

Africa poised for growth in adventure tourism industry

Adventure tourism presents a significant opportunity for the tourism industry in Southern Africa and Africa, as highlighted by a panel discussion at WTM Africa, which took place from 3 to 5 April at the Cape Town International Convention Centre.

The discussion brought together industry experts Julia Louw, head of leisure tourism for the DMO unit Wesgro; Hannelie Du Toit, chief operating officer Satsa; Andre Du Toit, executive head of new business development for the first Equity Insurance Group and director at SATIB Insurance Brokers; and Quintin Smith, founder of Bikes 'n Wines, to discuss the potential for adventure tourism and the challenges facing the industry.



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During the panel discussion, Satsa announced the release of its Adventure Tourism Self-Regulation Roadmap and Code of Good Practice documents for public comment. The draft Self-Regulation documents were developed in consultation with industry stakeholders and aim to provide a framework for adventure tourism operators to operate responsibly and sustainably while promoting growth and development in the adventure tourism industry.



Satsa to unlock SA's adventure tourism potential

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"We believe that the Adventure Tourism Self-Regulation documents will provide a clear framework for operators to follow, resulting in raising standards and producing credible products with which we can position Southern Africa as a top adventure destination," said du Toit.

Africa is already recognised as a leading destination for thrill-seekers, and experts at the panel discussion predicted this trend will continue. The Southern African region offers numerous opportunities for adventure activities across the tourism value chain from big operators to the smaller SMMEs.

Sustainable travel

This form of travel offers a unique and eco-friendly way to explore the continent's diverse landscapes and cultures. With smaller cruise ships venturing into lesser-known towns, the concept of explorer cruising has gained momentum. This approach not only ensures that the cruise itself is environmentally responsible, but also supports local communities and economies by visiting smaller towns and promoting cultural exchange.

As adventure tourism continues to grow, new products and experiences will be created to transform the travel landscape, according to the panellists. This is already evident in rural areas where cultural activities are now included in tour itineraries, bringing new opportunities to those who live there.

Africa's adventure tourism industry is poised for growth, with opportunities for innovation, job creation, and sustainable tourism products. The continent's natural environments, wildlife habitats, and local communities must be protected through cooperation between governments and tour operators to ensure the sector's continued success.

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