

Plan to grow sustainable coastal and marine tourism in SA approved

In an effort to grow sustainable coastal and marine tourism (CMT) in South Africa, which will advance the [Nine-Point Plan](#) through [Operation Phakisa's Oceans Economy](#), the Cabinet - in partnership with various tourism stakeholders, including the Department of Tourism and the Minister of Tourism, Tokiozile Xasa - will see South Africa's competitive advantage in nature, culture and heritage, leveraged.

Welcomed by Xasa, the CMT plan will be implemented in a nodal or cluster approach which will prioritise destinations rather than individual tourism projects or products.



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“The coastal and marine tourism sector will contribute about R21.4bn to the GDP and create about 116,000 direct jobs by 2026, thus reducing poverty, inequality and unemployment, while contributing to sustainable livelihoods and development. These estimates are conservative as they are growing off a low 2015 base of R 11.9bn direct contribution to GDP and 64,400 direct jobs,” said Xasa.

The identified nodes/clusters in the first phase (0 - 5 years) encompass the following geographic areas:

- Node 1: Durban and surrounds (KwaZulu-Natal);

- Node 2: Umkhanyakude District including Umhlabuyalingana and surrounds (KwaZulu-Natal);
- Node 3: Port St Johns to Coffee Bay (Eastern Cape);
- Node 4: East London, Port Elizabeth and surrounds (Eastern Cape);
- Node 5: Cape Town and surrounds (Western Cape); and
- Node 6: West Coast and surrounds (Northern Cape).

Initiatives in all of these nodes cover six thematic areas including marketing, events and routes, regulations and permitting, research and spatial planning, beach precinct development, tourism infrastructure and tourism safety, maritime tourism and skills development.

Over the last year, three initiatives, namely the [blue flag beaches](#) programme, boat based whale watching and shark cage diving, as well as off-road vehicle 4X4 beach driving have commenced. These initiatives will continue to be taken forward in the first phase implementation plan.

“I would like to convey my gratitude to the relevant public and private stakeholders who took part in the development of detailed plans for coastal and marine tourism implementation plan. I can say without a doubt that it is only through these kinds of partnership that we can successfully implement this plan, together We Do Tourism,” concluded Xasa.

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