

PARLIAMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE

ANNOUNCEMENTS, TABLINGS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

FRIDAY, 17 MAY 2013

COMMITTEE REPORT

The Speaker:

Report of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Development on the visit to the 2013 Tourism Indaba in Durban, 10 to 12 May 2013.

The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Development, having undertaken a visit to the 2013 Tourism Indaba in Durban from 10 to 12 May 2013, begs to report as follows:

1. Introduction

The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Development was invited by the Western Cape Destination Marketing, Investment and Trade Promotion Agency (WESGRO) to attend the 2013 Tourism Indaba in Durban from 10 to 12 May 2013.

The Tourism Indaba, one of the largest tourism marketing events on the African continent, showcases Southern African tourism products and services for the international travel trade. The Tourism Indaba hosts a wide array of exhibitors and delegates from across the travel, tourism and related sectors and attracts extensive local and international media coverage.

The Indaba afforded the Committee the opportunity to interact with Western Cape exhibitors and to network with various national and international tourism stakeholders to the ultimate benefit of tourism and economic development in the Western Cape.

2. Delegation

The delegation consisted of the following Members:

Ms CF Beerwinkel (ANC)
Ms TN Bevu (COPE)
Mr AM Figlan (DA)

Mr EJ von Brandis (DA) (Chairperson)
Mr MC Walters (DA)

The delegation was accompanied by Mr D Cronjé, Committee Co-ordinator.

3. Account of Visit

On Friday evening, the Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism hosted the Committee and other guests at an informal welcoming event. The Minister wished all the Western Cape Exhibitors well on promoting their businesses during the Indaba.

On Saturday morning the Committee joined the Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, the Wesgro delegation and leading industry role players at a networking breakfast to share tourism initiatives and to promote the Western Cape as favorable business investment destination.

Following the networking breakfast, the Committee joined Minister Winde on a walkabout through each district municipal exhibit at the Western Cape stand. Members had the opportunity to interact with tourism officials, exhibitors and mayors from the Cape Central Karoo, Cape Garden Route and Little Karoo, Cape West Coast, Cape Winelands and Cape Overberg regions. Each exhibit offered unique insight as to some of the most prominent tourist attractions and destinations from each of the respective regions.

The Committee attended the Trade and Media lunch where Minister Winde welcomed the national and international press and shared the Western Cape Government's vision for creating employment opportunities by stimulating economic growth through promoting the Western Cape as a favorable tourist destination. Mr Nils Flaatten, Chief Executive Officer of Wesgro, unveiled the Western Cape's GeoCaching campaign and gave an overview of how the system will attract tourists to the Province.

On Saturday afternoon the Committee attended the Western Cape Activation event at the Western Cape Exhibit where guests and stakeholders were entertained by a Cape Town Minstrel band and a Cape Malay cooking demonstration offering cuisine unique to the Cape region.

The Indaba was officially opened by the Minister of Tourism, Mr Martinus van Schalkwyk at a festive ceremony held in the auditorium of the Durban International Convention Centre. The Minister congratulated all industry stakeholders who contributed to South Africa achieving a 10.2% tourist arrival growth rate in 2012 and stated that such growth has directly allowed South Africa to position itself as a globally competitive and responsible tourism destination.

Other keynote speakers which included the Premier of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Dr Zweli Mkhize and the Chief Executive Officer of Tourism SA, Mr Thulani Nzima elaborated as to how the 2013 Indaba theme - *Focus on Heritage and Culture* – aims to promote the history, stories and people that make South Africa such a unique and extraordinary destination.

The Committee shared in a true Durban experience with a visit to the Victoria Street Market in the central business district. Members were not only captivated by the authentic sights and smells of traditional Indian spice stalls, but witnessed firsthand how the informal trade contributes to sustainable economic growth within a community.

4. Findings, Concerns and Recommendations

The Committee commends the efforts of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism and Wesgro on creating a warm and hospitable environment at the Western Cape Exhibit. True to the nature of the people of the Western Cape, exhibitors and staff were friendly and inviting, setting a buzzing vibe which attracted thousands of visitors to experience the sights and smells on offer.

The entertainment provided at the events was unique to the Western Cape. The minstrel band contributed to the atmosphere with song and dance and comedian Marc Lottering had the audience in stitches with comical sketches and stories about the Western Cape, Cape Town and its people.

The Committee lauds the implementation of the Indaba Connect initiative which allowed each and every registered visitor to the Indaba to connect with exhibitors, stakeholders and role-players by merely tagging each with the Poken interactive electronic device. This innovation contributed to the success of the Indaba and should be considered for future large events in the Western Cape.

The Committee was impressed by the creative rubber wristband initiative used at the Western Cape Exhibit. Each of the 5 Western Cape municipal district areas represented at the Indaba was allocated a different color. Visitors to the Western Cape Exhibit were then given a pack of 5 wristbands of the same color. Visitors then had to go around to each district's stand, enquiring about tourism in that particular area. Upon converging with the stand representatives, a person had to swop one of their color wristband for a color of that stand. If a person went to all the stands, they should have had 5 wristbands, each of a different color. Visitors who collected all the different colors then had to post a picture of themselves on the Facebook or Twitter accounts of Wesgro in order to be eligible for a lucky draw. This was a fun and interactive way to get visitors to spend time and to learn about tourism across the Western Cape.

The Committee commends the influence of Minister Winde in directly contributing to the success of the Western Cape Exhibit. The Minister's enthusiasm and passion for the Western Cape and its people is inspiring and contagious. The Minister engaged all stakeholders and visitors to the exhibit and allowed individuals the opportunity to not only present ideas, but to air industry related concerns.

The Committee recommends that the Western Cape Exhibition in future showcase the successes of community-based initiatives such as the Department of Coffee project and Mzoli's restaurant. Such initiatives would arguably have had a powerful impact to showcase how the Western Cape is trying to integrate tourism, economic development, job creation and community upliftment.

The Committee wishes to express its concern that guests of Wesgro, who represented tourist destinations and facilities such as bed and breakfast establishments at the Indaba, were not afforded the opportunity to showcase promotional material promoting their businesses.

5. Conclusion

The Committee is satisfied that the Minister and Department responsible for Economic Development and Tourism, and its affiliated entities succeeded in promoting the Western Cape as a favorable tourist destination.

The Committee was proud to represent the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and the people of the Western Cape at the 2013 Tourism Indaba and is grateful for the opportunity to engage industry stakeholders and role-players.

The Committee looks forward to utilizing relationships established at the Indaba to further its mandate.

The Committee would like to congratulate Ms Nisreen Bulhulia from Citi Hopper on being named the Western Cape finalist in the Emerging Tourism Entrepreneur of the Year Awards. The national winner will be named in September 2013.

The Committee would further like to congratulate Wesgro on being awarded a gold medal for their Western Cape Exhibition. This prestigious award judges a stand on aesthetic appeal, brand presence, innovation, design, sustainability, energy and interaction.

6. Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to express its sincere appreciation to Mr Nils Flaatten, CEO of Wesgro, and his team of dedicated staff and officials for their hospitality and efforts in ensuring a memorable visit to the 2013 Tourism Indaba.

In addition, the Committee would like to thank the Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Mr Winde, for providing spirited leadership to entities such as Wesgro, to ultimately further tourism and economic growth in the Western Cape.