Sustainable Tourism in National Parks and Protected Areas:
A Legislative Overview
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Presentation Outline

• Purpose
• Background
• National Parks and Tourism in SA
• Legislation for Tourism Management and Development in Parks and Protected Areas
• Key Stakeholders
• Conclusion
Purpose

• To provide an overview of the legislative framework required for the management and development of tourism in National Parks and Protected Areas; and

• To initiate discussion on the importance of sustainable tourism in providing resources for National Parks and Protected Areas.
Background

• The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)
  – Chapter 2: Bill of Rights, Section 24 (Environment)

Everyone has the right

• to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and
• to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that
  – prevent pollution and ecological degradation;
  – promote conservation; and
  – secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.
Nature Based Tourism in National Parks is an important aspect of the tourism sector in SA
The natural environment and biodiversity represent a strategic competitive advantages of SA as a destination;
Background

• The National Department of Tourism (NDT) has developed a number of tools to support sustainable and responsible tourism, such as:
  – White Paper on Tourism Development and Promotion;
  – Responsible Tourism Guidelines (2002); and
  – National Minimum Standard for Responsible Tourism (SANS 1162: 2011);
  – Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Environmental Affairs
National Parks and Tourism in SA

• SA National Parks (SANParks) established in 1926 and is the leading conservation authority in SA; and

• SANParks is responsible for approximately 3,751,113 hectares of protected land in 21 National Parks across SA.
Parks and Protected Areas are key assets in the tourism supply value chain in SA
SA part of some Transfrontier Parks such as the Great Limpopo
Community Participation in Tourism

• The involvement of the local communities that are in close proximity to the tourism plant and attractions through the development of meaningful economic linkages.

• Case of SANParks and the Makuleke Tribe:
  – the Makuleke community successful claimed land within the Kruger National park;
  – maintained the conservation status of the land as an integral part of the KNP;
  – Joint Management of the land by the Makuleke community and SANParks (Joint Management Board);
Case of SANParks and the Makuleke Community:

– The Makuleke gain exclusive commercial rights to the area and a variety of other cultural and use rights;

– The Makuleke case shows that community based resource management and tourism development is possible; and

– There are opportunities to replicate the Makuleke model across South Africa.
Policy and Legislative Framework

- The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act 57 of 2003);
- The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004);
- World Heritage Convention Act (Act 49 of 1999); and
- Marine Living Resources Act (Act 18 of 1998);
- White Paper on Biodiversity (1997); and
- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2005);
Key Stakeholders

• Other National Departments such as Environmental Affairs;
• SANParks and Provincial Parks Agencies;
• SADC and neighbouring countries;
• Community Based Organizations and NGOs;
• Private sector; and
• Research and Academic Institutions.
Challenges

• Fighting poaching in Parks and Protected Areas;
• Balancing the commercialization of parks with the conservation of natural resources;
• Managing the trophy hunting industry;
• Complying with international agreements on trade in endangered species i.e. CITES;
• Growing the skills required for successful conservation;
Challenges Continued..

• Coordination and the management of TFCA;
• Addressing the issue of land claims in National Parks; and
• Managing conflicting interests between parks and adjacent communities.
Conclusion

• The balance between environmental protection and tourism involves important regulatory framework;

• Integrated and efficient strategies are required to ensure a significant contribution of parks to the country’s economy; and

• Private Public Partnerships and Community Participation are also required to ensure sustainability and competitiveness.