led by MEC Tshitereke Matibe.

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