

# SADC to support RETOSA on tourism destination marketing strategy

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat in Gaborone, Botswana has agreed to fully support and actively assist the Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (RETOSA) to establish partnerships and secure resources from international cooperating partners towards a tourism destination marketing strategy.

The agreement is aimed at moving the SADC region's share of tourism from its current 2% of global tourist arrivals and receipts to 5% within the next decade. Additionally, RETOSA secured support for the various mechanisms to be adopted in seeking approval from the SADC ministers for the implementation of Phase II of the Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas (TFCA) Development Strategy to be expanded to include all 18 SADC TFCA's.



From left to right: Bentry Chaura, acting director, SADC, Tawanda Gotosa, technical advisor, SADC, Deborah Kahatano, senior programme officer, SADC, Lily Rakorong, chairperson, RETOSA, Sem Shikongo, former Chairman, RETOSA, Moses Chakanga, technical advisor, RETOSA, Tebogo Oletile, public relations and marketing manager, HATAB, Kenneth Racombo, Acting Ceo of RETOSA, Andoniaina Andriamiandrisoa, Programme Officer, SADC and Simba Mandinyenya, Executive, RETOSA.

Lily Rakorong, CEO of Hospitality and Tourism Association of Botswana (HATAB) and newly elected chairperson of RETOSA said: "The outcomes of this meeting with the SADC Secretariat will inform RETOSA's contribution towards the preparations for the upcoming combined SADC tourism, environment and natural resources ministers meeting which is to be held in Johannesburg on 23 and 24 November 2017."

## Activating regional transformation

"The SADC governments now have the important task of activating the Tourism Coordinating Unit (TCU) at the SADC Secretariat which is a key requirement for the completion of the RETOSA transformation. It must be remembered that RETOSA's new priority is to secure smart partnerships with the region's private sector players towards a focused destination marketing strategy for the region," she added.

Since RETOSA, as a subsidiary of the SADC Secretariat, reports to the new directorate of food, agriculture and natural resources, it was important that RETOSA also receives a briefing on the activation of the Tourism Coordinating Unit (TCU). RETOSA expects the TCU to assist in addressing the bottlenecks and challenges in the tourism policies that hinder investment in tourism and movement of the businessperson.

Kenneth Racombo, acting CEO at RETOSA had the following to say about the main objective of the partnership: "The main objectives of this meeting was for RETOSA to provide a briefing on the transformation process at REOTSA thus far and to initiate the formalisation of the partnership and cooperation between SADC and RETOSA, as required by the SADC subsidiarity guidelines. New priorities were discussed following the recent corporate restructuring of RETOSA which resulted in a new value proposition for its key stakeholders, and a new vision which will be achieved through focused destination marketing and strategic investment.

This new vision is firmly founded on strong partnerships with the private sector operating in the region – a steep departure and a serious shift in paradigm from past practice which had seen more preoccupation with governments or public sector. Intra-regional tourism is essential to a thriving tourism economy in the region."

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