Welcome to the Responsible Tourism in Cities Pavilion where you can engage with South African cities’ responsible tourism journeys to date, what is happening now and some of the plans for the future.

Cities are key tourism destinations and tourism draw cards for nations. Cities are also home to more than half of South Africa’s population, and so are crucial sites for sustainable development. While Responsible Tourism is central to South Africa’s tourism policy and a key trend in tourism globally, little focus has been placed on the needs and challenges faced by cities to become sustainable destinations and to implement responsible tourism. Local governments sit at the intersection of tourism and development, and face particular challenges. But tourism requires effective partnerships among government, local communities and the private sector in order to thrive.

Although awareness of Responsible Tourism is high and the tourism industry is strongly supportive in principle, in practice comparatively little has been done, and Cities must work in partnership with the industry to take some of necessary steps toward Responsible Tourism management. This is one of our biggest challenges and it takes time, focus, and the commitment of resources over a prolonged period of time to make a difference.

The local authorities of very few major cities in the world have adopted comprehensive responsible tourism policies and committed to implementing them with action plans. While there are cities with sustainability strategies and cities with tourism strategies, few link these two in formal and robust ways. If one looks at the finalists and winners of the ‘Best Destination’ category of the Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards, none have been a major city other than Cape Town. So what is it about major cities and Responsible Tourism that presents a particular challenge? This is one of the key questions as we move forward.

Also, few places that are implementing Responsible Tourism are doing it destination-wide, that is, with local government, the tourism industry, local communities and visitors pulled into a common effort. This is complex, time-consuming and at times less efficient, but it is the only way to produce lasting results.

Be sure to make time in your schedule for networking with people active in responsible tourism. This is a great opportunity to meet like-minded people in a fun and informal atmosphere, and to learn about what’s happening in South African cities and elsewhere in the world. It is also an excellent platform to share your own projects, plans, ideas and achievements around responsible tourism and to receive feedback, suggestions and assistance.
Embracing responsible tourism

South Africa is one of the great destinations of the world. Over ten million people visit our shores every year. They enjoy the cities, the mountains, the wildlife and the spirit of the local people. But there are costs too – for local people and the environment. To find a balance, the destination has embraced responsible tourism as it helps create better places to live, and better places to visit.

Imagine that tourism in South Africa

- takes care of our unique and fragile natural environment;
- does no harm to children, women or communities;
- sees South Africans earning an income for their families, as owners of tourism businesses, employees of tourism companies, or selling products and services to the tourism industry;
- offers every South African a fair opportunity to be a part of the tourism industry;
- helps to protect and showcase our unique cultural heritage;
- provides South Africans with a say in how tourism affects their lives and opportunities;
- has tourists interacting with locals, visiting our favourite places, and learning more about who we are, what makes us special, and what concerns us;
- is accessible to people with disabilities; and
- respects everyone’s culture, and helps us celebrate our individuality as South Africans.

It started back in 1996 when South Africa was the first country to include Responsible Tourism in legislation, just two years into our new democracy. Visitors come wanting to experience the culture, to participate, and to connect. But the beauty and hospitality enjoyed by so many visitors is not matched in the daily lives of many locals and the potential represented by every South African is not close to being realized – and certainly not on an equitable basis across socio-economic and racial groupings. The beauty means very little if it comes at the expense of our environment or our residents and their prospects for the future.

But progress is being made and though the benefits often seem to be enjoyed first by visitors before locals experience them, the responsible tourism approach is beginning to make a difference. As cities, implementing Responsible Tourism in our destinations will mean that what benefits residents will also benefit visitors; what is good for the tourism industry must also be good for local communities. The goal is a virtuous cycle, using the growth of tourism as an engine for improving the quality of life for all residents.

Simply put, responsible tourism is tourism that creates better places for people to live in, and better places to visit.
Why is responsible tourism important?

Other than the fact that responsible tourism is the right thing to do, tourism businesses should be motivated to adopt responsible tourism practices.

Responsible tourism makes business sense

For the past several decades, increasing numbers of consumers have started to look at the reputation and responsibility of the companies they buy from; they want to have guilt-free holidays. This is a market trend tourism businesses cannot ignore. Those practising responsible tourism will have a powerful competitive advantage.

Responsible tourism is central to South Africa’s tourism policy

• The 1996 White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa identified ‘Responsible Tourism’ as the guiding principle for tourism development in our country.
• The National Responsible Tourism Guidelines were published in 2003.
• A Minimum Standard for Responsible Tourism will be launched in 2011.

Responsible tourism and the tourism BBBEE (broad-based black economic empowerment) scorecard

By adopting responsible tourism policies and practices, tourism business can make significant progress in complying with the scorecard. At least four of the seven key indicators on the 2009 tourism BBBEE scorecard - skills development, preferential procurement, enterprise development and social involvement - are also central to the National Responsible Tourism Guidelines published in 2003.

What responsible tourism is not

✓ Not another type of niche tourism
   Responsible tourism is about the legacy and the consequences of tourism – for the environment, local people and local economies.

✓ Doesn’t only take place in protected natural environments
   Any tourism business, whether located in a thriving urban metropolis like Central Cape Town, a neighbouring suburb or coastal town, can be a responsible tourism operation.

✓ Not something only big business must do
   The smallest of owner-managed tourism businesses can practise responsible tourism.

✓ Not a fad
   Operators, destinations and industry organisations in the UK, USA, Mexico, the Gambia, India, Sri Lanka, New Zealand, France, Australia, Germany and many more are already practising responsible tourism, and this list is growing. World Responsible Tourism Day is celebrated annually during November, endorsed by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).

✓ Not for those who want to see the world without suffering the consequences of their actions
   Responsible tourism doesn’t mean you have to go off the beaten track to experience it. You can have a responsible tourism experience right here at home, or in any destination you choose to visit.

✓ Not about giving to charity
   Responsible tourism is about the legacy and the consequences of tourism – for the environment, local people and local economies.

✓ Not about ‘green’ or ‘bush’ tourism
   Responsible tourism is about the legacy and the consequences of tourism – for the environment, local people and local economies.

✓ Not about a ‘no blackcurrants’ approach to tourism
   Responsible tourism is about the legacy and the consequences of tourism – for the environment, local people and local economies.
Cape Town is recognised as a world leader among destinations in implementing responsible tourism, highlighted by a win in the Best Destination category in the Virgin Holidays 2009 Responsible Tourism Awards.

However, this does not imply that Cape Town is truly a responsible destination in practice, and while levels of awareness of Responsible Tourism are moving in the right direction, this is not yet translating into widespread behaviour changes. That is why the City’s Tourism Department has been busy.

Over the past two years, the City of Cape Town’s Tourism Department has been working closely with other City departments and the local tourism industry to develop a Responsible Tourism Policy and Action Plan for Cape Town. The Responsible Tourism policy is not one in isolation in the City, but forms part of an overall policy approach to sustainability. This includes an electricity and water conservation campaign aimed at local residents, green building guidelines, a biodiversity strategy to conserve the city’s unique and endangered natural habitats, the Youth Environmental Schools programme, the Smart Living and Smart Events Handbook and related training, the development of new public transportation systems and much more.

The City believes that a successful plan will only emerge if the industry and destination stakeholders devise it together and that a small number of priority issues have to be established as a starting point.

Seven priority issues were identified in the Policy:

• Conservation of water resources
• Energy efficiency
• Integrated waste management
• Preferential procurement
• Enterprise development
• Skills development
• Social development

Later in September 2009, the City adopted a Responsible Tourism Charter. Signed by government and non-government organisations, tour operators, educators and trade associations (the Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa [FEDHASA], the Southern Africa Tourism Services Association [SATSA], the South African Association for the Conference Industry [SAACI] and Cape Town Tourism), the Charter commits each signatory to work actively on the seven destination issues.

The next steps in the campaign are to promote awareness of responsible tourism among residents, visitors and stakeholders; facilitate the implementation of responsible tourism practices in tourism businesses, and collect data and report on progress against the priority areas identified. A Responsible Tourism Communications Strategy and Action Plan has been developed to align and guide communications by the City and Charter signatories to achieve seven objectives:

• Give recognition to existing Responsible Tourism initiatives and actions
• Unite the diverse Responsible Tourism initiatives into a co-ordinated campaign
• Create awareness of Responsible Tourism within the City, the tourism sector, among the general public and tourists
• Provide targets for stakeholder action
• Gather information for the monitoring and reporting of the destination’s performance and progress in respect of Responsible Tourism
• Produce verifiable and credible reports regarding destination performance
• Create consumer awareness of Cape Town as a responsible destination

Cape Town: responsible tourism case study

For more information
Visit Cape Town’s website on responsible tourism on www.responsiblecapetown.co.za for the latest news and information about Cape Town as a responsible destination, and for documents about responsible tourism, including policies, research, guidelines, and tips for responsible travellers.
Cape Town’s journey to become a responsible destination

Many years ago, Cape Town embarked on the journey to become a responsible destination, but there is still a long road ahead before the city and its tourism industry are truly living by the principles of responsible tourism, and helping all visitors to enjoy the destination as responsible travellers. But, the City is on its way, and would like to share lessons learnt with other cities.

1996 Back in 1996, South Africa was the first country to include Responsible Tourism in its national tourism policy, the 1996 White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa. This was just two years into our new democratic era.

2002 In 2002, the South African National Responsible Tourism Guidelines were developed and a handbook published to help tourism businesses and destinations in adopting a Responsible Tourism approach. Also in 2002 the first International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations was held in Cape Town, with the ratified Cape Town Declaration becoming the world’s definition for responsible tourism.

2004 The City of Cape Town includes the principles of responsible tourism as a founding principle of its Tourism Development Framework.

2009 The City of Cape Town formally adopted a Responsible Tourism Policy committing all of the resources and structures of the Municipality to adopt a Responsible Tourism approach. This entails using six different levers to achieve sustainability in managing our destination. These include:
• Planning for economic development, transport and all other areas
• Regulation, including land-use approvals, rezonings, licensing, building plan approvals, and the like
• Using buildings and other immovable property owned by the City
• Requiring organisations funded by the City to adhere to Responsible Tourism principles in contractual arrangements
• Managing the City’s supply chain in a Responsible manner, including transport and travel, meetings and conferences, events, and so on
• Integrating Responsible Tourism principles within the City’s Performance Management framework

Also in 2009, on World Responsible Tourism Day, a Responsible Tourism Charter was signed by the tourism industry and the City of Cape Town. This included Cape Town Tourism, FEDHASA Cape, SATSA and SAACI.

Cape Town was recognised as the “Best Destination” in the 2009 Responsible Tourism Awards, announced at WTM in November, 2009.

2010 In 2010, Cape Town was one of the Host Cities for the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, and developed an action plan for hosting this major event in alignment with the principles of sustainability. The Green Goal programme had 41 projects designed to provide a positive legacy and help the event itself be sustainable.

The founding Responsible Tourism Charter signatories submit policies and improvement plans to extend responsible tourism throughout the local industry.

2011 In 2011, a Responsible Tourism Communications Strategy and Action Plan was developed to align and guide communications by the City and Charter signatories. This includes the development of a website, a brochure, a DVD, a How-To Guide, an image library and tips for travellers, amongst other products specific to Responsible Tourism.

Cape Town hosts the Responsible Tourism in Cities Conference at Indaba, bringing leading figures together to focus on the key issues that cities face along their journeys to become more responsible destinations.

Also in 2011, Cape Town showcases responsible tourism in South Africa in an iconic pavilion made out of recycled milk crates and milk bottles.

2019 Back in 1996, South Africa was the first country to include Responsible Tourism in its national tourism policy, the 1996 White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa. This was just two years into our new democratic era.
The South African National Standard for Responsible Tourism

If South African cities are to implement Responsible Tourism approaches, then it stands to reason that a single, unified national minimum standard for Responsible Tourism and an accreditation process for conformity assessment bodies that work with the tourism industry, is required.

Many existing interpretations of Responsible Tourism do not embrace the three main elements of responsible and sustainable tourism, i.e. social, environmental and economic responsibility. Furthermore, several different sets of criteria are currently used to certify tourism businesses. In this context, tourism businesses and consumers find it difficult to evaluate the credibility of certification schemes such as Fair Trade in Tourism SA (FTTSA), Heritage Environmental Management Company, Green Leaf and the like, and to determine whether the certification criteria used are in line with national policy.

Inconsistent interpretations of Responsible Tourism also confuse consumers, potentially damaging the reputation of the destination.

The South African National Standard for Responsible Tourism has therefore been developed to:

• Establish a common understanding of the minimum criteria for Responsible Tourism.
• Promote Responsible Tourism in the tourism sector, including accommodation, hospitality, travel distribution systems, as well as all organs of state and entities, organised labour and communities involved or interested in the tourism sector in South Africa.
• Establish the minimum criteria for certification organisations in the tourism sector.
• Be in line with the National Guidelines for Responsible Tourism and the global sustainable tourism criteria.

What about certification?

Some businesses join certification schemes to give greater weight to their corporate social responsibility. Evidence that customers choose certified products over non-certified products, and that certification therefore provides market advantage, is inconclusive. Having said this, the certification process will certainly channel a business’ thinking and actions to become more responsible.

Certification Organisations

• Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA) is a non-profit organisation that promotes sustainable tourism development. By electing to stay at or use the services of an FTTSA-certified establishment, tourists are assured that their travel benefits local communities and economies, and that the business is operated ethically and in a socially and environmentally responsible manner.

• The Heritage Environmental Certification Programme® has been developed to provide tourism-based businesses with an environmental management system (EMS) designed to reduce and limit the impact that their operations have on their environment. The programme is based largely on the Swan Eco-Label in Scandinavia, Green Globe Agenda 21, HEI and ISO 9000, 14000 and 18000.

• International Green Leaf Environmental Standard was initiated by the non-profit Wilderness Foundation of South Africa to reduce the effects of consumption on the environment and improve upon environmental management and awareness in an eco-friendly manner.

For more information on the South African National Standard for Responsible Tourism please call the SABS on Tel: +27 (0) 12 428 6666 or E-mail: info@sabs.co.za

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Cape Town
THIS CITY WORKS FOR YOU

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Cape Town
How can cities go from good plans and ideas to practical results at scale?

Crossing the chasm

We have ‘innovators’ and some ‘early adopters’ in Responsible Tourism in South Africa. There are encouraging signs: Responsible Tourism is being practiced across the range of products and experiences, from home-based stays in poorer communities straight through to the top-end in luxury, from pristine natural environments to the heart of a city’s urban centre.

But, although the tourism industry is strongly supportive in principle, in practice comparatively little has been done, and as cities we must work in partnership to build on this. We must cross the chasm, otherwise, Responsible Tourism will never become mainstream and have the impact that we need it to.

Consider the following five elements that will help cities increase the effectiveness of their drive for adoption of Responsible Tourism across the destination:

A destination-wide approach: No one role-player or segment of the industry or geographic area within South Africa’s cities will ultimately be effective. And as cities – a major employer, facility manager, and purchaser of tourism-related services – this firm commitment serves as the catalyst for bringing the other role-players into the partnership.

Partnerships: The City Government, as destination manager, should drive the process, but it is undertaken in partnership with the tourism industry and stakeholders. The journey must be taken together.

Co-creation and co-implemented: Create structures such as the Responsible Tourism Action Team with the City Government providing venues and resources to keep them functioning.

Transparency: Without transparency there is the risk of the private sector thinking the Government has a hidden agenda or in other ways trust begins to break down.

Rewarding early adopters: It is important to support innovators and early adopters of Responsible Tourism practices. Encourage and help the industry to enter Responsible Tourism Awards.

Responsible Tourism contributes to a city’s brand by keeping the destination grounded in what is authentic and sustainable. It connects the city with real people, communities, their needs, the physicality of the environment, and the social compact among residents. This inter-linkage also helps with uptake by the industry – it doesn’t threaten their business and they understand how to market themselves in the broader context of the destination.

Innovators Early Adopters Early Majority Late Majority Laggards

Adoption and implementation of Responsible Tourism

The Imvelo Responsible Tourism Awards

Imvelo means ‘nature’ in South Africa’s Nguni languages. The Imvelo Responsible Tourism Awards were initiated to coincide with the World Summit on Sustainable Development that was held in South Africa in 2002. They recognize tourism and hospitality businesses that make a real, measurable and sustained contribution to responsible tourism.

The awards are in line with the Responsible Tourism Guidelines for the South African hospitality industry and the UN World Tourism Organisation’s code of ethics. Imvelo is supported by the Heritage Environmental Rating Programme. The Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa is the custodian of Imvelo. Imvelo partners include the Department of Tourism, the Department of Water Affairs, Eskom, Absa, the Industrial Development Corporation and Don’t Waste Services.

Visit www.imveloawards.co.za

Deadline for entries: 31 August 2011

FEDHASA

Tel: +27 (0) 861 333 628
www.imveloawards.co.za

Imvelo award categories

Hospitality and tourism establishments or businesses, irrespective of size, can enter any of the following Imvelo award categories:

• Best social involvement programme
• Best practice — economic impact
• Best overall environmental management system
• Best single resource management programme
• Most empowered tourism business
• Investor in people award
• Chairman’s Award

An overall Imvelo winner will be selected from the various categories. The Imvelo award ceremony will be held on World Responsible Tourism Day – 9 November 2011.

Imvelo Responsible Tourism Awards

In partnership with

FHS: City Works for you
The Responsible Tourism in Cities Pavilion

Touch the Earth Lightly — a message to Indaba visitors.

The design rationale behind this Responsible Tourism in Cities Pavilion showcases the creative thinking and responsible use of alternative materials in the design and construction of exhibition venues.

The stand is constructed using standard scaffolding. The frame is clad with 1,200 recycled plastic milk crates, filled with 13,200 recycled plastic milk bottles. The interior space is clad with locally sourced alien invasive timber on the floor, walls and roof.

The scaffold framework has an internal cavity in which 32 water-proof fluorescent light units are mounted, four per scaffold panel. These lights illuminate the stand at night. The plastic bottles diffuse the light from these units housed inside the scaffold cavity and create a beautiful, eye-catching “jewel-box” effect at night time and early evening.

But it’s not just about aesthetics – it’s also about responsible living. The creators of the pavilion want to showcase creative opportunities arising from recycling of plastic materials and the clearing of alien invasive timber in South Africa.

All construction materials were sourced within a 40 km radius of the site, thereby reducing the carbon footprint for the pavilion. All the materials are either recycled waste, re-usable, re-claimed or newly purchased for re-use after Indaba.

The timber used in the construction of the stand is locally sourced pine (Pinus pinaster) and alien invasive gum (Eucalyptus) used in the manufacture of shipping pallets. This is in line with the objectives of the Working for Water Programme which is to clear water catchment systems of alien invasive species and to create employment opportunities.

The form of the structure is a cube – a simple, singular, powerful, memorable and iconic shape. It stands above the throng and acts as a billboard for our responsible tourism messages.

On the roof, a ‘forest’ of bamboo poles are secured at their bases and allowed to wave in the wind – announcing the pavilion by the gentle ‘clickety-clack’ of the poles connecting as they tap each other and reach skywards.

Credit

- Thanks to Host City Cape Town Green Goal 2010 Programme for enabling us to recycle the Pavilion
- The stand was designed and constructed by Cape Town based “Touching the Earth Lightly” – sustainable development and green design practitioners in collaboration with ST&AR Architects
- Thanks to SA Tourism for providing the space at Indaba
- Polyoak Packaging are thanked for the generous donation of reusable plastic crates and milk bottles

Join Cape Town on its journey to become a responsible destination.

www.responsiblecapetown.co.za