Item 5 of the provisional agenda

PROGRESS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEPAD TOURISM ACTION PLAN

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General informs the Members of the Commission to discuss about the Progress of Implementation of the NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development) Tourism Action Plan. Economic and Social Body of the African Union – previously named the Organization of the African Union – the NEPAD has been adopted at its 37th Summit in Lusaka, Zambia, in 2001 and performs towards the end of under-development within the African States, which Tourism is an important economic vector. The document is based on the NEPAD communication on this topic.
AU / NEPAD TOURISM ACTION PLAN
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AU African Union
AVU African Virtual University
CAF Commission for Africa
EIA Environmental Impact Assessment
EU European Union
HIV/AIDS Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
MDGs Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD New Partnership for Africa’s Development
PRSPs Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
RECs Regional Economic Communities
SMEs Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
ST-EP Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty
TSA Tourism Satellite Account
UN United Nations
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
WTO World Tourism Organisation
FOREWORD

The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) was adopted as the socio-economic development programme of the African Union (AU) in July 2001 at the 37th and last Summit of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Lusaka, Zambia. NEPAD centres on African ownership and management. Through this programme, African leaders are setting an agenda for the renewal of the continent. This agenda is based on rational and regional priorities and development plans that must be prepared through participatory processes involving the people. NEPAD is anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment, marginalisation and poverty in an increasingly globalized world.

NEPAD has identified tourism as an important vehicle to addressing the current development challenges facing the African continent, which is closely linked to market access and private sector development. The promotion of sustainable tourism has significant potential to diversify economic opportunities, and generate income and foreign exchange earnings for African countries. In addition to developing local economies, a government-led and private sector driven tourism industry can unlock the potential of local communities. Trans-boundary tourism initiatives also have the potential to promote regional integration.

African tourism ministers who meet annually under the World Tourism Organization (WTO) Commission for Africa (CAF) provided political leadership in the development of the AU/NEPAD Tourism Action Plan. At the 39th CAF meeting in Angola in May 2003, Ministers of Tourism requested Mozambique, as the chair of the AU, to work closely with the NEPAD Secretariat in this process. Two support groups were formed to assist, in this regard. The Task Team was a fairly large multi-stakeholder group of experts that provided broad policy and technical guidance to the process; and the Working Group was a smaller sub-group of the Task Team that worked more closely with the NEPAD Secretariat at both the policy and technical levels.

The draft Tourism Action Plan was presented to and adopted with amendments by African Tourism Ministers at the 41st WTO CAF meeting, in Mahé, Seychelles on 10-11 May 2004. The Action Plan was adopted at the 3rd General Assembly of the AU on 6-8 July 2004 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Assembly further called on African Ministers of Tourism to form a Steering Committee of Ministers of Tourism to guide the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat, as well as RECs and Member States, in the implementation of the Tourism Action Plan. The Committee is to be chaired by a tourism Minister whose country will be chairing the AU at any one time.
The AU/NEPAD Tourism Action Plan highlights interventions that are required to
optimize the role of tourism as an engine and a catalyst for economic development and
growth in Africa. These interventions are for the medium and long-term and targeted in
eight strategic areas, namely:

- Creating an enabling regulatory environment
- Strengthening institutional capacity
- Promoting tourism marketing
- Promoting research and development
- Promoting investment in tourism infrastructure and products
- Reinforcing human resources and quality assurance
- Establishing and adopting a code of conduct and ethics for tourism
- Mobilising financial resources

The process has taken cognisance of the fact that there are activities and programmes that
African countries may implement individually but there all also those that require sub-
regional and continental approach if the objectives of NEPAD are to be met.

The challenge facing African countries is to ensure effective implementation of the
Action Plan by building on existing initiatives, where appropriate. It is important to note
that the successful implementation of the Action Plan will largely depend on the extent to
which tourism activities are linked to other sectors of NEPAD.

Hon. Minister Fernando Sumbana Junior
The Honourable Minister of Tourism
Republic of Mozambique
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

The Tourism Action Plan for the African Union (AU)/New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) has been developed under the guidance of the African Ministers of Tourism, who meet annually under the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) Commission for Africa (CAF). Initial discussion of the AU/NEPAD Tourism Action Plan took place at the 29th CAF meeting, which was held in Luanda, Angola, in May 2003. At this meeting, the Ministers concurred with the proposal to focus action in tourism under NEPAD in six key areas, namely:

- Policies and regulatory environment;
- Institutional capacity;
- Tourism marketing;
- Research and development;
- Investment in tourism infrastructure and products; and
- Human resources and quality assurance.

Tourism is recognized as one of the sectors with the greatest potential to contribute to the economic regeneration of the continent, particularly through the diversification of African economies and generation of foreign exchange earnings. In this context, carefully considered strategic interventions in the tourism sector at the continental level have the potential to catalyse growth in other areas of the economy, for example, agriculture, horticulture and the service sector. More importantly, the tourism sector has a huge potential to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and ultimately eradicate poverty.

During the development of NEPAD, four key broad objectives were set for the tourism sector, namely to:

- Identify key “anchor” projects at the national and sub-regional levels, which will generate significant spin-offs and assist in promoting economic integration;
- Develop a regional marketing strategy;
- Develop research capacity in tourism; and
- Promote partnerships such as those formed through Regional Economic Communities (RECs).
At the framework level, NEPAD recognizes the need for focused actions that will result in a dynamic tourism sector. These actions include:

- Forging partnerships to maximize the benefits of information sharing and cooperative action;
- Providing Africans, particularly communities, with opportunities to participate in, and benefit from, the tourism sector;
- Paying particular attention to issues of safety and security;
- Marketing tourism products in specific areas, such as adventure tourism and ecotourism; and
- Increasing the regional coordination of tourism activities and maximizing the benefits of the strong inter-regional demand for tourism activities, by developing specialized consumer-targeted marketing campaigns.

At the 39th CAF meeting in Angola in May 2003, Ministers of Tourism appointed the Honourable Minister of Tourism of Mozambique\(^1\) to provide political leadership in the development of the Action Plan. The Minister worked closely with the NEPAD Secretariat. Two support groups were formed to assist the NEPAD Secretariat in developing the Action Plan, namely:

1. **The Task Team** - This was a fairly large group of experts from governments, civil society, the private sector, RECs and development banks. The function of this group was to provide broad policy and technical guidance to the process.

2. **The Working Group** - This was a smaller sub-group of the Task Team. It worked more closely with the NEPAD Secretariat at both the policy and technical levels. The Working Group guided the NEPAD Secretariat in the recruitment of consultants, and provided technical back up for the two phases of developing the Action Plan.

The draft Tourism Action Plan was presented to, and adopted with amendments by African Tourism Ministers at the 41st WTO CAF meeting, in Mahé, Seychelles, 10-11 May 2004. The Ministers agreed and recommended that the revised Action Plan be taken through the NEPAD structures for approval, and be presented for endorsement at the AU Summit in July 2004. The Ministers also recommended the formation of a small ministerial committee to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan, and that the committee be chaired by the Minister whose country is chairing the AU at the time.

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\(^1\) Mozambique was Chair of the African Union from 2003-2004.
Consequently, the Tourism Action Plan was adopted at the 3rd General Assembly of the African Union (AU) on 6-8 July 2004 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Assembly further called on African Ministers of Tourism to form a Steering Committee of Ministers of Tourism to guide the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat, as well as RECs and Member States, in the implementation of the Tourism Action Plan.

The challenge facing African countries is to ensure effective implementation of the Action Plan by building on existing initiatives, where appropriate. It is important to note that the successful implementation of the Action Plan will largely depend on the extent to which tourism activities are linked to relevant sectors of NEPAD, such as infrastructure.

1.2 Strategic Focus of the Action Plan

At the first Task Team meeting, held in Johannesburg in July 2003, it was decided that the Tourism Action Plan would be developed in two phases. Phase I was the “Baseline Study” which was aimed at creating a strategic understanding of the existing tourism realities in Africa. The study gave particular attention to the six strategic focus areas that the Ministers had already agreed upon, and also provided scope for wider investigation and analysis of areas that might not have been previously identified.

The Baseline Study report identified a wide range of constraints that currently impinge on the successful development of a vibrant tourism sector in Africa. Considering the diverse socio-economic and competitive environments within which tourism operates, especially in the wider international tourism context, major problems were identified, and were categorised into four classes, namely: generic, structural, tourism supply assets, and tourism’s sustainability. It was on the basis of gaps identified in the baseline report that the Tourism Action Plan was developed.

1.3 Status of Tourism in Africa

The Baseline Study confirmed that several strategies had been designed at continental level with a view to promoting tourism. These strategies include: promoting partnerships; building capacity for community-based tourism projects; marketing of tourism products (such as adventure tourism, eco-tourism and cultural tourism); increasing regional co-ordination of tourism initiatives in Africa; and developing consumer-targeted marketing campaigns. This is in line with NEPAD’s recognition that “Africa also provides prospects for creative partnership between the public sectors in beneficiation, agro-industries, tourism and human resource development in addressing the challenges of urban renewal and rural development.”
Over the past three decades tourism, measured in volume and value terms, has grown to be recognized as one of the major international economic activities, globally and regionally. Estimates of the WTO show that 703 million tourist trips took place across international boundaries in 2002, generating over US$474 billion. Projections for the year 2020 envisage a rise in tourism arrivals and earnings to about 1.6 billion and US$2 trillion, respectively. Although historically tourism was largely an activity centred on the developed countries, it has been seen to offer many potential benefits to countries in the developing world. In the African context, the successes of tourism development countries such as in Mauritius, Morocco, South Africa and Tunisia have demonstrated how countries in the region have been able to use tourism as part of their economic development strategies.

Growing wealth and real discretionary income, the availability of more leisure time, improvements in international air services and a reduction in real airline have all helped to stimulate demand from the wealthy countries, which are the traditional generators of tourists. Conversely, many developing countries face considerable international barriers to developing their trade in manufacturing and merchandising goods because of tariff and quota restrictions which characterise the goods.

Whilst these broad factors are applicable to Africa, they are supplemented by the special situation in Africa, about which so much has been written, and includes international debt burden; changing world geo-political landscapes; acute problems of unemployment; and rising commodity prices. Continuation of these and other emerging problems, such as HIV/AIDS, will certainly increase the continent’s marginalization in the global system. Continued marginalization will curtail development, and further pose challenges to policy makers and test regional cohesion. All these problems afflicting the African economy and society are themselves barriers to development of the tourism sector.

African governments and investors have realised the growing demand for international tourism, noted the absence of barriers to travel (few tourism-generating countries limit the destinations to which their residents may travel or how much they may spend), and recognised opportunities to benefit from in a market with a consistently high growth rate. In particular, the potential of tourism to contribute to economic development in terms of foreign exchange earnings, employment and income generation, contribution to government revenues, and as a development catalyst (or a stimulus to inward investment), are the usual reasons advanced for governments’ support for tourism. For Africa, these economic benefits will, if realised, be used to overcome resource problems, increase the region’s economic well-being, improve the opportunity and quality of life of its inhabitants and thereby facilitate the development continuum. Otherwise, the continent will inevitably continue to depend on international aid to support development efforts.

Given major competitive pressures on Africa’s development efforts, there is a recognized need to diversify the economy, and in particular, to secure new sources of foreign
exchange earnings. Tourism has many potential benefits to offer the region, such as improved welfare and equity, empowerment of local people, and improved resource conservation by local people. This potential has been recognised by NEPAD in its vision, which has been articulated and reiterated in numerous policy documents, outlining the role that tourism, among other sectors, could play in Africa’s development efforts. In essence, “the expansion of tourism is one of the principal engines for growth”.

It is further argued that the tourism sector in Africa, by world standards, is still at an early stage of growth. If Africa is to participate well in the global ‘pleasure periphery’, it must look at ways in which the sector can be promoted through the regions. There is therefore a need to carefully evaluate the region’s use of tourism in its development strategy as well as the need to set out broad parameters on future action so as to enhance the economic and social benefits stemming from tourism development. It is against this background that the African Ministers of Tourism have identified the NEPAD initiative to develop an action plan for tourism at continental level because it will allow, amongst other factors, some form of economy of scale, regional integration, and shared development costs, especially in infrastructure and marketing.

Although emphasis is invariably given to the economic advantages of tourism, there are inevitably impacts of a social, cultural and environmental nature which have to be considered in any development strategy. If these potential impacts are not considered, then they may be the very factors which compromise the economic, environmental and cultural sustainability of the tourism sector. The challenge is for African governments to play a role which will create a policy framework that not only encourages profitable investments, but also formulates incentives and regulatory frameworks that ensure poverty alleviation and social inclusion of all Africans.

While many African countries have invested heavily in the tourism sector in order to take advantage of the opportunities cited above, many have done so without careful and sustained consideration to tourism’s role in the development process, its strengths and its limitations. Few have also given careful consideration to the type of tourism they want; the extent to which their declared aims are realistic; what needs to be done to achieve the desired aims; and how the public and private sectors can work together to achieve common goals. For these and other reasons, it is necessary to manage the growth of the tourism sector and to have clear guidelines that will ensure that growth is compatible with national and sectoral objectives. A realistic starting point for this process is to identify the current constraints on development opportunities.

Another crucial factor is that the tourism industry throughout Africa operates below international competitive standards. Competitiveness in tourism arises from several sources, not least of which is the discretionary nature of tourism demand. It is discretionary because, unlike business tourists, leisure tourists are under no obligation to take a holiday, either at home or abroad. Thus, being confronted with a key feature of

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international tourism – the possibility of destination substitution, which highlights the negative consequences of poor and inadequate service levels in destination areas. Poor and inadequate levels of service will encourage destination substitution.

1.4 Key Findings from the Baseline Study

1. The Creation of an Enabling Policy and Regulatory Environment

A number of African countries have developed Tourism Master Plans with the assistance of mainly the WTO and development partners. However, some of these plans are not integrated to include poverty eradication concerns, and only a few plans bring out the important reality that tourism can develop sustainably only if the complex requirements of the sector and its impacts are embedded into a country’s economic and physical planning frameworks.

The study also brought out the important role of governments as enabling or facilitating the growth of tourism, particularly through the provision of financial incentives; infrastructure development; and legislative and institutional support necessary for tourism to flourish. Moreover, it was also noted that governments need to ensure the application of appropriate legal frameworks for managing and controlling the tourism sector.

2. Institutional Capacity or Strengthening

Tourism structures in many African countries are inadequate for delivering on the objectives set out in NEPAD. Being a multi-faceted economic activity, which is usually regulated by more than one ministry or parastatal, tourism continues to be a victim of multi-tiered and horizontal overlaps, resulting in poor co-ordination. With respect to the private sector, the same situation prevails, given the long chain in the industry, which spans from access providers (such as airlines) to accommodation and amenities, all of which need to be coordinated and need to speak with one voice for successful destination marketing. The study identified the need to review existing structures with a view to establishing more effective structures to facilitate and regulate the tourism sector.

3. Tourism Marketing

The most important problem areas within the marketing of tourism are three-fold: marketing links between and among other African sub-regions and markets; market mechanisms; and marketing strategy. The study identified an urgent need for marketing studies, a common regional or sub-regional marketing strategy, and specific marketing efforts for important tourist zones and localities. It recognized the absence of these
factors as key constraints to tourism development. In addition, the necessary distinction between the primary and secondary markets of the African region as well as between competing and complementary markets has not yet received appropriate consideration.

There is therefore a need to develop a marketing strategy that seeks to optimise the economic benefits of tourism, and to ensure that these benefits accrue to the location where tourism takes place. In this regard, a multi-stakeholder process should be a key feature of the formulation and implementation of a marketing strategy for the region. The role of the private sector is indispensable in this important area. The marketing strategy should focus on improving the image of Africa, increasing awareness of the continent’s exceptional tourist attractions and changing the travel trade’s negative perception of the region. At the country level, the focus should be on thinking and acting on a ‘marketable tour basis’ leading to multi-centre tourism development, taking into account all combined tourism potentialities by air, road and sea. It is also important to consider joint tourism marketing schemes to be implemented at sub-regional level on the basis of appropriate intra-regional market and marketing surveys and studies.

4. Research and Development

There currently exists a huge gap in terms of measuring and quantifying the economic contribution of the tourism industry to national economies. Only a few countries in the world include the contribution of the tourism sector in their national accounts. The United Nations (UN) in 1993 initiated and called upon countries to develop National Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSAs) to provide a credible measure of the contribution of tourism to national economies. This process, which has been fully supported by the WTO, should be given priority in terms of financial and human resource allocations by all the countries that wish to raise the status of their tourism industry.

Similarly, information on the capacity and utilisation of accommodation facilities in the region is currently insufficient and does not follow international standards. The information does not cover the whole sector and is not compiled and published on a regular basis in consistency with international practices.

It is therefore imperative that RECs take measures to improve knowledge of the tourist industry in respect of its characteristics, components and development through the:

- development of regional statistics on tourism by harmonising the concepts and methods used by member governments, in line with the UN Statistical Commission’s definition;
- establishment of a tourism research, statistics and information exchange network to collect and regularly disseminate as well as analyse existing data on African tourism; and
• adoption of TSA procedures to bring out the contribution of the tourism industry in comparison with other sectors of the economy.

5. Investment in Tourism Infrastructure and Products

Investment in tourism is capital-intensive. Good infrastructure for tourism is not a luxury but a necessity. However, it should not be provided in isolation from the broader development needs of a country.

Transport, both external and internal, is a vital aspect of the tourist product and tourism promotion. The level, quantity and price of air services are all important determinants of international tourism demand. Also, the importance of providing a good surface transport network cannot be over-emphasised as it will facilitate tourist movements in the country visited as well as encourage domestic tourism.

The following aspects are fundamental to the development of tourism:

• The type and level of incentives - be they capital reduction incentives, operating cost reduction incentives or indeed capital mobility incentives; and whether or not incentives should be offered and, if to be offered, to whom – foreigners or Africans?

• The funding roles of the public and private sectors - what funding sources would be available for tourism, and what initiatives might be taken to improve the flow of funds into the tourism sector.

• The case of the airline sub-sector underscores the need for African airlines to establish viable levels of service and reputation through pioneering innovative fares; becoming involved in tourism promotion and instituting attractive ‘stop-over’ options; and the need for governments to meet their social obligation to invest in infrastructure provision.


Human resource development problems are a major obstacle to the up-grading of standards in the tourism sector. The major problem in Africa concerns the levels of skills in the sector. Unlike finance, which can be borrowed, human resource development is a continuous process and its direction and focus should relate to a country’s development objectives. Some of these objectives may be general. For example, the need to increase the proportion of literate people in the country and in other cases, the development of human resources may be related to the needs of a particular sector such as tourism (e.g. the introduction of hotel and catering schools).
Service provision and delivery plays a key role in the assessment of a holidaymaker. The quality of a tourism product or its rating is a key determinant in the decision making process of a potential holidaymaker in terms of where to stay. Therefore, the establishment of a classification and grading system also plays a crucial role as a marketing tool. Thus, a five star graded hotel would immediately tell the potential holidaymaker that the facility is up-market if the grading system is, say, from one to five stars.

In the short term, African countries can overcome these shortages of skills by importing foreign workers, but in the medium term this solution will give rise to the repatriation of currency and possibly economic and social problems where foreign workers are seen as filling jobs which locals should be doing. Reducing dependence and eventually minimising reliance on foreign labour requires careful planning and focus. The lack of human resources might be overcome by recourse to organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and WTO assistance and by proactive measures by African governments to tackle the issue.

7. Cross-cutting Thematic Issues: Gender, Environment and HIV/AIDS

The issues arising out of the baseline study, under cross-cutting issues, were predominately related to gender, environment and HIV/AIDS, with a call for the following considerations:

- To move beyond the conceptualisation of development primarily in economic terms, and the re-definition of development to recognise and remunerate the roles of women and gender dynamics in tourism. There is a need to transform all structures and ideologies - societal, institutional and even legal - that constrain these roles in tourism development policy initiatives.
- To involve communities in the development and management of tourism enterprises for the sustainable utilisation of natural resources, poverty alleviation and protection of the environment.
- To put in place awareness programmes of the dangers posed by the HIV/AIDS pandemic afflicting the African continent.
2. MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Vision

Tourism will be established as a key instrument in Africa’s transformation and development.

2.2 Mission

The mission is to optimize the role of tourism as an engine and a catalyst for economic development and growth in Africa through the establishment of a conducive environment, regional cooperation, advocacy and stakeholder participation.

2.3 Goal

The tourism sector is to contribute successfully to poverty eradication, economic growth and diversification by 2020.

2.4 Strategic Objectives

The Baseline Study identified issues which constrain development. It has been recognized that there are interventions and activities which are key to the development of tourism, but which are best implemented, and indeed driven, at the national level. This action plan focuses on those issues that are best implemented at the sub-regional and continental level, with clear linkages to ongoing national activities. There has also been a recognition that different RECs, and different countries, are at different stages of developing their tourism sectors. This action plan is therefore meant to galvanise national and sub-regional action.

The NEPAD Tourism Action Plan focuses on the following strategic objectives, whose identification was informed by the Baseline Study, and on consultations with key stakeholders in the tourism sector. It is clear that, further to the six areas that were initially proposed, an additional two were identified as critical to the achievement of NEPAD Tourism objectives, namely to:

- Create an Enabling Regulatory Environment
- Strengthen Institutional Capacity
- Promote Tourism Marketing
- Promote Research and Development
- Promote Investment in Tourism Infrastructure and Products
- Reinforce Human Resources and Quality Assurance
- Establish and Adopt a Code of Conduct and Ethics for Tourism
- Mobilize Financial Resources

2.4.1 Create an Enabling Regulatory Environment

In order for the tourism sector to develop sustainably on the continent, its complex needs and impacts need to be embedded into countries’ socio-economic planning and development frameworks, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Whilst a number of African countries, mainly through assistance from the WTO, the European Union (EU) and UNDP, have documented tourism policies or adopted Tourism Master Plans as part of their national development frameworks, these are infrequently implemented. More often, regulatory legislation that is found to exist is difficult to implement, not only because of inadequate human resource capacity, but also because of the difficulty in co-coordinating the various ministries and parastatals which count amongst the key stakeholders in this sector. To ensure a sustainable tourism sector, government needs to play its role as enabler or facilitator for the sector’s growth through the provision of financial incentives; infrastructure; and legislative and institutional support.

The movement of tourists to and within Africa and the distribution of tourism within the African countries are hindered by the unreliable nature of Africa’s transport services. Air services, in particular, constrain ease of movement due to limited route connections, cost of movement and service quality. Similarly, road networks are often poorly developed and scarcely adequately maintained. The provisions of the Yamoussoukro Decision should enable airlines to expand their networks inside the region. Intra-continental markets should be regarded as domestic markets for African airlines, through measures including the limitation of foreign carriers to long haul flights in order to reduce competition by those airlines in the regional market and protect the African airline industry against marginalisation by foreign competitors. Alliances are therefore needed amongst African inter-continental carriers, particularly by sub-region. Through restructuring inter-airline cooperation, these alliances may also be able to gain control of sub-regional markets, develop feeder traffic to and from a limited number of common hubs, and jointly use their competitive strength to gain a foothold on inter-continental routes. In addition, to maximise airline efficiency, diverse enterprises should be formed to run international long haul, regional and domestic routes.

Proposed actions to create an enabling regulatory environment:

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• Compare and develop policies that create an enabling environment for investment in the Tourism Sector.
• Compare and develop enabling policies for investment in tourism.
• Carry out an audit and review all legislative frameworks to assess their impact on the industry to ensure consistency with NEPAD objectives.
• Establish structures to promote coordination and complementarity, such as national facilitation committees.
• Create an enabling environment for accessing tourism services.

2.4.2 Strengthen Institutional Capacity

The operating structures in many African countries’ tourism sector institutions are inadequate, mainly due to the fact that tourism is a multi-faceted economic activity, usually regulated from more than one ministry or parastatal, and often uncoordinated. It is common to find that different activities in the tourism sector, for example, the provision of infrastructure, fire and health regulations, are the responsibility of different organizations. As a result, co-ordination is time consuming, difficult and often ineffective. Where tourism is part of, or tasked on to, a government ministry or department (it is rarely given full ministerial or departmental status), the tourism unit usually has no effective control over operational standards.

The same applies to the private sector chain of production because of the heterogeneous nature of tourism comprising different service providers; the sector suffers from lack of a co-ordinated approach to issues of concern to the stakeholders.

There is a need for continuous dialogue between the government and the private sector on the management of the tourism sector. This can be done through the setting up of umbrella bodies comprised of private sector interests and national tourism facilitation committees to co-ordinate all the activities of the industry. Finally, there is a need to assess and harmonise the institutional structures at continental, regional and national levels in order to ensure the effective contribution and success of tourism in Africa.

Proposed actions to strengthen institutional capacity:
• Rationalise institutional structures at national, sub-regional and regional levels.
• Develop and implement a programme for strengthening institutional capacity in order to implement the Tourism Action Plan.
• Establish a monitoring and evaluation process for implementing the Tourism Action Plan.
• Encourage and strengthen cooperation between tourism regional organizations within the continent.

2.4.3 Promote Tourism Marketing

Weak market links between and among African sub-regions and markets, ineffective or non-existent market mechanisms, and lack or of non-effective adherence to marketing strategies are the three most important problem areas within the marketing of tourism. In addition, one fundamental prerequisite for the effective marketing of Africa’s destinations and products is a united regional and continental approach to combat the negative perception of Africa as a ‘dark continent’ ridden by conflict, wars, diseases and poverty, with little good governance. To counter the negative perception of Africa as a ‘dark continent’, some of following may be required:

• Raise political awareness of the socio-economic implications of the negative perception of the continent.
• Develop a positive branding for Africa’s image.
• Undertake aggressive marketing at all levels and in relevant forums to promote a more positive image of the continent.
• Ensure that the continent has adequate capacity to deal with demands of markets.
• Promote cross-border marketing synergies by ensuring that cross-border tourism operations are better enabled by bilateral and multi-lateral government agreements.
• Create cross-border tourism products.

There is therefore a need to develop and implement a consultative multi-stakeholder marketing strategy that aims at improving the image of Africa, promoting the economic benefits of tourism and ensuring that these benefits accrue to the location where the tourism takes place. In addition, there is a need to develop and implement joint tourism marketing schemes based on appropriate intra-regional market and marketing surveys and studies.

Proposed actions to promote tourism marketing:

• Develop action-oriented marketing plans; develop strategic plans aimed at capturing a significant slice of the global tourism market and increasing length of stay and tourist spend; and encourage product diversification.
• Promote the development of information and communication technologies infrastructure, such as telephones, broadcasting services, computers and internet access for publicity programmes.
• Promote cross-border marketing synergies and product packaging through private sector partnerships.

2.4.4 Promote Research and Development

Tourism in Africa has taken much longer than other productive economic sectors to be recognised as a strategic economic sector. As a result, tourism has not been strategically positioned in the national economic development plans of African countries. It has been shown that countries that are strong in tourism research and tourism development planning also have well structured and growing tourism industries. In this context, specific research gaps in promoting tourism as a key economic sector include:

- tourism research, information technology skills and experience;
- financial resources allocation for research;
- poor quality research;
- policy understanding by decision makers and willpower to implement;
- inadequate skills transfer within the continent; and
- limited information sharing.

At REC level, there is little or no documenting of research initiatives and mechanisms for their effective use to improve policy formulation and implementation. A priority research action to support Africa’s development through tourism would require an audit of tourism research initiatives that have been done in Africa so that information can be shared and relevant research gaps can be identified. Identified areas of research studies which can assist member countries include the need to:

- monitor market trends;
- identify new markets and new product opportunities;
- be competitive and gain a greater market share;
- increase length of stay and tourist expenditure;
- sustainably utilise the tourism resources;
- implement Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs); and
- promote tourism investment and technology transfer.

A tourism database and management information system should therefore be established through the creation of a Tourism Satellite Account(s) (TSA) in order to close information gaps and enable improved research on the tourism sector.
Proposed actions to promote research and development:

- Identify and close research gaps and thereby provide facts from which all stakeholders can embrace tourism as a priority sector, and establish a data collection system linked at regional and continental level, to provide up-to-date and accurate statistics.
- Establish a network of tourism research institutions across the continent.
- Institute a research think tank/committee at regional and continental level to guide research endeavours.

2.4.5 Promote Investment in Tourism Infrastructure and Products

The lack of financing resources for tourist infrastructures in respect to transportation, accommodation and associated services, particularly in support of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), is a critical constraint on the growth of tourism in Africa.

There are merits in advocating for indigenization and empowerment programmes that have been embarked upon by some countries in Africa. These programmes give a voice to ownership and management, and lessen the perception of tourism being an industry for foreign investors. National policies for land ownership, titling and zoning can help keep traditional land assets in the hands of communities and ensure their availability as collateral. For the larger investors, land titling is an essential prerequisite without which the investment will not take place.

Each African country should devise a strategy for tourism investment which best meets its own circumstances and needs. Countries must realistically determine their priorities for and within the tourism sector. Investment strategies should be realistic and targeted to achieve stated aims. Investors will also evaluate critically the country’s legislative and regulatory framework. Among the issues they will weigh in the balance are:

- good governance and the absence of political upheavals;
- effectiveness of and continuity in corporate and contract law, where private sector investors should be able to enter into contracts with enforceable mechanisms for conflict resolution;
- access to land and property titles, with a transparent cadastral registry system, where property laws must be enforceable, with reasonable transaction costs; and
- labour laws that balance the interests of employee and employer.

Proposed actions to promote investment in tourism infrastructure and products:
Encourage member states to develop a tourism investment strategy identifying funding possibilities. The package should be selective, monitored and adjusted to best meet the circumstances and needs of each country - all aimed at developing infrastructure and tourism products.

Put in place concomitant incentives aimed at attracting investment in infrastructure and tourist products.

2.4.6 Reinforce Human Resources and Quality Assurance

As tourism is primarily a service-driven sector, human resource management plays a central role in ensuring sustained competitive advantage for the effective development of the sector. Continued inadequate human resources on the continent create difficulties in recruiting and retaining suitable staff. There is therefore a perceived need for the development of human resources in order to raise the profile of the industry, increase productivity and provide sustainable employment within the sector. The following intervening actions are therefore required:

- A system of accreditation, standards testing and certification, and encouragement for enterprises to operate within a common framework needs to be created at sub-regional and national level.
- Gender-sensitive training and career prospects should feature as major criteria in the development of human resources development initiatives.
- Information exchange on best practices is needed between training institutions.
- Adequate government training allocations should be made available to the tourism sector.
- Education policies should incorporate tourism programmes in school curricula from primary to tertiary level.
- Delivery of tourism education programmes needs to be facilitated.

Proposed actions to reinforce human resources and quality assurance:

- Encourage education policies to incorporate tourism programmes and trips to areas of interest into school curricula at an early age.
- Facilitate the delivery of tourism education programmes through the African Virtual University (AVU)².
- Establish mobile units to spread training opportunities.
- Encourage distance learning to open up new possibilities for various workers.

² An interactive-instructional telecommunications network established by the World Bank
• Create a system of accreditation, standards testing and certification and encouragement for enterprises to operate their own training programmes within a common framework.
• Create an umbrella quality assurance body to oversee schemes through monitoring and accrediting the standards adopted.

2.4.7 Establish and Adopt a Code of Conduct and Ethics for Tourism

Poor quality of services has been identified as one of the main constraints to tourism development on the continent. The dilemma for the African tourism industry is the necessity to introduce best practices and common principles in satisfying quality standards, taking into account not only market requirements but also cultural issues. As a general rule, the service quality shortfalls that require attention are between:

• customer expectations and management perceptions;
• management perceptions and specifications of service quality;
• specifications of service quality and actual delivery of the services;
• actual delivery of the services and external communications; and
• customer expectations and their perceptions of the quality of the service.

Lack of adequate use of the above criteria by African organisations working in the tourism sector takes away their competitive advantage on product offerings. Harmonized hospitality and leisure Standards and Classification Criteria for all the countries therefore need to be developed, drawing on the work which the WTO has already initiated. As guiding principles for best practices, a code of conduct and ethics should be established and applied at all levels.

Proposed action to establish and adopt a code of conduct and ethics for tourism:

• Establish a process for adherence to the WTO Code of Conduct and Ethics.

2.4.8 Mobilize Financial Resources

The lack of financing for tourism development to cover institutional arrangements is a critical constraint on the growth of tourism in Africa. Considerable effort will be needed to mobilize the necessary financial resources. Costing the operationalisation of this action plan (an extensive exercise) will include an audit of the resources of the various member states available as seed capital, leaving the remainder to be sourced with the assistance of development partners.
Most African countries, with assistance by the WTO, have prepared Tourism Master Plans with their related policies. However, due to lack of financial resources, amongst other factors, implementation of these initiatives is limited. It is therefore necessary to create and establish a system of mobilizing financial resources at continental, regional and national levels to ensure that tourism programmes can be implemented. NEPAD emphasises the need to increasingly rely on domestic resources for the realisation of all sectoral programmes. However, these domestic resources need to be supplemented with development partner support. To this end, African countries are being called upon to increase their national budgetary allocations for tourism.

Since this is a short to medium term action plan, an estimated budget of US$50 million would be required over the next 5-10 years for the successful implementation of this Tourism Action Plan.

Proposed action to mobilize financial resources:

- Develop national, bilateral and multilateral mechanisms for sustained resource mobilisation.
3. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The core responsibility for implementation of this Action Plan will be that of each country. Whereas AU/NEPAD will be responsible for the political leadership and possible co-ordination, and a facilitating role at REC level, an enabling environment must be created to ensure that the appropriate frameworks are developed and adhered to at national level. The AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat will therefore remain the continental drivers of the Action Plan, in consultation with African ministers of tourism. Policy guidance, advocacy and co-ordination will be provided to RECs and countries to ensure effective implementation of the Action Plan.

The responsibility for co-ordination and implementation of activities at sub-regional level will be the responsibility of the RECs. This is in line with the implementation of all NEPAD programmes. It is proposed that, if governments are to take ownership of the Action Plan and its implementation, and indeed turn around their individual and collective economies through tourism, this commitment and ownership should be demonstrated through increased financial and human resource allocations to the tourism sector. This is the only way to ensure that national programmes are effectively implemented. Similarly, the cooperation of development partners, investors, the private sector and civil society partners needs to be called upon to support the implementation of the Action Plan.

Given the WTO’s experience in and knowledge of the continent, it is important that synergies be developed between the AU/NEPAD Tourism Action Plan and WTO programmes in Africa, particularly in respect of the Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP) Programme. Implementation of the WTO Code of Conduct and Ethics for Tourism should also be prioritised.

4. THE WAY FORWARD

In order to maintain the momentum already created in the development of the AU/NEPAD Tourism Action Plan, and to carry it through to the implementation stage, it is proposed that there be a standing technical working group, which will work closely with the NEPAD Secretariat and provide both policy and technical guidance. It is further proposed that the Minister of Tourism whose country is chairing the African Union at the time automatically be the political guide of this technical group. This will facilitate report-back on activities, as well as ensure political accountability for the implementation of the Action Plan.
### 5. Proposed Initial Action Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Proposed Actions</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1. Create an enabling policy and regulatory environment | • Compare and develop policies that create an enabling environment for investment in the Tourism Sector  
• Compare and develop enabling policies for investment in tourism  
• Carry out an audit and review all legislative frameworks to assess their impact on the industry to ensure consistency with NEPAD objectives  
• Establish structures to promote coordination and complementarity such as national facilitation committees  
• Create an enabling environment for accessing tourism services | 2 years | AU, RECs, Member States |
| 2. Strengthen institutional capacity           | • Rationalize institutional structures at national, sub-regional and regional levels  
• Develop and implement a programme for strengthening institutional capacity in order to implement the Tourism Action Plan  
• Establish a monitoring and evaluation process for implementing the Tourism Action Plan  
• Encourage and strengthen cooperation between tourism regional organizations within the continent | 2-3 years | NEPAD Secretariat, RECs, Member States |
| 3. Promote tourism marketing                   | • Develop action-oriented marketing plans; develop strategic plans aimed at capturing a significant slice of the global tourism market and increasing length of stay and tourist spend; and encourage product diversification  
• Promote the development of information and communication technologies infrastructure, such as telephones, broadcasting services, computers, and internet access for priority programmes  
• Promote cross-border marketing synergies and product packaging through private sector partnerships | 2-3 years | RECs, Member States |
| 4. Promote Research and Development            | • Identify and close research gaps which include facts that allow all stakeholders to embrace tourism as a priority sector, and a data collection system linked at regional and continental level to provide up-to-date and accurate statistics  
• Establish a network of tourism research institutions across the continent  
• Support the WTO initiative on the development of Tourism Satellite Accounts | 2-3 years | NEPAD Secretariat, RECs, Member States |
| 5. Promote investment in tourism infrastructure and products | • Encourage Member States to develop a tourism investment strategy identifying funding possibilities. The package should be selective, monitored, and adjusted to best meet the circumstances and needs of each country - all aimed at developing infrastructure and tourism products  
• Put in place concomitant incentives aimed at attracting investment in infrastructure and tourist products | 2 years | RECs, Member States |
<p>| 6. Mobilise financial resources               | • Develop national, bilateral and multilateral mechanisms for sustained resource mobilisation | NEPAD Secretariat, RECs, Member States |
| 7. Establish and adopt a code of conduct and ethics for tourism | • In partnership with WTO, facilitate the implementation of the WTO Code of Conduct and Ethics | 2 years | WTO, NEPAD Secretariat, RECs, Member States |
| 8. Reinforce human                             | • Encourage education policies to incorporate tourism programmes | 2-5 years | RECs, Member States |</p>
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<th>and Trips to Areas of Interest in School Curricula at an Early Age</th>
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