

MEC TLHAPI ENGAGES WITH TOURISM INDUSTRY PRODUCT OWNERS

MEC for the Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation, and Tourism led by Mme Galobekwe Virginia Tlhapi, hosted a Tourism Stakeholder Engagement Session at Royal Marang Hotel in Rustenburg, Bojanala District. The purpose of the session was to solicit inputs towards the finalization of the North West Provincial Tourism Sector Strategy. This approach seeks to provide an insightful platform for the development of a sustainable and thriving tourism sector, benefiting both formal and informal businesses, local communities, and industry players which ultimately will result in economic growth across the four districts.

The engagement welcomed esteemed industry players, including tour operators, game rangers, tour guides, luxury accommodation establishments, and wildlife/adventure enthusiasts. Both local and provincial governments participated in the proceedings, marking a united front to address challenges faced by tourism product owners in the province.

Given North West's nature-based and rural character, it presents a unique opportunity to explore diverse tourism offerings in unspoiled, tranquil natural habitats. The call for partnership and collaboration among travel agencies and tour operators to promote packaged tours and experiences regionally is underscored.

Furthermore, there was an emphasis on encouraging the development of high-quality and diverse accommodation options to cater to different traveler preferences, from luxury resorts to budget accommodations and eco-friendly lodges.

Speaking on tourism contribution to the economy MEC Tlhapi emphasized the importance of Public Private Partnerships as it allows stakeholders to participate in the finalization of the Provincial Tourism Sector strategy to achieve common goals and interests of reducing the rate of unemployment faced by the province. She also highlighted that big businesses need to offer support to emerging and existing small businesses as they play a big role in the economy and society.

“As department we encourage our SMMEs to actively participate in the improving local economies. Let us strengthen our working relationship for the benefit of the future generation and achieve the goals of the National Development Plan (NDP).

MEC Tlhapi urged the department to continue with the implementation of the Tourism Safety Plan to minimize attacking of tourists by criminals within N4 and R556 routes.

In her closing remarks she pointed out that the province will host “Bojanala Lekgotla as build up to National Tourism indaba as well as intensifying its efforts of ensuring transformation within the tourism industry for the benefit of SMMEs within all the districts of the province.