

**Southern Africa Regional Sustainable Tourism Network  
Meeting**

Meeting Held on 8 May 2008

Durban, South Africa



## List of Abbreviations

<b>AGM</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>AWF</b>	African Wildlife Foundation
<b>BOCOBONET</b>	Botswana Community-Based Organisation Network
<b>CI</b>	Conservation International
<b>DEAT</b>	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism – South Africa
<b>DBSA</b>	Development Bank of Southern Africa
<b>DTI</b>	Department of Trade and Industry – South Africa
<b>FTTSA</b>	Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa
<b>GOTO Mada</b>	Groupement des Operateurs du Tourisme de Madagascar
<b>GTZ</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Technical Cooperation)
<b>LTDC</b>	Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation
<b>MITUR</b>	Mozambique's National Ministry of Tourism
<b>NACOBTA</b>	Namibia Community Based Tourism Assistance Trust
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>PSC</b>	Project Steering Committee
<b>QWT</b>	Quthing Wildlife Development Trust
<b>RETOSA</b>	Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>SAT</b>	Southern Africa Trust
<b>SNV</b>	Netherlands Development Organisation
<b>ST</b>	Sustainable Tourism

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## **1. In Attendance and Apologies**

Delegates from all 14 Southern African Development Community (SADC) members states were invited to attend the meeting, as were representatives from numerous regional organisations. The meeting was attended by 32 individuals from 11 different countries; a total of 25 different organisations were represented.

### **In Attendance:**

African Wildlife Foundation (AWF)

Botswana Tourism Board

Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) – South Africa

Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Tourism Unit – South Africa

Eco-Awards Namibia

GOTO Madagascar

Heritage, the Environmental Management Company

Ministry of Environment and Tourism – Namibia

Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources – Zambia

Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Culture – Malawi

Namibia Community Based Tourism Assistance Trust (NACOBTA)

Namibia Tourism Board

National Directorate of Tourism – Mozambique

Open Africa

Quthing Wildlife Development Trust (QWDT)

Netherlands Development Organization (SNV)

Southern Africa Trust

Swaziland Tourism Authority

Tanzania Tourist Board

Tourism Council of Zambia

World Wide Fund for Nature

Zambia National Tourist Board

Zimbabwe Council for Tourism

**Apologies:**

Africa Safari Lodge Foundation

Botswana Community-Based Organisation Network (BOCOBONET)

Conservation International (CI)

GTZ - Madagascar

Lesotho Council for Tourism

Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC)

Malawi Tourism Marketing Consortium

Ministry of Tourism – Angola

Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (RETOSA)

**2. Meeting Organisation and Objectives**

The workshop process was facilitated by Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA) with funding provided by the Southern Africa Trust (SAT). The objectives of the workshop were as follows:

1. To reach consensus on the need for an integrated approach to sustainable tourism in southern Africa, and on the role of a Network in achieving this.
2. To expand Network participation to organisations from all SADC countries, and to share the outcomes of the first meeting (November 2007) with the wider group.
3. To agree on the direction of the Network:
  - a. To develop a membership protocol.
  - b. To establish working groups based on the four thematic areas identified at the first meeting.
  - c. To identify and elect contact points within in each country.

### **3. Meeting Summary**

FTTSA, the Botswana Tourism Board and the National Directorate of Tourism of Mozambique made specific inputs to the network meeting.

#### **Presentations**

##### **3.1 Review of Inaugural Meeting (November/December 2007)**

Mr Steven Ramalepa, Botswana Tourism Board

This presentation reviewed the highlights from the initial meeting, which included consensus that tourism development in SADC could benefit from: establishing uniform Sustainable Tourism (ST) principles for the region; marketing ST collectively; developing tourism certification in an integrated manner, and; avoiding the creation of numerous independent labelling schemes.

Foreseeable outcomes of working together in ST were identified; these included a harmonised, efficient, stronger and more efficient approach to ST development in SADC. Four main thematic focus areas were identified:

- Policy and advocacy
- Standards and branding
- Training and learning
- Marketing and awareness-raising

##### **3.2 The Feasibility of Sustainable Tourism Certification in Mozambique**

Ms Analàdya Loureiro, National Directorate of Tourism, Mozambique

This presentation reviewed a study being conducted to explore the feasibility of implementing a 'Fair Trade in Tourism' certification programme in Mozambique. Support for initiating such a program included: tourism is a key economic sector in Mozambique; tourism's potential to contribute to poverty eradication; there is already a responsible tourism policy and Code of Conduct in place, which require tools to assist with implementation, and; sustainability criteria can potentially work alongside Mozambique's quality and grading criteria. In addition, it was explained that FTTSA was chosen as a logical partner because

they have already received requests for such an initiative from the private sector and the certification programme is a strong policy implementation instrument.

The research component of the feasibility study was conducted through a joint effort of South African and Mozambican consultancies. It included an analysis of the tourism industry in Mozambique as well as recommendations for a prospective certification programme to address the local context. To supplement this research, workshops were held during April 2008 in Maputo, Inhambane and Pemba in order to consult the private sector, local governments, NGOs and tourism associations about relevant opportunities and challenges of implementing such a certification programme.

The entire process has been guided by a Project Steering Committee (PSC), which is comprised of senior representatives from Mozambique's National Ministry of Tourism (MITUR), Centro Terra Viva (an environmental NGO in Mozambique), the Hotel Association of Southern Mozambique, and Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA).

The initiative is receiving strong support from national and provincial tourism authorities as well as private sector and NGOs. A pilot project may be launched in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2008 pending approval of the PSC.

### **3.3 A Case Study: A Regional Approach to Sustainable Tourism in the Americas**

Ms Jen Smith, Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA)

The Sustainable Tourism Certification Network of the Americas (known as 'the Network of the Americas') is a group of certification programmes and supporting organisations that work together to promote ST in the Americas. A case study on the Network of the Americas is relevant to SADC for a variety of reasons, such as: it includes participants from various developing countries; it incorporates environmental, social, and economic aspects of ST; important lessons were learned during the process, which have been shared; and because it is widely known as a successful regional approach to ST networking.

Prior to the establishment of the Network of the Americas, an 18-month feasibility study was conducted. The feasibility study suggested that a regional sustainable tourism platform was needed to disseminate information about certification, to address the participation of small, medium-sized and community-based certification operations, and to address matters such as financial sustainability, marketing, monitoring and evaluation, and accreditation.

The presentation covered the following:

- Structure of the Network
- Responsibilities of members
- Lessons learned
- Top 5 Achievements of the Network

### **3.4 Considerations for a Southern Africa Network**

Ms Lisa Scriven, Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA)

This presentation brought forth a number of considerations for a Network in southern Africa, which served as the basis for discussion on the topic. These included the following themes:

- Structure of the Network
- Membership Protocol
- National Contact Points
- Technical Working Groups
- Ad hoc working groups
- Executive Committee
- Annual General Meeting
- Secretariat
- Legal Status
- Travel Costs

## **4. General Discussion**

The general discussion that followed the presentations encouraged delegates to bring forward suggestions and concerns about the Network. It focused primarily on finances, the role of relevant regional organisations such as the Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (RETOSA), who will drive the Network, Annual General Meetings, Membership and the Network's initial focus.

### **4.1 Finances**

There was much discussion surrounding the financing of the Network, particularly regarding travel costs associated with Network participation. Feedback from delegates included the following:

- Participants need to work together to secure financing for the Network.
- A working group could be tasked to discuss how the Network could potentially be financially sustainable.
- Donor money should not be relied on; rather see it as an added bonus if donor funds are obtained.

### **4.2 Role of RETOSA**

Many delegates expressed concern that RETOSA was not represented at the meeting. Jennifer Seif, the facilitator, clarified that RETOSA had been invited to the meeting but were, unfortunately, unable to attend due to a restructuring process underway currently, which will be finalised in the coming months. RETOSA is, however, aware and supportive of the Network discussions and supplied FTTSA with many contacts for the meeting. Comments from delegates included the following:

- RETOSA could potentially take on the Network as one of its activities.
- Some delegates felt that SADC governments may want to continue to channel their financial support through RETOSA and that they may be reluctant to redirect funding from RETOSA towards other initiatives (e.g. an ST network).
- Despite this, it was maintained that a regional Network should, at the very least, strive to influence RETOSA.

- It *is* possible to move forward without RETOSA for now, but options to bring RETOSA on board as the Network moves forward should be considered.

### **4.3 Who Drives the Network?**

The extent to which the Network should be driven by the private and/or public sector was also raised. Input from delegates included the following:

- The Network should be driven by the private sector so that its progress can be more easily streamlined, although support from SADC members' governments, in principle, would be beneficial.
- Private sector expertise would be beneficial. There are many possible expert members such as consultants who could potentially make significant contributions.

### **4.4 Annual General Meetings (AGMs)**

Regular network meetings will be required. Feedback from delegates regarding the location and frequency of AGMs (if it is ultimately decided that they take place annually) are as follows:

- Some delegates felt that while it makes sense democratically to move the AGM to a different destination each year, it does not make as much financial sense. All countries that will be involved in the Network have direct flights to Johannesburg, making it a logical meeting location (in terms of time and finances).
- Others, however, maintained that the AGM should not necessarily take place annually in South Africa, nor at Indaba and that it would be preferable to have it move from country to country.
- Travel requirements for working groups were also discussed. It was suggested that they could meet in different countries depending on the location of the members of the relevant working group. The destination that makes most logistical sense for the working group could be selected.

#### **4.5 Membership**

Much discussion took place on the topic of membership. Comments from delegates included:

- Some delegates felt that membership should be confined to country-level representation.
- Others commented that members should include Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), governments and corporate businesses.
- In spite of the fact that some countries might not be able to participate at this stage, the network can still get started. In other words, it was felt that the network should not be delayed while waiting for all countries to get on board; those who are ready and willing to work together should do so without delay.

#### **5. Focus on Sustainable Tourism Certification**

It was decided that the Network needed an initial focal point, which was selected from the 4 thematic areas identified at the Network's first meeting (as outlined in the summary of the first presentation). The group present decided that Sustainable Tourism Certification should be the initial priority area for the Network's efforts. The motivation was that this would provide a more manageable workload and would streamline efforts during the initial establishment of the network. Opportunities for future expansion of the network's activities were, of course, left open. .

It was agreed that a working group to explore the initial focus area of ST certification should be established. All parties were welcome to join this working group; six delegates from five SADC countries volunteered to take part. These were Mr Luis Sarmiento (SNV Mozambique); Ms Sonja Ranarivelo (GOTO Madagascar); Mr Wolfgang Schenck (Eco-Awards Namibia); Ms Olga Katjiuongua (NACOBTA); Mr Steven Ramalepa (Botswana Tourism Board); Ms Analadya Loureiro (MITUR), and; Ms Jennifer Seif (representing the Secretariat of the Network, FTTSA).

This group is to communicate electronically in the months following the meeting regarding ST certification in SADC and will circulate the outcomes to all tourism delegates who have been involved in the Network thus far.

## **6. Concluding Remarks**

At the end of the meeting there was consensus that the Network should proceed and that the majority of delegates were interested in staying involved.

Mr George Murumba from the Southern Africa Trust (SAT) thanked all of the participants for attending and expressed his enthusiasm about the start-up of the Network.

Ms Olga Katjiuongua of NACOBTA concluded the meeting, sharing enthusiasm for working together as a region, marketing collectively, and getting to know each others' products, environments, cultures and more. She also reinforced the need to work together and stay committed to the Network. Lastly, she thanked the donor, the Southern Africa Trust, the facilitator (Jennifer Seif), FTTSA for organising and all delegates for their attendance and participation.