



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

NATIONAL POLICY ON TOURISM FOR NAMIBIA

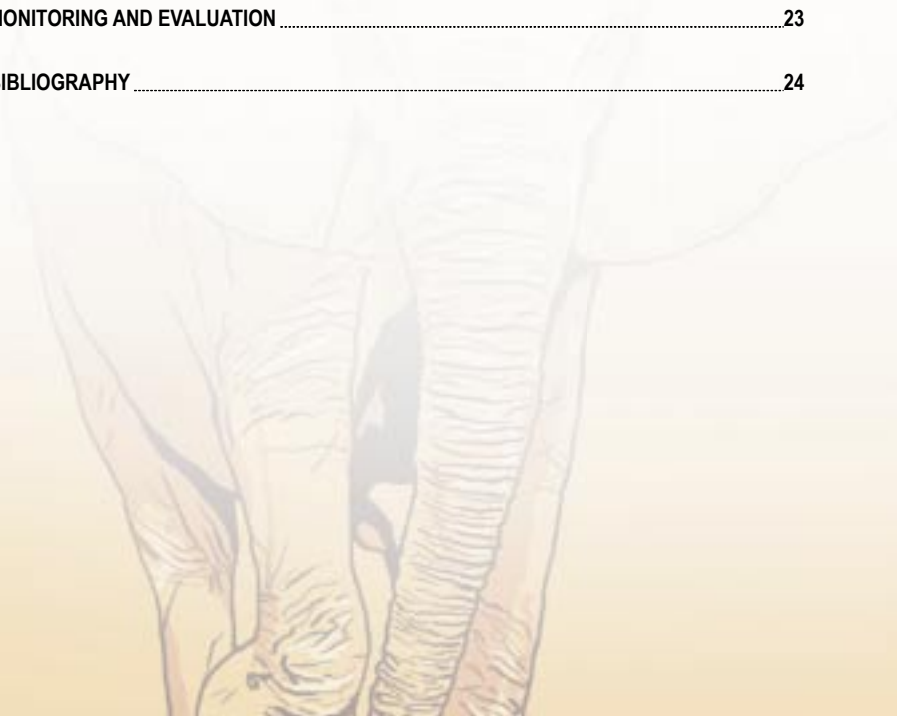
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FOREWORD

The National Policy on Tourism for Namibia represents the consensus of a wide consultative process with those commercially in tourism, non governmental organizations and government officials.

The policy provides a framework for the mobilization of resources in order to realize long-term national objectives. As articulated in the National Development Plan 3 and Vision 2030, these are sustained economic growth, employment creation, poverty reduction, reduced inequalities in income, gender and between regions and the promotion of economic empowerment.

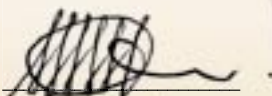
The Policy covers several aspects of the economy, environment and society as a whole. This is appropriate because the “footprint” of tourism permeates many areas. Tourists are temporary residents in our country and as such share with Namibians in the benefits of services provided by all divisions of government. Both tourists and nationals want security, good roads, efficient transport services, comfortable accommodation, hygienic restaurants, good value shopping, entertainment, efficient tele-communication services and access to health services in the event of indisposition.

The Policy is not limited to those areas that are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. It includes aspects related to tourism that are contained in the policies of other state bodies. What is present in this Policy is a compromise between a simple broad brush policy and a detailed version which would replicate large parts of many other policy documents. These include policies dealing with wildlife concessions, tourism investment, the environment, regional development, land, education, aviation etc.

Tourism is not a new phenomenon in our country. It has evolved over the years notwithstanding the absence of a specific written policy. However the Policy is required because we are at the stage when important decisions need to be taken on the future of the sector whose implementation would require significant financial resources.

The policy formulation is guided by the vision of:

“A mature, sustainable and responsible tourism industry contributing significantly to the economic development of Namibia and the quality of life of all her people, primarily through job creation and economic growth”.



Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, MP
Minister

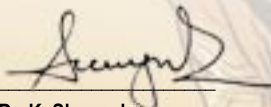
PREFACE

With the emergence of tourism as one of the key sectors in economic development, it became evident that a clearly defined policy for the tourism sector was an imperative. Although its development has taken a great deal of time to be finalized, the process ensured that the interests of parties involved in tourism or benefiting from it are balanced.

The first step in the development of the National Policy for Namibia was the conduct of a major workshop on the subject followed by a series of bilateral discussions between officials of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and other ministries, public bodies, communities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. This policy strikes a balance between the policies of other ministries and agencies which have a bearing on tourism and one which would be limited to those for which the MET is directly responsible.

The policy document contains sections dealing with information, regional cooperation and planning, the administration of tourism, provision of information, the respective roles of the private and public sectors and planning of tourism. It has been of particular importance to codify policies relating tourism development on State and communal land, hunting and the granting of concessions. In addition, the issues of access, aviation, roads, rail, ports and telecommunications are discussed. The development of superstructures covering accommodation, catering, shopping, tour operators and vehicle rental are encouraged. Of particular importance is the facilitation of access to capital and BBEE. The latter include skills development, apprenticeships, internships, and sponsorships, strategic representation and employment equity, ownership and enterprise development, preferential procurement and social responsibility programmes. Human resources training and personal development, domestic tourism and funding are covered in this policy document.

I acknowledge with appreciation the contribution made by many organisations to the formulation of the Policy among them, FENATA, NAPHA, TASA, HAN and NACOBTA, the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communications, the National Planning Commission, Namibia Wildlife Resorts, Namibian Tourism Board, the National Roads Authority, Civil Aviation Authority and the National Police. I commend the efforts by the staff members of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism who spearheaded this process.



Dr. K. Shangula,
Permanent Secretary

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BBEE	Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment
FENATA	Federation of Namibian Tourism Associations
HAN	Hospitality Association of Namibia
MET	Ministry of Environment and Tourism
MTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
MWT	Ministry of Works and Transport
NACOBTA	Namibia Community Based Tourism Association
NAMPORT	Namibian Ports Authority
NAPHA	Namibia Professional Hunting Association
NDP III	National Development Plan III
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NIC	Namibia Investment Centre
NTB	Namibia Tourism Board
NWR	Namibia Wildlife Resorts
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprise
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Sized Enterprise
TSA	Tourism Satellite Account
TASA	Tour and Safari Association
UNESCO	United Nations Economic Social and Cultural Organisation
VAT	Value Added Tax

1. INTRODUCTION

The government aims to improve the quality of life of the people of Namibia. As articulated in “Vision 2030” Namibia shall be “well developed, prosperous, healthy and confident in an atmosphere of interpersonal harmony, peace and political stability; and as a sovereign nation, (being) a developed country to be reckoned with, as a high achiever in the community of nations”.

Tourism is a key sector in achieving this national goal whose development will be afforded a high priority. Conditions to encourage growth, spreading benefits and ensuring sustainable utilization of the natural resources and wildlife will be created.

In order to realise the 2030 Vision and harness tourism’s potential, government will encourage tourism that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

Tourism offers opportunities for economic and social development where few other economic opportunities exist. Tourism jobs are geographically widespread and they can be created with lower capital investment unlike in other sectors. Furthermore, the large variety of jobs in the sector offers employment opportunities for people lacking formal qualifications that can thereafter acquire skills and advance their careers. Tourism creates jobs that help conserve the nation’s magnificent natural environment and wildlife. In short, tourism offers the opportunity to achieve economic and social development for communities throughout the country, while at the same time help to conserve the country’s unique natural environment. A significant percentage of women are employed in the tourism industry.

2. POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 Aim of the Policy

The National Policy on Tourism for Namibia aims to provide a framework for the mobilisation of tourism resources to realise long term national goals defined in Vision 2030 and the more specific targets of the Third National Development Plan, namely, sustained economic growth, employment creation, reduced inequalities in income, gender as well as between the various regions, reduced poverty and the promotion of economic empowerment.

The policy formulation is guided by the vision of:

“A mature, sustainable and responsible tourism industry contributing significantly to the economic development of Namibia and the quality of life of all her people, primarily through job creation and economic growth”.

2.2 Principles of the Policy

Ten important guiding principles underpin Namibia's tourism policy:

- 2.2.1 Tourism policy must serve government objectives and shall be for the benefit of all Namibians and visitors. Government intervention, whether in the form of regulation, facilitation or investment, will be driven by national interest, not by narrow self interests. This policy is promoting both domestic as well as international tourism. Promoting domestic tourism will ensure that Namibians also enjoys the beauty of their tourism attractions.
- 2.2.2 Tourism needs to be competitive. Attracting investment and successful marketing require positive interventions by government to create a competitive business environment which enhances the country's ability to compete internationally and regionally.
- 2.2.3 The tourism policy must enable the private sector to operate and compete effectively in global markets to generate responsible tourism. Government recognizes the contribution that the private sector makes towards government objectives.
- 2.2.4 Increased local participation and equity are essential to spread the benefits of tourism. Broad-based black economic empowerment will underpin the future of society and the economy. Both men and women must develop appropriate skills which equip them to become fully involved in profitable business operation, management and ownership.

- 2.2.5 Tourism development must be economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. Namibia neither wants, nor can afford to permit, tourism that yields only short-term benefits and leaves behind a wake of destruction, de-motivation or disruption to the fabric of local life.
- 2.2.6 Sustainability is inextricably linked to the protection of the natural resource base namely, environment, aesthetic value, wildlife and culture. Government recognizes the need to be involved in managing, promoting and financing aspects of these.
- 2.2.7 The government's investment and operational functions with regards to the tourism sector are related to the areas of infrastructural development, marketing, education and skills development. Government will further facilitate the identification and removal of strategic barriers to tourism development and thus create an enabling environment for the tourism sector to operate competitively. It is also government's responsibility to ensure conservation, quality standards, fiscal policies and the provision of a rational and equitable business environment. Government recognizes the importance of its role in these areas, without which Namibian tourism will not achieve its potential. Government owned tourism enterprises such as Namibian Wildlife Resorts and Air Namibia need to operate on commercial principles.
- 2.2.8 Tourism investment, development and promotion must be market-driven. Assessment of the market potential and viability must be undertaken before committing resources. Otherwise projects risk failure, wastage of resources, local de-motivation, and the opportunity cost of these resources being invested in viable development projects elsewhere. If not however, there must be valid justification on the basis of national economic benefit or on social or environmental factors, e.g. conflict resolution, wildlife conservation, community cohesion etc.
- 2.2.9 It is the government policy to promote interventions on the basis of national economic benefits.
- 2.2.10 The human factor is of prime importance in tourism. The quality of service provided should be of a standard that meets the requirements of present day national, regional and international tourism.

2.3 Objectives of the Policy

- 2.3.1 Tourism is already a well established sector in Namibia. It has developed over the years within the framework of various government policies virtually all of which evolved to deal with general domestic business activities. Policies relating to tourism have in fact been in effect over the years but in large measure they have been un-written. This document represents a formal statement of these de facto policies already existing with some adjustments to cope with changing circumstances and help achieve national objectives.

- 2.3.2 The Policy is published in order to facilitate the drafting of a tourism strategy; increase confidence of prospective investors and entrepreneurs; tourism awareness of the general public regarding the direction of tourism in Namibia.

2.4 Strategy of the Policy

- 2.4.1 Government recognises tourism as a priority economic activity and its contribution to national development. It also recognises the extensive 'multiplier' effect of tourism and its ability to deliver jobs and incomes well beyond the areas directly benefiting from tourism. It generates employment not only in businesses providing goods and services directly to tourists but also in suppliers of these goods and services and, by the spending and re-spending of incomes arising from tourism.
- 2.4.2 In this, its role as an export business and important generator of foreign exchange is accepted. Where practicable, it will be afforded similar fiscal and monetary support as provided for other export oriented businesses
- 2.4.3 Its impact on national and personal incomes and employment has been determined through a Tourism Satellite Account exercise¹ developed for tourism. It will be necessary to repeat this on a regular basis perhaps biannually to measure economic impacts and monitor performance.
- 2.4.4 Government will focus on increasing tourism revenues within sustainable limits, in order to realise the potential of tourism as a major contributor to Namibia's economic growth.
- 2.4.5 Government will create an enabling environment by putting in place the political, economic, fiscal, human and physical frame conditions conducive to development and by removing barriers. Regulations are also essential to protect communities from exploitation and land from overuse, as well as ensuring environmental sustainability, public safety and maintenance of standards.

¹ World Travel and Tourism Council – The Impact of Travel and Tourism on Jobs and the Economy. (2006)

3. CROSS-CUTTING TOURISM FRAME CONDITIONS

3.1 Information

Effective planning of all aspects of tourism requires accurate data on visitor numbers, spending, movements, use of amenities and facilities, etc. Information of the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism is also needed as is qualitative research identifying tourists' preferences, dislikes, motivations, profiles and their impact on the environment and society. Government policy is to provide necessary statistical information in a coordinated manner and ensure that market and other research necessary for tourism planning and operations is available.

3.2 Planning

- 3.2.1 A national tourism growth strategy and action plan will be drafted under the auspices of the MET and NTB to achieve the objectives and implement the National Tourism Policy.
- 3.2.2 Regional tourism strategies and development plans are needed to ensure implementation of the policy at regional and local levels, to provide input into the national strategy and in particular to guide national product development priorities.
- 3.2.3 All tourism developments must be within the carrying capacity of an area. This will be defined by environmental limits as determined by the Environmental Management Act and Environmental Management Plans.
- 3.2.4 It is essential that development decisions are made taking into account the value of tourism and the opportunity costs incurred by the inappropriate use of areas with high tourism potential with incompatible or inappropriate activities. Planning decisions will be taken in a transparent manner on the basis of land use and regional plans that include clear zoning and take into account environmental sensitivity and the potential for tourism development.
- 3.2.5 A mechanism will be developed to enable land use plans to be drawn up at regional levels within the context of regional development plans and within national guidelines.
- 3.2.6 Regional economic development plans and regional tourism strategies will provide an essential framework for identifying the most appropriate form of use for land, thereby guiding decisions on investment in tourism development at local and regional levels.

3.3 Environment and Sustainability

- 3.3.1 All tourism developments must conform to the provisions of the Environmental Management Act, 2007 and other relevant legislation². All tourism developments must also conform to appropriate and applicable regulations of municipalities and local authorities.
- 3.3.2 In conjunction with the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement, the MET will draft guidelines and best practices defining the nature of commercial operations on conservancies and other State owned lands, which will be considered eligible for Land Board approval.
- 3.3.3 Government will encourage environmental management plans to be in place in advance of tourism developments.
- 3.3.4 A code of environmental regulation and best practice particularly with respect to off-road operations and activities in sensitive areas to be followed by tour operators and individual visitors will be drafted. Breaches of these codes by tour operators and their guides may result in the withdrawal of their registration and may be taken into account when applications for registration are considered by the NTB.
- 3.3.5 Namibia possesses landscapes and attractions of great beauty which are unparalleled and which must be protected from unsuitable exploitation and degradation. The MET will explore means of achieving this, including the designation of areas as 'tourism zones' within which certain activities would be favoured and supported and adverse developments curtailed.
- 3.3.6 Tourism offers many opportunities for economic and social development which can be achieved in a sustainable manner. However it will only be possible if the product i.e. wildlife and the natural environment, are also managed in a sustainable way.
- 3.3.7 The principle of sustainable tourism implies that tourism activities should be planned in such a way that visitor satisfaction is achieved, the industry is profitable, the fragile environment is protected and natural resources are used sparingly for the benefit of current and future generations. Namibia will develop sustainable tourism within the context of this definition.

² These include:

- Environmental Management Act, 2007,
- Pollution Control and Waste Management Act,
- Marine Resources Act 2000,
- Water Resources Management Act 2004,
- NTB Act 2000,
- Tourism Industry Transformation Charter, 2004,
- Government Notice 121 on General Health Regulations.

- 3.3.8 Government is also committed to the principles set out in the international plan of action for sustainable development. It wishes to establish Namibia on the international stage as a leader in sustainable tourism, with a reputation for effectively managing the balance between the demands of nature and wildlife conservation, environmental protection and tourism development.
- 3.3.9 It is recommended that specified carrying capacity studies be undertaken for each major tourism area in Namibia, particularly for Tourism Control or Development Areas. In addition environmental management plans and monitoring programmes should be carried out to detect if the defined carrying capacity is appropriate

3.4 Hunting

- 3.4.1 Hunting tourism is a valuable segment of the market. It can help address human wildlife conflict and provide strong incentives for conservation. Accordingly government policy is to support such activity provided it is sustainable and beneficial to communities.
- 3.4.2 Hunting and non-hunting activities cannot be easily accommodated at the same time and place. Management and zonation plans must ensure that conflicts do not arise between the two groups.

3.5 Tourism Development on Communal Land

- 3.5.1 Government encourages the establishment of tourism on communal land as an efficient means of involving communities in the tourism sector and thus for the to share in the benefits derived from tourism.
- 3.5.2 Government recognises that tourism offers significant opportunities for poverty alleviation in communal land areas. Due to barriers that blocks tourism investment, Government will institute measures to ensure access to resources in order to ensure that the full potential for tourism development is realised.
- 3.5.3 The core function of conservancies is community-based natural resource management. Revenues derived from natural resource management will be critical in ensuring local support for conservation and covering direct costs involved. Conservancies should only engage in activities that do not compromise the integrity of natural resources.
- 3.5.4 Where conservancies exist, they should be the primary agency for the collection and distribution of benefits from tourism use of natural resources. MET through the Community Based Natural Resources Management programme will facilitate appropriate training for members of the conservancies to undertake tasks associated with their operation.
- 3.5.5 Conservancies will be empowered to negotiate sub-leases as long as the new agreements comply with the terms of the original lease to the conservancy.

- 3.5.6 Synergy between tourism on communal land and adjoining state-protected areas will be encouraged.
- 3.5.7 Under the terms of its contract, a tourism business operating on communal land is required to compensate communities for any loss of benefits that would otherwise accrue to it or to certain of its members and for the costs incurred in associated land management and environmental and infrastructural maintenance and repairs.
- 3.5.8 Local communities often incur considerable costs through damage to crops and the living environment, as well as through surrendering traditional hunting rights or refraining from killing disruptive animals. They must therefore benefit directly from local tourism revenue for such restraint and loss of livelihood as per existing agreement with the conservancies.
- 3.5.9 Provision shall be made in leasing contracts to minimise the adverse effects on local communities of a business failure. The primary safeguard against this occurring is to ensure that businesses are run efficiently on commercial lines. Social benefits can only be derived if the undertaking is economically successful. A second safeguard is the inclusion of a performance clause in leases that enables rights to be returned from the conservancy to the State, or for the State to intervene, where there is clear evidence of actual or potential business failure threatening major damage to local community interests. This will not oblige government to act, but merely create the opportunity for it to intervene, if deemed necessary to provide “breathing space” for another investor to be found.
- 3.5.10 Where a tourism business in a communal area cannot be shown to be commercially viable, yet a community decides to go ahead with the venture, it will have to make clear how it intends to resource and fund it in the long-term.

3.6 Concessions on State Protected Land and Communal Land

Granting of concessions will be guided by the Policy on Tourism and Wildlife Concessions on State Land of 2007.

4. REGIONAL COOPERATION

- 4.1 Government recognises the benefits of Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) and related tourism initiatives with Namibia's neighbours in order to increase the total volume of tourism into the Region.
- 4.2 Government will participate in Southern Africa Development Community regional initiatives and will seek to promote Namibia's best interests within the context of such regional cooperation. It will strive to achieve reciprocity with neighbouring states on tourism initiatives and seek to harmonise regulations relating to tourism.
- 4.3 Government supports and therefore participate in the development of trans-frontier parks as well as Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas and conservation areas as a means of fostering regional cooperation.

5. NATIONAL COOPERATION ON TOURISM

5.1 Culture and Heritage

- 5.1.1 Implementation of this Policy will be done in conformity with the National Heritage Act of 2005. The MET supports the efforts of the National Heritage Council in developing appropriate visitor access and providing high quality interpretation of a standard in keeping with the international importance of sites under its care.
- 5.1.2 Government supports the improvement and upgrade of national cultural heritage sites for tourism purposes.
- 5.1.3 In the implementation of this Policy Government will protect and preserve current and future UNESCO designated world heritage sites such as Twyfelfontein for amongst others tourism purposes.
- 5.1.4 In the implementation of this Policy Government will promote and encourage the experience of local culture, traditions and customs and ensure that culture is not inappropriately exploited.

5.2 Health, Safety and Security

- 5.2.1 Namibia is a safe destination and incidents involving tourists are rare. Given the importance of safety and security to the tourism sector, the Ministry will actively liaise with the relevant ministries to enforce the relevant safety measures and regulations
- 5.2.2 This Policy further encourages Operators to ensure the security and safety of their guests.
- 5.2.3 MET recognises the effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and its adverse impacts on the tourism industry. It supports the efforts of other government bodies and NGOs in addressing the problem especially through the implementation of the National Policy on HIV/AIDS; the Guidelines for the implementation of the National Code on HIV/AIDS in Employment issued under the Labour Act, 1992. The Third Medium Term Strategic Plan (2004-2009) and the MET Policy on HIV/AIDS.
- 5.2.4 In line with the four frameworks on HIV/AIDS above, this Policy encourages employers in the Tourism industry to develop employee assistance programmes.

5.3 Tourism³ Super structure and Communication

- 5.3.1 The infrastructure used by visitors has been developed primarily to serve the needs of the resident population. Tourism needs will be taken into account in planning and developing capital projects and the provision of major infrastructural facilities.

Air Access

- 5.3.2 The national aviation policy of the Directorate of Civil Aviation is favourable to tourism development. As a party to the Yamoussoukro Decision, Namibia effectively operates an open skies policy for African airlines it is therefore that a liberal approach is followed in considering applications by other airlines seeking operating 'rights' to and from Namibia.
- 5.3.3 Maintaining a national airline not only raises the profile of Namibia in business and political circles abroad, but also ensures reliable links for trade and tourism with key external markets. Most importantly, it avoids Namibia being dependent on foreign carriers, whose business decisions are dependent on factors outside the control of the State.
- 5.3.4 The Airports Company of Namibia is important to tourism development not least because the quality of its facilities and services colour the initial and final impressions of virtually all visitors by air. Attractive building design and decoration, clear signposting, efficient systems for ensuring smooth and fast traffic flows, as well as helpful welcoming staff, should all add to the visitors' experience and create a positive impression of Namibia. The same applies to airports operated by municipalities.

Roads

- 5.3.5 A good quality route network is of particular importance to the development of tourism in a far flung and sparsely populated country. Good access to attractions and facilities are also necessary. Given the scale of the country, the quality of these is reasonably good as far as tourism is concerned. The policy of the Ministry of Works and Transport is to expand the network of good quality roads based on sound economic and business principles.
- 5.3.6 The MET maintains close ties with the Ministry of Works and Transport, the Roads Authority and municipalities and makes representations on behalf of the tourism sector to rectify identified deficiencies.

Rail and Bus

- 5.3.7 The permanent way and rolling stock of the railway system are at present being upgraded. The Governments policy is to provide a more attractive product for tourists.

³ The concept 'Tourism superstructure' refers to infrastructure required at regional and national level to enable and facilitate local investment into tourism.

Scheduled Bus Routes

- 5.3.8 Co-operation with the existing busline services between Namibia and her neighbours as well as internally in Namibia should be intensified and the possibility of using buses as a means of transport of tourist should be promoted. The existing scheduled bus service is proposed to be extended to include services to all the regional centres. If the same buses cannot be used on tar and gravel roads, a system of changing of equipment should be introduced.

Taxis

- 5.3.9 Government recognise that taxis provide an essential service to the tourism industry it therefore will liaise with the relevant competent authority to regulate the taxis sector especially those that operates from the airport to the city centre. In order to promote standard services and fees to their clients as well as the safety of their clients.

Sea Ports

- 5.3.10 Recognising the importance of cruise liners along the Namibian coast, the Ministry will actively liaise with important stakeholders such as Namport to ensure appropriate facilities are provided for the cruise line sector. It is believed that Namibia can capitalise on its location and attract increasing visits to the ports of Lüderitz and/or Walvis Bay. Companies will be encouraged to include Namibia in cruise itineraries and local operators should be facilitated in providing necessary land services/facilities for shore excursions and shopping.
- 5.3.11 The ports of Namibia are already visited by yachts either on excursions from RSA or those on long voyages travelling the trades northward to Europe, the Caribbean or North America. These visitors will be encouraged.

Entry Formalities

- 5.3.12 Government is committed to ease of movement across Namibia's borders for its citizens, residents and bona fide foreign visitors.
- 5.3.13 The Ministry of Environment and Tourism will continue to liaise with relevant line ministries and stakeholders to ensure that officials are treating visitors with courtesy and efficiency.
- 5.3.14 Government supports the implementation of a SADC-wide regional visa for bona fide visitors.

Telecommunications

- 5.3.15 The Ministry recognises the importance telecommunications to the tourism sector. It will support increased use and wide-scale accessibility of broad band internet connections as an essential tool in international marketing and as a service to tourists. National policy is to encourage extension of coverage of the mobile phone service.

5.4 Tourism Infrastructure

Accommodation

- 5.4.1 Government commits to the enforcement of the NTB Act of 2000 and all its related regulations. Government further recognises the need to ensure that accommodation is of a quality to match the demands of international visitors. It will encourage the provision of such facilities which meet environmental criteria and promise to be viable in line with the provisions of the NTB Act of 2000.
- 5.4.2 The NTB maintains a register of all accommodation and facilities provided for tourists. To qualify for registration, establishments and operations must meet set minimum standards. As per the NTB Act of 2000, only businesses duly registered can operate.
- 5.4.3 Real estate developments planned for use by tourists have also merit and will be encouraged. They represent the emergence of an ancillary form of tourism which can be provided at low cost and promises a long term stream of benefits. However developments will only be supported if they meet environmental standards and local planning regulations, do not detract from the natural attractions of the areas, do not impose unreasonable burdens on the local utilities and are proportionate to the size of the municipality.
- 5.4.4 The Ministry will support the implementation of an appropriate accommodation grading scheme, which will be administered through the NTB and will provide assurance to potential visitors and enable them to make informed choices. It will also assist tour operators in Namibia and overseas to select premises meeting appropriate quality standards. And it will act as a benchmark for establishments to assess the relative quality of their operations and ensure improvements.

Restaurants

- 5.4.5 Dining is an important feature in tourism. Restaurants will be encouraged to work closely with the professional tourism industry to link their standards with the quality levels expected by tourists who frequent their facilities. Restaurants will be required to improve standards, diversify their menus and offer a greater range of international cuisine. The variety of national cultural cuisine and dishes should not be ignored as making new food discoveries is for many an ingredient of a good holiday. To this end, the MET will explore ways of encouraging restaurants to popularising Namibian food and featuring local dishes.

Shopping

- 5.4.6 The Ministry of Environment and Tourism recognises that shopping is an important activity in a holiday and may serve as a motivation for the selection of the destination. The MET will examine how sales can be increased by the development of handicraft, the promotion of the VAT refund scheme for non-residents and other initiatives that instil confidence in visitors that they are getting good value. The relatively early closing hours of shops not only limits the shopping opportunities for visitors, it also contributes to the absence of animation in towns after 6 pm. The MET will seek with relevant ministries a liberalisation of trading regulations to permit late hour opening of retail establishments.
- 5.4.7 Good quality handicrafts which reflect aspects of the country and which are transportable are items sought by tourists. The MET encourages the activity and will seek means to improve design, production and marketing. It will explore with municipalities and other bodies how the physical conditions of informal handicraft markets can be improved.

5.5 Regulated Businesses

Tour Operators

- 5.5.1 Efficient tour support services are of vital importance for the development of the tourism sector. Government will ensure and encourage through NTB that operators offer safe, value-for-money tourism packages. Operators must maintain the legal levels of insurance on all vehicles used for fee-paying passengers. Operators are encouraged to train tour guides, booking agents, and other tour operations staff for higher levels of specialized tourism operations in Namibia. Government will encourage tour operators to work with community based tourism operations and promote use of tourism products in Communal Conservancies and integrate such products into mainstream, traditional tourism routes. Government recognizes that tourists choose where they would like to go when on holiday, but tour operators can suggest alternative locations and destinations which promote eco-tourism and cultural tourism products as a part of the overall tourism experience in Namibia.

Vehicle Hire

- 5.5.2 The Government recognises the importance of this sub-sector to the tourism industry and encourages vehicle hire operations to maintain modern well-service fleets that will meet the standards and guidelines set by the relevant regulatory authorities. The Government encourages that vehicles for hire in Namibia should be registered in Namibia according to the standards set by local authorities. Government will work with NTB as the regulating authority to implement guidelines to achieve this end.

Air Charter

- 5.5.3 Government recognizes that Air Charter is a significant factor in the growth of the tourism sector and will liaise with the relevant authority to ensure that this sub-sector comply with the relevant policies, legislation and regulations that governs their operations especially as regards the safety of aircrafts used by the industry.

Tour Guides

- 5.5.4 Tour Guides are an essential component of the tourism sector and government will liaise with the relevant training institutions to ensure that guides receives a high quality education in order for them to deliver effective and quality service to their clients and work towards registration of all tour guides operating in Namibia.

Travel and Booking agents (Including on line booking services)

- 5.5.5 Travel and booking agents are the first line of contact for tourist intending to visit Namibia. Government will work with the NTB to ensure that relevant tourist information and other marketing information is made available to them to ensure effective and quality service to clients.

Hunting Operators

- 5.5.6 Namibia is a one of the sought after destination for the hunting tourism sub-sector. Government will liaise with the relevant authority to ensure that all relevant policies, laws and regulations are adhered to and in this regard MET will also strive to create an enabling environment in which professional hunting can operate efficiently.

6. TOURISM PROMOTION

6.1 Investment

- 6.1.1 The Government recognises the importance of investment in the tourism sector and will strive to create an enabling and supportive environment for investors through the development of a tourism investment strategy.
- 6.1.2 Government recognises the need for facilitating investment in tourism ventures in general. In certain circumstances, it may introduce incentives to attract prospective investors to encourage investment in new potential tourism ventures i.e. community lodges. These incentives should however not skew or displace market forces.
- 6.1.3 The MET will proactively engage with Ministry of Trade and Industry on tourism investment opportunities. In this regard Government will actively strive to identify and remove barriers to tourism investment opportunities in rural areas and on communal lands and to create incentives for increased investment into tourism opportunities in rural areas on communal lands.
- 6.1.4 The Ministry of Trade and Industry directly and through its agency Namibia Investment Centre (NIC) is responsible for investment promotion of all sectors of the economy in Namibia. However, the MET and NTB through contacts with investors and active involvement in international promotion, can bring a particular expertise to the task of attracting the increasing levels of foreign direct investment that will be needed to meet growth targets. Means of how this expertise contributes to or complement the efforts of the NIC, will be explored.

6.2 Small and Medium Enterprises

- 6.2.1 Support to small firms is primarily the responsibility of the Ministry of Trade and Industry. The MET in conjunction with the MTI will support actual and potential SMEs in the field of tourism to improve or develop skills in business planning, management, operations and marketing.
- 6.2.2 The establishment of tourism enterprise centres to support tourism for SMEs will be explored.

6.3 Access to Capital

- 6.3.1 Government recognises the difficulties faced by investors undertakings and in accessing capital for tourism projects in rural areas and on communal land. This reduces development potential and compromise Namibia's competitiveness. Government will explore remedies for addressing these obstacles to accessing affordable capital.

6.4 Business Tourism

- 6.4.1 Namibia has potential for business tourism and the government together with the NTB will work towards the promotion of business tourism to capture this segment of the visitors to Namibia.

6.5 Spreading the Benefits of Tourism to formerly disadvantaged Namibians

- 6.5.1 Tourism development contributes towards alleviating poverty, reducing regional inequities and promoting economic empowerment. The aim is to ensure that tourism benefits host communities, particularly in rural areas.
- 6.5.2 Investors are required to commit themselves to the principles of empowerment, environmental conservation and appropriate sectoral codes of conduct, as outlined from time to time in government policy regulations and industry charters.
- 6.5.3 Government supports initiatives of local people that are economically sustainable. Its views are that a broader section of the population and a higher proportion of women than heretofore should be involved in the management and ownership of the tourism enterprises. As an immediate step and to facilitate the transfer of knowledge, the Government encourages partnerships between the private sector, communities and individuals from within formerly disadvantaged sections of society.
- 6.5.4 Mechanisms shall be developed to support incentives to maximise growth of local ownership, involvement of women and management capacity by means of partnerships between the current industry, land holders or resource owners and external sources of management skills and investment capital. The private-public-partnership concept is seen as a suitable vehicle for spreading the benefits of tourism.
- 6.5.5 The Government recognises where properly registered communal conservancies are the appropriate institutions for tourism development partnerships.
- 6.5.6 Historical inequities and geographical factors have prevented many Namibians from participating in economic development. The nation's future success depends both on ensuring that opportunities are available to all and integrating previously disadvantaged men and women into the economic mainstream. Tourism offers many opportunities for transformation.
- 6.5.7 The Government will encourage the formation of a National Tourism Advisory Council to develop, implement and monitor, in co-operation with government, a plan to ensure that BBEE is progressing and that these principles are applied in tourism businesses. The National Tourism Advisory Council will also address other tourism related issues which impact tourism development in Namibia.
- 6.5.8 Government will further promote the establishment of private sector membership associations.

- 6.5.9 Government endorses the Tourism Industry Charter of 2004 as an effective mechanism to pursue BBEE in the tourism industry.

6.6 New Product Development

- 6.6.1 MET and NTB will assist regional and municipal tourism authorities and non-governmental organizations in planning new tourism initiatives. It is essential that such developments, including community-based initiatives are market-driven and economically viable.
- 6.6.2 Government will support product diversification and a route development strategy that spread demand and/or promote the emergence of new products and/or improve access to existing ones.
- 6.6.3 The MET recognises that new product development must be linked to existing or emerging tourism plans.

6.7 Employment Creation

- 6.7.1 One of the aims of the National Tourism Policy is to give guidance, advice and direction to tourism development in Namibia in order to maximise efficient and sustainable use of national resources and increase employment opportunities for Namibians. Where skills shortage exists and that this needs to be addressed with increased training and skills transfer programs for those entering and already a part of the tourism industry.
- 6.7.2 Government will monitor non-nationals as a proportion of total tourism employment and the trends in order to ensure that numbers of non-nationals are decreasing over time.
- 6.7.3 Availability of well-trained and qualified guides is a priority. Guides operating in Namibia are required to be appropriately qualified and registered with NTB when such registration procedures and systems are promulgated.

6.8 Training and Personal Development

- 6.8.1 NTB is legally mandated to provide training in the sector in collaboration with the National Qualifications Authority. Together with relevant ministries, a programme will be drawn up which will provide the necessary skills to meet the needs of the industry and aspirations of those employed.
- 6.8.2 MET will support the NTB and the National Qualifications Authority in the development of national qualifications framework and national curriculum guidelines to meet the needs of the industry.

- 6.8.3 In delivery of training, the roles of government and industry should be complementary. The provision of second level vocational training will continue primarily to be the responsibility of Government. Vocational training will be certified by Namibia Training Authority within the national standards set by the Namibia Qualifications Authority. Government will also strive to ensure that training institutions correlate their programs to the needs of the industry.
- 6.8.4 The MET will seek to make training more accessible to previously disadvantaged Namibians especially women and vulnerable groups through liaison with the relevant stakeholders.
- 6.8.5 MET will encourage line ministries and institutions responsible for tourism training to involve representatives of the industry's professional associations in planning and delivery of training.
- 6.8.6 If necessary, government shall devise possible schemes to source additional funding in order to make training self-financing.

6.9 Tourism Awareness

- 6.9.1 Government will develop programs which can assist Namibians in understanding the importance of tourism to their standard of living and to the economic, social and environmental development of the country
- 6.9.2 The Government with its partners will initiate national tourism awareness campaigns.

6.10 Marketing

- 6.10.1 Government encourages effective marketing as a key to expanding tourism earnings.
- 6.10.2 Marketing will focus on maximising foreign earnings.
- 6.10.3 Marketing will also address the needs to spread occupancy throughout the year and the country, and encourage demand for socially and economically beneficial products.
- 6.10.4 In order to compete as a tourist destination an adequate marketing budget is required. Namibia needs to ensure that the level of promotion is adequate in terms of volume and quality to compete internationally.
- 6.10.5 The NTB is responsible for developing marketing strategy in implementing the national tourism policy and achieving targets set by the MET in accordance with the NTB Act.
- 6.10.6 The Ministry of Environment and Tourism will explore with the Ministry of Finance other potential sources to finance specific activities, such as a tourism development fund, training, marketing and research.

6.11 Domestic Tourism

- 6.11.1 The Government recognises the untapped potential of domestic tourism to ease the problem of the seasonality and support for facilities that otherwise would not be viable. Government encourages tourism operators to introduce flexible seasonal pricing, particularly in accommodation, to stimulate domestic tourism and generate the benefits it brings to local communities. The direct beneficiaries of tourism, who are the Private sector, Regions, Municipalities and in some cases Non-Governmental Organizations are encouraged to promote tourism.
- 6.11.2 The Government recognise the untapped potential of domestic tourism and therefore will develop and implement a national domestic tourism strategy.

6.12 Cultural Tourism

The Government will aggressively promote the attractions of Namibia's varied cultures and heritage as part of the Namibian tourism product. Namibia is blessed with a rich and diverse cultural and traditional heritage of artists ranging from story tellers, poets, musicians and traditional dancers amongst others. There is also the important and oft forgotten Namibian traditional cuisine which definitely has great potential to add to the Namibian tourism product. Namibia's distinctive and varied culture will undoubtedly increase the 'sense of place' that contributes to its uniqueness. Visitors will be encouraged to be involved and experience aspects of local cultures especially those related to graphic and performing arts. The MET will work closely with the National Monuments Council and the NTB to put cultural and historical issues in tourism planning and marketing.

7. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- 7.1 The Government recognises the fact that the tourism industry is multi-sectoral and involves many stakeholders. The lead body is the Ministry of Environment and Tourism.
- 7.2 The Policy will be implemented through a partnership of the private and public sectors with government creating the necessary favourable conditions and the private sector availing of this climate to develop commercial operations. The MET's role will be to provide leadership, maintain an environment conducive to development and monitor progress. Government recognises the need to secure the sector's active involvement, amongst others, in the following areas:
- 7.2.1 Consultation with the tourism industry on proposals or changes to existing arrangements affecting businesses (e.g. policy development, regulations, legislation and fiscal issues);
 - 7.2.2 Provision of marketing support, via the Namibian Tourism Board (NTB), for collective marketing;
 - 7.2.3 Communication of market intelligence on developments, trends and market potential, via NTB;
 - 7.2.4 Facilitation of access to capital for small, medium and micro enterprises (SMEs) business development;
 - 7.2.5 Support for broad-based black economic empowerment (BBEE) in the industry;
 - 7.2.6 Development of skills and training; and
 - 7.2.7 Support for measures for environmental and social responsibility.
- 7.3 The responsibility of planning and coordinating tourism development rests with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET).
- 7.4 Its main efforts for tourism are focused on creating a facilitative environment that supports enterprise development, encourages the growth of responsible tourism and prevents undesirable practices. It is responsible for the regulation and control of tourism businesses and coordinates the efforts of public and private sectors. It represents the interests of private sector in government in resolving problems, introducing initiatives, removing constraints, facilitating responsible development and creating development opportunities. Implementation of some of its tasks is delegated to agencies for which it is responsible, i.e. the Namibian Tourism Board and Namibia Wildlife Resorts (NWR).

- 7.5 NTB is a statutory body responsible for achieving broadly defined marketing goals set by the MET in the areas of; research, promotion, product development and quality and service standards. NTB is also responsible, in accordance with the provisions of the NTB Act, 2000 with setting and enforcing quality standards for the tourism industry and collecting levy payments from the tourism industry.
- 7.6 Namibia Wildlife Resorts is a key agency in implementing government's strategic plans for developing tourism facilities in protected areas. In this it is responsible for the commercial operation of resorts owned by government and developing new resorts as approved by the Minister of Environment and Tourism.
- 7.7 The Namibia Wildlife Resorts should be an active development partner and foster broad based tourism development through assistance with mentoring, marketing and promotion of government initiated tourism ventures such as community based lodges.
- 7.8 Government recognizes that the capacities of the MET and associated tourism bodies need to be expanded and improved to handle the expanding complexities of tourism development.
- 7.9 Government recognizes that Air Namibia is a key player in tourism development, marketing and air access to Namibia and will therefore liaises with it to further strengthen its contribution to tourism.
- 7.10 To facilitate the required expansion to meet Vision 2030 and NDP 3 aims, the structure of the public administration of tourism will be reviewed to afford it the flexibility and necessary resources to permit it to anticipate and respond to rapidly changing situations.
- 7.11 The establishment of a National Tourism Advisory Council which consists of representative of key public and private 'players' in tourism is encouraged and should be established by cabinet decision.
- 7.12 (Regional Councils) Government recognises the key role played by the Regional Councils in rural development, which is one of the key development areas of the Government's development agenda. The Government recognises the need to assist Regional Councils capacities to facilitate tourism development.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 8.1 Monitoring and evaluation of the appropriateness of the Policy will be undertaken in tandem with that of the planned Tourism Growth Strategy. The Policy will be the framework within which a strategy will be elaborated to achieve the national goals.
- 8.2 A national tourism growth strategy and action plan will be drafted under the auspices of the MET and NTB, in consultation with partners and stakeholders in the tourism industry, regional and municipal leadership, and other Ministries whose duties affect the tourism industry to achieve objectives and implement the national tourism policies.
- 8.3 Quantifiable targets for tourism will be set by Government.
- 8.4 The Directorate of Tourism will be responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Policy.

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