

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA RELEASE

TOMSA FUNDS THE #WATERWISETOURISM GLOBAL PR CAMPAIGN

Pretoria, South Africa: *In light of the drought situation in the country, which has now been elevated to a national state of disaster; and in particular its impact on tourism in parts of the Northern, Eastern and Western Cape (provinces), TOMSA has provided funding for the #WaterWiseTourism global PR campaign to the tune of R10 million. This additional funding to South African Tourism is made possible through the TOMSA Collaborative Fund.*

The tourism levy or TOMSA as it is commonly known is the levy charged to the consumer for the use of tourism services that includes accommodation, car rental, travel agencies and tour packages. The Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) manages the collection of the TOMSA funds from participating levy contributors, with the bulk of the funds transferred to South African Tourism (SAT) on a quarterly basis to complement their destination marketing and promotion budget.

The TOMSA Collaborative Fund is a recent innovation of the TOMSA/TBCSA collaboration with SAT. The Fund was initially conceptualized in 2016 following broad industry input on the need to explore creative ways to generate value for the trade in response to their levy contributions; and ultimately to benefit the destination. It has been agreed that the Fund will drive various industry initiatives, which may or may not directly fall under the mandate of destination marketing – the first of which is SAT’s #WaterWiseTourism global PR campaign.

The funding allocation for projects would be on the basis of joint agreements between SAT and the trade as represented by the TBCSA. This thus serves to also strengthen the collaboration between the respective organizations.

TBCSA CEO, Ms. Mmatšatši Ramawela says: “We are elated to formally share the good news about the TOMSA Collaborative Fund. This is a Fund that is borne out of extensive industry engagement and collaboration – hence its name. The #WaterWiseTourism campaign has provided the right setting for us to share information about this Fund and we are grateful to the SA Tourism leadership for agreeing to its establishment.”

Ramawela explained that twenty years later, it was important for TOMSA to continue demonstrating value to the trade, the actual levy contributor, and most importantly to the tourism businesses that make it a point to put systems in place to facilitate levy contribution. “That we now have a Fund through which TOMSA can expand its value creation to the levy contributors and the broader trade is an important milestone that should be celebrated”.

In order to secure support through the Collaborative Fund, the parties have agreed upon a set of parameters within which prospective initiatives /projects should fall. These include:

1. Joint Marketing Agreements (JMAs), particularly as they relate to increasing tourist arrivals through empowerment initiatives for local operators and local tourism businesses
2. Empowering bursaries and scholarships to support travel and tourism students/youths
3. Crisis management initiatives, with the current drought/water crisis PR campaign as a start
4. Support for or trade shows for TOMSA Levy Contributors including the sponsorship for emerging businesses which require funding to attend and exhibit
5. Initiatives to facilitate a welcome environment at ports of entry into South Africa, which may include information provision facilities
6. Support for Provincial/Local Tourism agencies and DMOs in the promotion of their destinations
7. Support for the business tourism industry to increase tourist arrivals into the country
8. Initiatives to support and promote domestic tourism by supporting local travel and tour operators

Providing further context to the funding of the #WaterWiseTourism campaign, Ramawela says it was opportune for TOMSA to support this campaign given the recent negative media coverage and trade sentiment that were emerging as a result of the drought. “In the face of changing global climate conditions, there is no doubt that South Africa is facing serious challenges when it comes to access to water. From a TOMSA perspective, we saw the need to lend our support to current efforts by the industry to ensure responsible media reporting on the situation. We want to support the initiatives to ensure that the global trade has the correct information and that our tourists could make informed decisions about their visit to our country. “

Ramawela added that the tourism trade was encouraged by some of the positive feedback that has been reported by SAT so far. “ Highlights of the recent road show undertaken by SAT CEO, Mr. Sisa Ntshona to the United States of America shows a good response so far with a total \$12.3m generated in media coverage value alone, 38 stakeholders and 75 media engaged which includes the likes of CNN, Bloomberg and Thomson Reuters. This is made possible in part by the support SAT receives through TOMSA, an important collaborative effort which will benefit the destination and the industry going forward. Ends

Editors Notes:

ABOUT TOMSA

In establishing the Tourism Levy South Africa (“TOMSA”), South Africa’s travel and tourism private sector recognised that the success of South Africa’s destination marketing lies in fostering collective effort and collaboration. This partnership is premised on the understanding that no single organisation can effectively compete at a global level, extend its marketing reach and promote the country’s entire tourism offering on a sustainable basis without partnerships.

ABOUT TBCSA

Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) is the umbrella organisation for business in the travel and tourism industry. We are a non-profit, member-centric organisation representing the unified voice of business. We serve to unite and influence the diverse travel and tourism industry to contribute to a competitive, responsible and inclusive travel and tourism (and South African) economy.

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