



DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE COMMUNICATION & ICT

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Women in Tourism urged to take the lead

Hartebeesport Dam - Women's contribution in the Tourism industry is continuing to make a serious impact towards growth and development in the sector. This is according to the Tourism Minister Thokozile Xasa during the women in Tourism chapter launching session simulcast in five provinces across the country. The North West session was attended by women in the industry and was viewed in Brits in Hartebeesport Dam at the Leopard lodge recently.

The Women in Tourism Networking Session was established in 2014 as a platform to drive programmes to support the development and empowerment of women in the tourism sector and also provide networking opportunities. The programme is driven by Respect, Recognition, Representation and Reward, of the women in sector.

According to Minister Xasa the department wants to capacitate women through high profiled programmes. "We want to give women in the industry the much needed training which is why we came up with the Executive Development Programme. We cannot allow obstacles such as education and training to keep women from growing. It is important to note that women are ready to challenge the obstacles in the industry. If we talk about inclusive participation we are dealing with diverse issues such as support, funding and networking," said Minister Xasa

In providing feedback on the progress made thus far, Minister Xasa indicated that Women in Tourism Networking Session is in the process of establishing an Advisory Council for Women in Tourism. The Council will provide the Minister with advice on

how to attain tangible results within the next five years given the projected economic performance of the sector against the transformation compliance levels related to participation of women in the sector. Council Members will be a focused group of women with distinguished track record on women empowerment issues and thought leaders, who are willing to spare their time for the Women in Tourism programmes in their advisory capacity to the Minister.

Addressing delegates attending the event in Hartebeespoortdam, Professor at the University of North West Haretsebe Manwa called on women to move from being role players in the industry and become implementers. She said that women dominate the industry and they must strive to take over the industry.

The Provincial Head of Tourism Department in the North West Advocate Neo Sephoti hailed the networking session as a pivotal platform that ensure networking and create opportunities for outstanding and leading women in the tourism sector. She applauded women in the industry for the role they play in sustaining tourism growth within the province.

The breakfast sessions were held simultaneously in five provinces namely, the Eastern Cape (Port Elizabeth), Gauteng (Johannesburg), KwaZulu-Natal (Durban) and North West (Brits), in order to nationally mobilize women in the sector, raise awareness and facilitate networking to strengthen women's networks in tourism.

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