TSHWANE DECLARATION

Standard Setting for Tourism Development of Heritage Resources of Significance in South Africa
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President Nelson Mandela of the Republic of South Africa said that ‘culture should be the language that should heal and transform the nation.’ Mahatma Gandhi referred to culture as the 'authentic wisdom of human ends and means.' Keeping in harmony with this profound understanding of culture, the Macro Economic Strategy on Growth, Employment and Redistribution by the South African government focuses on reconstruction and restructuring through an engagement of its social partners in development. The key guiding principles are equity, participation, empowerment and productivity.

Developing on existing cultural values and traditions enhances opportunities for communities. Identification of common goals leads to coordination, cooperation and efficiency. Development projects could alleviate existing tensions and achieve positive group dynamics stimulating productivity and encouraging tolerance for differences and the promotion of peace in a free and democratic South Africa.

It is within this context that the harnessing of cultural and heritage tourism potential of South Africa has been identified by the government and the South African Museums Association (SAMA) as a national priority in reconstruction and development. The official policy papers on Arts, Culture and Heritage; the Environment; and Tourism have all identified cultural tourism and cultural resource/heritage management as critical areas to be addressed.

In order to develop a coordinated national framework for cultural and heritage tourism the SAMA (Gauteng North Branch) convened a National Conference entitled The Way Forward: Harnessing Cultural and Heritage Tourism in South Africa during 4-9 February, 1997 in the Museum Park of Pretoria. It was a national initiative and an integral part of the triennial program (1997-99) for the development of South African tourism entitled Culture: Explore South Africa. It was organised in partnership with the various stakeholders from both the tourism industry and the heritage sector including the South African Tourism Board, University of South Africa, Declared National Cultural
Institutions especially the National Cultural History Museum, City of Pretoria and so on. The principal sponsor is the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. The conference was opened by the Deputy Minister for Minister for Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Ms Bridget. Mabandla and chaired by Andries Oliphant who was the Chairperson of the Arts and Culture Taskforce that conducted the national consultations leading to the drafting of the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage in free and democratic South Africa.

*The Way Forward* was structured around three themes: Partners in Progress for Responsible Tourism; Critical Issues in Cultural and Heritage Tourism; and Opportunities and Creative Development. Sessions were interspersed with workshops on Case Studies in Cultural and Heritage Tourism and the business of Arts and Cultural Development. A pre-Conference symposium/workshop on standards and ethics was organised in partnership with the South African Chapter of the International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and the National Monuments Council of South Africa. A post-conference workshop focussed on capacity building in previously disadvantaged communities for the planning and establishment of community cultural centres as hubs of cultural and heritage tourism that is grounded in the Reconstruction and Development Program of post-apartheid South Africa.

The major outcome of the conference and workshops is the TSHWANE DECLARATION for Tourism Development of Heritage Resources of Significance. The full text is reproduced below. Readers are invited to circulate or reproduce it in their bulletins and journals only in full along with this introductory statement. Proceedings of this process conference and the workshops are currently being edited for publication.
TSHWANE DECLARATION
For Tourism Development of
Heritage Resources of Significance

Preamble
Heritage resources are increasingly drawn into tourism development. This has given rise to serious concerns about the protection of environmental and cultural conservation values. While the heritage resources provide the content for product development tourism facilitates the promotion and marketing of these products. As the world’s largest growth industry, tourism has the responsibility, potential and purpose to ensure the conservation of heritage resources of significance, the enhancement of their appreciation and providing for community development.

Heritage and tourism industries have a responsibility to present and future generations in ensuring the preservation, continuation, interpretation and management of heritage resources of significance. In the development of heritage tourism products and the presentation and interpretation of heritage resources of significance, the responsible agencies and visitors should respect the community values embedded in the heritage resource being used.

The following guidelines were developed by participants from a diversity of heritage and cultural tourism interest groups in South Africa at the pre-conference workshop of The Way Forward: Harnessing Cultural and Heritage Tourism Conference in February, 1997. The workshop participants formed a significant portion of the participants in the conference. The following declaration was amended and adopted at the final plenary session of the Conference:

Acknowledging that heritage tourism:

- provides a unique opportunity to combine South Africa’s heritage with the tourism industry to create social economic and environmental benefits;
- offers South Africans and their visitors learning experiences on the personality of South Africa;
- nurtures experiences derived from South African cultural, artistic and natural heritage;
- can assist in providing equitable access to heritage and financial resources
- could be harnessed to achieve a more equitable distribution of the capacity to engage in economic and cultural systems in South Africa
Recognising that a partnership between heritage and tourism sectors can result in:

- quality products, information and services for the visitors;
- diversification of tourism products that enable visitors to experience the diversity of South African culture and heritage;
- promotion of cooperative marketing enabling effective and efficient use of facilities and resources;
- the responsibility of the tourism industry contribution to heritage conservation;
- enhanced social and economic outcomes contributing to the reconstruction and development of South Africa.

Principles for Heritage Tourism
We, the coalition of participants, at the conference entitled The Way Forward: Harnessing Cultural and Heritage Tourism, convened from 5-7 February 1997, including a diversity of members of various South African heritage and tourism industry sectors resolve and recommend the following principles in the promotion of constructive partnerships whose aim is to provide quality experiences for visitors without compromising the conservation and significance of affected heritage resources:

Identity, Image and Profile
- South Africa is a country of diverse cultures and all heritage tourism activities should be based on the full diversity of South African cultures
- Include arts, culture and heritage in all future tourism information materials such print media, audio visual materials, film and video as well as new multimedia formats
- Base the imaging of South Africa on indigenous symbols and forms of communication using local materials in all sectors of the industry
- Use South African artistic and cultural practitioners in portraying the natural attractions and heritage
- Encourage cross cultural communication and meaningful exchanges
- Encourage imaging which addresses national, regional and local priorities

Conservation
- Tourism should be recognised as an effort towards conserving and enhancing in a responsible manner the presentation of heritage
resources, including tangibles such as places; collections and artworks of heritage significance and intangibles such as voices, values and the traditions of people

- Tourism development should ensure the conservation, presentation and interpretation of resources in an authentic manner that is consistent with local character and the promotion of community development. Conservation of heritage resources does not prohibit the encouragement of economic development through the sensitive and respectful use of these resources for tourism in a manner that ensures their preservation for future generations.
- Ensure the development of visitor management strategies that comply with the laws, conventions and regulations dealing with the conservation of heritage resources of significance and respect for the rules and protocols of the community as keepers, custodians and caretakers of places of significance.
- All natural and cultural conservation legislation should be upheld.
- Tourism development should recognise the cultural and economic rights of the community.

**Community Participation**

- Ensure adherence to a standard of community development that is grounded in the principles of the Reconstruction and Development Program including the identification of benefactors and priority for employment of local people through creation of appropriate training opportunities.
- Encourage respect and consideration of community norms, customs, spiritual and religious beliefs in the development of tourism products and programs.
- Ensure the building of capacity amongst local artists and crafts people and local tourism destination managers to enable them to participate in development activities without exploitation by middlemen or copyright violations.
- Establish a policy environment that will ensure that communities share economic benefits that heritage tourism generates.

**Presentation and Interpretation**

- Effective interpretation of a heritage resource is important in making the message exciting, meaningful and authentic. The history and heritage connected to a resource and its environment are what visitors wish to experience. Assisting visitors to respect and appreciate the significance of the heritage resources should be the aim.
- Training of guide-interpreters, educational personnel and volunteers through accredited programs is important for quality interpretation,
conveyance of multiplicity of perspectives and communication of heritage values to visitors

- Access to interpretation in a variety of formats and appropriate languages and the employment of local community members are critical to the development of sustainable heritage tourism
- Recognition of existing knowledge in the community and encouragement for the participation of the public in the representation of cultural identities

**Heritage and Tourism Partnerships**

- Promotion of the active participation of public and private sectors is necessary to maximise use of local expertise, resources and opportunities
- Establishment of quality and management criteria that takes into consideration elements of physical environment, common values and aspirations is important in the determination of planning procedures for heritage sites
- Ensure that the economic benefits derived from tourism are also used for heritage conservation, development, maintenance, interpretation and community capacity building by means of funds establishing from tourism income
- Heritage Tourism potential of an area should include mapping of regional heritage resources; establishing their market potential; developing partnerships with regional services; ensuring community readiness and the building organisational capacity
- Promotion of joint policies, planning and programs between the different national, provincial and local government departments of Arts and Culture; Environment and Tourism; Trade and Industry; Sport and Recreation; Education; Housing and Town Planning; Safety and Security and Foreign Affairs

**Implementation**

The coalition of participants has agreed to establish a Heritage and Tourism Forum to promote and implement these principles.

Bodies, organisations, agencies and persons involved in heritage and tourism are encouraged to adopt this declaration.

*The Way Forward: Harnessing Cultural and Heritage Tourism Conference*

*4-9 February, 1997*

*South African Museums Association*

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Chairperson of the Executive Council Working Group on Cross Cultural Issues, ICOM; and was awarded by the South African Museums Association in 1997 the presidential award for outstanding service for transformation planning and training. As a Visiting Professor during 1997 at the University of South Africa, he worked as a specialist adviser, researcher and facilitator for the drafting of the Tshwane Declaration. (a.galla@uq.edu.au)


3 See also the Principles for Reconstruction and Development Program, African National Congress, Johannesburg, 1994.

4 The Tshwane Declaration was inspired by the report of the World Commission for Culture Development entitled Our Creative Diversity. Raj Isar, Executive Secretary of the Commission has made several trips to South Africa to engage in critical policy development forums.

5 Shifting the Paradigm, Corporate Plan of the South African Museums Association adopted at its Annual General Meeting in April 1997 in Petermartizburg (facilitated and drafted by Amarendra Galla)

6 Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa, Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism, June 1996; All Our Legacies, All Our Futures, White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage, Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, June 1996; Towards a New Environment Policy for South Africa, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, June 1996.