

## PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

### Pro-Poor Tourism Pilots in Southern Africa

Six leading Southern African tourism industry members have just been announced as partners in a new programme: ***Pro-Poor Tourism Pilots in Southern Africa***.

They will each be supported by the Pro-Poor Tourism Pilots programme to develop and implement 'pro-poor' strategies at one of their major operations.

The six industry partners and their chosen sites are:

- **Sun International**, working at **Sun City**, the largest resort in South Africa.
- **Southern Sun**, the largest hotel chain in Southern Africa, focusing on the **Sandton Sun and Tower Intercontinental Hotel**, along with other hotels in the Sandton area of Johannesburg.
- **Wilderness Safaris**, one of South Africa's leading safari tour operators, working at the **Rocktail Bay Lodge** in Maputaland;
- **Spier** and its expanding range of accommodation, attractions and facilities on the Western Cape's wine route;
- The exclusive safari operator **Ker and Downey, Tanzania**, working across Tanzania; and
- **Tribe Africa**, a tour operator which services a range of tourist establishments located in the Phongolo Biosphere and Phongolo-Ntsubane Transfrontier Conservation Area into Swaziland.

Over the coming 2 ½ years the programme will work with these six partners on site to help them to establish long-term PPT strategies that will significantly impact on local poverty and make business sense to the operator. Pro-poor tourism strategies are designed to increase the net benefits of tourism for the poor by focusing on issues such as employment and training, purchasing and sourcing patterns, resource and revenue-sharing, infrastructure development, consultation, and a range of potential livelihood benefits that can be derived from tourism. At each site, a set of strategies will be developed that are specific to local conditions.

The participation of these high profile and influential industry partners is a clear indication that Pro-Poor Tourism is gaining momentum in Southern Africa and that the industry supports the

programme. Information on pro poor tourism strategies, including lessons learned by the pilot partners, will be shared with the wider tourism industry during the project.

The programme has the backing of leading tourism organisations, which include South African Tourism (SAT), the Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA), the South African Chamber of Business (SACOB), the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (NAFCOC), Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTT, SA), the Greater St.Lucia Wetland Park Heritage Authority. and the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT). Information on pro-poor tourism is already being shared with the industry through networks of TBCSA and SACOB.

Cheryl Carolus, CEO of SAT launched the programme in September 2002, emphasising the importance of tourism and the value of this new programme within the strategic objectives for tourism in South Africa:

*'Economic growth per se is not enough. ... We put our weight fully behind this initiative. This can provide genuine growth – growth that makes a difference to the people. It is a great initiative. We all can make choices and we do – it makes business sense to take a PPT approach.'*

Clive Poultney (of Mboza Tourism Projects) and Caroline Ashley (of the UK-based Overseas Development Institute) initiated the programme, which is funded by the Business Linkages Challenge Fund of the UK Government's Department for International Development.

#### **Further information for editors.**

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##### **2. Further information sources**

For further information on the programme, the partners, or the launch, visit the programme's website: [www.pptpilot.org.za](http://www.pptpilot.org.za)

For general background on pro poor tourism, see [www.propoortourism.org.uk](http://www.propoortourism.org.uk)

##### **3. Details of partners for PPT pilots**

### **Southern Sun Hotels, Sandton**

In the heart of South Africa's financial and business district, our pilot site is the complex of seven hotels and the Sandton Convention Centre run by Southern Sun, with particular focus on the InterContinental Hotel. Southern Sun Hotels is the largest hotel chain in Southern Africa, expanding elsewhere in Africa, and holds exclusive rights from 6 Continents plc. to operate the InterContinental, Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn brands in sub-Saharan Africa. Southern Sun is seeking to broaden its transformation policy and strengthen its contribution to Alexandra Township through its portfolio of operations in Sandton and will focus on poverty alleviation initiatives.

### **Sun City Resort**

Sun City, the largest and probably best-known Resort in Southern Africa, includes four luxurious hotels with a room capacity of 1,300, casinos and a variety of entertainment. It is located in the North West region of South Africa, near the Pilanesberg National Park. It is owned by Sun International, one of the largest Southern African hospitality companies. A range of strategies to boost the local economy are being considered.

### **Rocktail Bay Lodge, Wilderness Safaris**

Rocktail Bay Lodge is an upmarket eco-lodge, located within a coastal forest reserve in Maputaland (KwaZulu Natal). It is co-owned by Wilderness Safaris, one of the largest safari operators in Southern Africa, and the neighbouring community. The partnership approach has already received several awards (BA Tourism for Tomorrow award in 1999; FEDHASA Imvelo award 2002 for 'Best Community Involvement Programme'), and means to enhance the partnership further are being pursued.

### **Spier**

The Spier is located in the winelands of the Western Cape in South Africa. The Spier estate has expanded from its traditional base as a winery into wineland tours, accommodation, retail and leisure activities/facilities. Further expansion plans strongly emphasise involvement of local products and entrepreneurs.

### **Tribe Africa & Phongolo Biosphere**

Tribe Africa operates in the Phongolo Biosphere located in KwaZulu Natal in South Africa, and is part of the Pongolo-Ntsubane Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) into Swaziland. The biosphere involves several private lodges with safari and cultural tourism products being developed in collaboration with local residents and entrepreneurs. Tribe Africa is also central to the Maputaland Tourism Association, involving tour operations across the region and into two further TFCAs.

### **Ker & Downey Tanzania**

Ker & Downey Tanzania operate exclusive safaris in nine private concessions and in the country's National Parks. They operate photographic safaris, trophy hunting safaris and an airline charter company. All of these activities support and fund 'The Friedkin Conservation Fund', which is responsible for community development projects and supports the Wildlife Department in its anti-poaching activities throughout the country.

We are furthermore grateful for the support from **AVIS Car Rental**, South Africa, over the whole duration of the project.