



**Department of Economic
Development and Tourism**
Umnyango Wezokuthuthukiswa
Komnotho Nezokuvakasha

KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

KWAZULU-NATAL BEACH TOURISM POLICY



“BUILDING AN ECONOMY THAT CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AND MAKING TOURISM WORK FOR US ALL”

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FOREWORD

MEC FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

It is my singular pleasure to present this maiden KwaZulu-Natal Beach Tourism Policy which purports to synergise beach tourism development and management in our beautiful province. This policy sets out a common policy direction for developing the tourism potential of our coastline in a sustainable way whilst responding to the needs of growth markets in both domestic and international arena.



KwaZulu-Natal has a 600km long coastline with pristine beaches, picturesque marine life, breathtaking coastal landscape, and our unique distinctive towns and cities. Our coastline is strategically located in close proximity of our nascent Zulu culture and heritage, all of which hold significant appeal to visitors and has ensured that KwaZulu-Natal achieves and maintains the number one position as a preferred domestic destination of choice in South Africa. KwaZulu-Natal has continued to occupy this number one position without a focused beach tourism policy. This has caused unequal beach tourism development along the coastline in the province with some cities and towns unleashing their growth potential whilst others remain dormant with their untapped latent potential. There is an immense scope to harness tourism opportunities imbued by the coastline and linked to the overall tourism development of the province.

It is an undeniable fact that the coastline of KwaZulu-Natal draws millions of visitors to South Africa and KwaZulu-Natal in particular, especially during the tourism peak season. The beach tourism phenomenon has evolved naturally and now is the time to introduce a strategic intervention that will maximize the inherent benefits of our asset. As a province, we need to focus on developing higher value, all year round tourism at the coast to help boost coastal economies and improve the quality of jobs that can be provided by the industry.

My Department fully understands and acknowledges the critical role that is played by municipalities and other provincial and national sector departments in issues relating to beach management. My Department alone therefore, cannot achieve a holistic beach tourism development without the involvement of all the interested and affected parties. Our coastline is also governed by a number of Acts and environmental prescripts that provide guidance on what is permissible and detrimental to our coastline. This policy observes these legislative provisions and we are aware that we need to ensure that whilst developing the beach tourism potential of the province we do not destroy the very same coastline which is the goose that lays the golden egg.

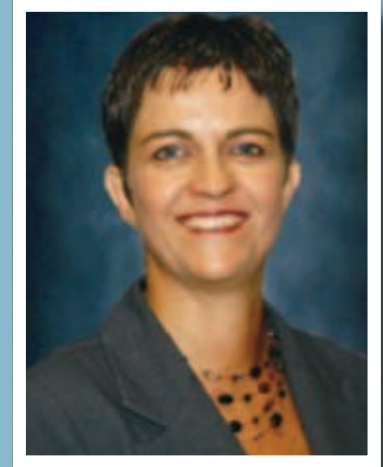
Mr. Michael Mabuyakhulu

MEC for the Department of Economic Development and Tourism



INTRODUCTION

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM



Beach tourism accounts for a bulk of tourists visiting our shores every year with 61.5% domestic beach tourists and 50% international beach tourists recorded in 2009. The figures drawn by the beaches in our province warranted the province to develop a KwaZulu-Natal Beach Tourism Policy that seeks to further develop and sustain this already thriving niche in the tourism sector. The MEC for Economic Development and Tourism Mr. Michael Mabuyakhulu announced in his 2010/11 Budget Speech that in pursuit of fully exploiting the biggest selling points, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism was developing a proactive Beach Tourism Policy that will bring together all the role players to respond to new beach tourism trends thus eventually employing a single marketing mechanism that will be used by coastal cities and destinations when selling the province domestically and throughout the world. This Beach Tourism Policy seeks to do just that and introduces institutional arrangements in coordinating implementation.

Firstly, an Implementation Protocol will be signed by a number of provincial and national departments that deal with coastal management in one way or another including the coastal municipalities. The Implementation Protocol will be signed to ensure that all the relevant role players play their particular roles in ensuring effective beach development and management with the overarching objective of promoting Beach Tourism. Secondly, a Provincial Beach Tourism Management Committee (PBTMC) has been established to oversee implementation of the policy and adherence to the Implementation Protocol by all stakeholders.

The PBTMC comprises all the coastal municipalities, relevant public entities, provincial and national sector departments. The successful implementation of the policy hinges on the effective operation of this committee and diligence that will be applied by its members. It is therefore imperative that all the signatories to the Implementation Protocol and representatives of various organisations in the PBTMC are committed and adequately resourced. The development of Beach Tourism in KwaZulu-Natal has a potential of creating numerous indirect tourism jobs and thus contribute to the much needed jobs in the province and towards the 250 000 jobs that need to be created by the tourism industry by 2020 as set out in The New Growth Path.

I therefore call upon all the responsible authorities to join us in implementing the KwaZulu-Natal Beach Tourism Policy.

Ms. Carol Coetzee

Head of Department for Economic Development and Tourism



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ACCRONYMS

DEDT	Department of Economic Development and Tourism
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
DAEA &RD	Department of Agriculture - Environmental Affairs and Rural Development
DM	District Municipality
FEE	Foundation for Environmental Education
FEEE	The Foundation for Environmental Education in Europe
KZNSB	KwaZulu-Natal Sharks Board
LM	Local Municipality
MEC	Member of Executive Committee
PBTMC	Provincial Beach Tourism Management Committee
PTC	Provincial Tourism Committee
TKZN	Tourism KwaZulu-Natal
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WESSA	Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa.



THE KWAZULU-NATAL BEACH TOURISM POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

Tourists nowadays are more discerning in deciding on a new destination for a holiday, and this previously simple exercise has become both exciting and difficult. Competition amongst destinations in the world and in particular coastal destinations in South Africa presents a tourist with the opportunity of discovering new and wonderful places. Deciding on a destination to visit, for a tourist, is set against the worry of potentially being disappointed with the choice of location or getting more than what is bargained for. Responsible tourism and green tourism has taken the world by storm as tourists become more environmentally conscious in the tourism products they consume.

Travel brochures have pages of tempting pictures of beautiful beaches, scenery and attractive descriptions, and the resorts themselves use all kinds of marketing strategies to attract as many visitors as possible. Beach tourism is one of the types of niche tourism markets which are vulnerable to the holiday purchasing decisions made by modern environmentally conscious clientele. The province of KwaZulu-Natal has decided to develop a proactive policy that will bring together all the role players to respond to the new beach tourism trends thus eventually employing a single marketing mechanism that will be used by coastal cities and destinations when selling the province domestically and throughout the world.

Beach tourism demands a dedicated beach management programme with serious implementation implications for the coastal municipalities. Beach management requires coastal municipalities to meet and deliver world-class standards of excellence to ensure safe bathing by locals and tourists in aspects such as water quality, safety for tourists, services and amenities, environmental management, environmental information, education and emergency responses. The activities undertaken by coastal municipalities should create assurances to local beach users, international and domestic tourists, that the local beaches offer safe and well-managed bathing conditions.

At a time in which the tourism sector is being severely impacted by the global recession and hence, reduced numbers of travelers, and exacerbated by the increasing competition between destinations in South Africa to attract visitors, an urgent intervention is needed in this region to re-establish confidence in KwaZulu-Natal as a safe and environmentally friendly tourism destination. A more widely implemented beach management programme in KwaZulu-Natal will increase confidence in the province as an eco-friendly destination. It is also critical for



tourism marketing agencies in KwaZulu-Natal to actively market and promote beaches using Responsible Tourism as a draw card and highlighting pockets of excellence being achieved by certain municipalities/ sub- destinations.

This policy however, acknowledges that there is increasing pressure on the coastal resource, and a growing recognition that the coastline should be managed in a more strategic and coordinated way. The policy also takes cognizance of the fact that impact of visitors on sites around the coast result in additional management costs to responsible government departments and local municipalities in terms of sustaining the quality of the environment and providing facilities for visitors to enjoy a safe experience. While some revenue costs can be recovered through car parking and other charges, much of the management costs arise in respect of public goods and spaces, with the costs having to be borne by the host municipalities.

Resources required covering the management costs arising from visitor activity are often under pressure from other spending priorities at a municipality level, and some municipalities may deem such costs as an unfunded mandate. Without appropriate management, there is potential for activities to spoil the peace, tranquility and quality of the environment that many visitors to the coast are seeking. The policy therefore pulls together a myriad of role players to ensure that the costs associated with beach tourism development are not borne by a single entity but resources are pulled together and shared for a common purpose of increasing the benefits that can accrue to the province from beach tourism.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the KwaZulu-Natal Beach Tourism Policy is three-pronged.

Firstly, the policy purports to rally all tourism stakeholders, both public and private sector, around a common goal of ensuring attractive and safe beaches for tourists in the province of KwaZulu-Natal thus advancing the competitive edge of the province as a number one domestic tourism destination.

Secondly, the policy identifies and recommends various Beach Tourism Programmes along the lines of Responsible Tourism that can be developed and implemented at a local level to maximise benefits of Beach Tourism to KwaZulu-Natal in general and coastal communities in particular.



Thirdly, the policy provides an integrated approach to Beach Tourism development and identifies roles of key stakeholders in achieving the overall objectives of the policy.

3. POLICY THRUSTS

The policy is anchored on FOUR Strategic Thrusts that govern the conceptualization, development and implementation of Beach Tourism Programmes in KwaZulu-Natal.

Thrust one: Ensuring that sustainable tourism is making an increasing contribution to the local economy of coastal communities.

Key Outcomes

- The increase in coastal tourism trips and nights spend at a particular coastal resort
- The coast attracts higher spending visitors
- Tourism supports more full time jobs on the coast
- There are increased levels of entrepreneurship amongst local communities in coastal tourism related activities
- The coastal tourism season is extended

Thrust Two: Improving the quality of visitor experience

Key outcomes

- KwaZulu-Natal coastal tourism offering appeals increasingly to the international and domestic markets
- KwaZulu-Natal is positioned as a leading watersports destination for the family and multi activity holiday maker
- The coast offers a more diverse tourism accommodation base that is meeting visitor needs
- Access to the coast is improved



Thrust Three: An integrated approach to the development and management of coastal tourism

Key outcomes

- Local communities are actively involved in the management of the coast
- Coastal resorts are managed and developed with the needs of visitors in mind
- Local communities participate in the development of coastal tourism in their areas
- Coastal communities benefit from beach tourism activities conducted in their area
- There is an increase in the number of KwaZulu-Natal residents participating in outdoor coastal activities

Thrust Four: Safeguarding and protecting the environment and cultural heritage as a key resource for the development of coastal tourism

Key outcomes

- KwaZulu-Natal coastal waters have the highest standards of water quality in the country
- The quality of facilities at KwaZulu-Natal beaches are internationally recognised
- Increasing and sustaining number of visitors travel to and along the KwaZulu-Natal coast
- Key coastal wildlife habitats and species are maintained
- There is a balance on the coast between tranquil areas and areas supporting a large number of people and a range of activity (carrying capacity management)
- More visitors are coming to the coast to enjoy its wildlife, heritage and culture (especially along iSimangaliso coastal reserves)

4. BENEFITS OF THE POLICY

Recreation, when properly planned and managed could minimize impacts on coastal environments and serve as a driving force in bringing sustainable tourism as a vehicle of development to local communities and destinations. Tourism and recreation associated with “sea and sun” is recognized as an essential component of domestic and international trade and a major contributor to economic growth.



The KwaZulu-Natal Beach Tourism Policy, if implemented within the wider context, will improve the environmental quality of beaches and marinas and the management of coastal areas in a holistic way within the province. The policy does not inhibit or curtail recreation in the coastal area but rather enhances management and safety of the beaches through a wide array of interventions and activities that have direct and indirect benefits to both beach users and municipalities.

The policy will among other things:-

- Be instrumental in improving compliance at the local level with national and local regional environmental legislation and policies and coastal regulatory instruments;
- Offer an opportunity to strengthen existing local and national capacities for coastal zone management;
- Provide networking opportunities on the provincial, national and international levels, between organizations, authorities, education institutions, industries and other experts.
- Be a tool to formulate and strengthen objectives for local, regional, provincial and national policies and actions related to the management of the beaches for tourism and socio-economic development;
- Provide a platform for discussion and conflict resolution surrounding the management of coastal zones and other community environment initiatives in the province.

5. STATUS QUO

KwaZulu-Natal has an international reputation as an excellent beach destination and this aspect has always been highlighted in marketing approaches by the various tourism agencies, especially Tourism KwaZulu-Natal and provincial coastal municipalities. Many coastal municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal have adopted varied beach tourism management approaches as instruments.

The concern is that at a time when other regions of the country have been increasingly offering world-class eco-friendly beaches, the KwaZulu-Natal region has not kept up with these trends. However, there are good beaches in the province with superb infrastructure which are struggling to maintain water quality standards thus jeopardizing marketing opportunities to international tourists.



There is a dire need for the province to provide strategic direction and guidance to beach tourism developments and management. A common programme that will be adopted and be binding to all coastal municipalities needs to be adopted and concurred by all stakeholders involved.

6. RATIONALE

Tourism is a particularly complex service sector which goes beyond the intangible, heterogeneous, inseparable and perishable nature of most services, to the additional challenges of having to deal with the 'dreams and fantasies' of travel. Tourism is a high involvement, high risk, status-enhancing product, to increasing consumer demands for distinctive and special experiences as a result of an increasingly well travelled market. The tourism product is a conglomerate of a range of services with many touch points that could fail during the consumption experience and is particularly susceptible to a range of external forces.

6.1 The significance of beach tourism for KwaZulu-Natal

The analysis of destination competitiveness indicates that there are many determinants of the comparative and competitive edge of a destination. The KwaZulu-Natal government understands that beach tourism is one of the niche markets that provide comparative advantage over other provinces in achieving and maintaining the number one spot in destination South Africa as a preferred domestic market destination. KwaZulu-Natal's beaches are one of the most important attractions for domestic and international tourists and beach-related activities are amongst the most important activities that they partake in when they are in this area. This is clearly illustrated in the following tables:



Table 1: Activities undertaken in KZN - Domestic visitors 2009

ACTIVITY	%
Go to the beach	61.5
Go to a live show, theatre or concert	10.4
Watch a live sports event	20
Visit a museum, art gallery or historical building	15.5
Visit a nature or wildlife or game reserve	15.4
Take part in a sports event	11.9
Take part in any water sport	8
Visit an arts or craft outlet	13
Visit an African township or cultural village on a tour	19.3
Food and wine fair	9
Go hiking or mountain climbing	5.5
Bird watching	4.8
Art and crafts festival	7.3
Attend a conference, workshop or training session	6.3
Visit a health spa	6.1
See bushman paintings	0.7
Fly-fishing	4
Horse riding	3.3
Go backpack/hostel traveling	2
Mountain biking or other cycling	1.5
Tour of the battlefields	2.7

(TKZN, 2010)



The following table illustrates African air departures and overseas visitors in 2009 indicating a fairly substantial percentage of visitors to the beach.

Table 2: Some activities undertaken in KZN - African air departure and overseas visitors 2009

ACTIVITY	Air* %	Land %
Shopping	72	96
Nightlife	91	48
Theme parks	26	6
Trading	0	3
Visited a Casino	3	3
Sporting competed	2	1
Sporting attended	3	2
Business	19	6
Adventure	5	1
Cultural, historical and heritage	34	9
Wildlife	48	7
Visiting natural attractions	62	4
Beach	50	36
Social	27	40
Medical	0	0
Hunting	1	0
Health	0	0

*African Air Departure and Overseas Visitors

Source: SAT 2010

Both the Grant Thornton Kessel Feinstein Beach Tourism Report of 2001 and the South African Global Tourism Competitiveness Study of 2004 emphasised the need for South Africa to develop up-market beach resorts in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. Grant Thornton Kessel Feinstein stressed that South Africa had the potential to grow foreign markets by at least 400,000 per annum if this was done. The province is currently developing a Provincial Tourism Master Plan and the prospects of developing Beach Resorts are high on the preliminary findings.

The Beach Resorts will thrive if coupled with proper beach management policies that appeal to the modern green tourist.



7. SCOPE

It is intended that every coastal municipality and protected area managers in the province of KwaZulu-Natal with swimming beaches comply with, and implement the KwaZulu-Natal Beach Tourism Policy on beaches within the next 3 – 5 years and beyond, to the extent applicable.

8. APPLICATION

The policy will apply to all coastal municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal Province with swimming beaches, and where compatible with the Protected Area's purpose, to the Protected Area Agencies that manage the beaches within the protected areas, such as the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority.

The policy will also be integrated into key performance areas and deliverables of supporting agencies and sector departments, namely, Tourism KwaZulu-Natal in their marketing endeavours; KwaZulu-Natal Sharks Board in their core function of protecting bathers in the province; the Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Rural Development (DAEA&RD) in their environmental management activities, the national Department of Environmental Affairs in their Coast care initiatives and coastal management programmes, and the Department of Water Affairs in their catchment management efforts. A holistic approach has to be adopted, incorporating all the national and provincial resources and programmes that can assist coastal municipalities in implementing the policy.

9. POLICY CONTENT

The policy suggests beach tourism activities which are categorized into short and long term goals as follows:

Short term goals:

- Develop an institutional framework to coordinate and implement beach tourism in the province;
- Develop programmes to promote beach tourism;
- Identify beaches that can easily comply with the policy for quick-win interventions;
- Encourage all coastal municipalities to implement the policy;
- Quantify the running costs for municipalities to implement the policy; and
- Assist municipalities in implementing the policy;



Long-term goals:

- Give overall direction to the advancement and implementation of the policy within the province.
- Ensure a wide geographic spread of municipalities complying with the policy;
- Support municipalities already implementing the policy to maintain standards and achieve ongoing success;
- Enable and work with municipalities struggling to comply with the policy to fully comply by 2015,
- Bring together all role-players (tourism stakeholders, municipalities, government departments, hospitality industry, private sector, etc) to ensure the ongoing implementation of the policy;
- Assess, monitor and enforce compliance with the policy framework,
- Establish a network of municipalities that work collaboratively to achieve integrated implementation; and
- Assess factors preventing and delaying full implementation of the policy, such as poor bathing water quality, and to put in place interventions to address these.

10. PRINCIPLES

- **Governance** – adhere to agreed national, provincial and local institutional arrangements to facilitate implementation.
- **Compliance** - with national and provincial environmental guidelines and legislation;
- **Confidence** - establish confidence in KwaZulu-Natal as a destination through the provision of beach facilities that achieve world-class standards of excellence;
- **Standardization of management** - to achieve a common set of criteria embraced by all municipalities.

11. BEACH POLICY PROGRAMMES

Policy implementation will require participation and coordination of activities and budgets by a number of stakeholders at a provincial and local level. The policy acknowledges that municipalities have varying capacities in implementing and effectively managing beach facilities. The policy also acknowledges that different forms of interventions will need to be provided to coastal municipalities to assist them in capacity building in implementing the recommended policy implementation programme. It is acknowledged that the process of ensuring that a beach complies fully with the policy will take a long time. Processes and operational requirements for a beach to comply fully with the recommended implementation programme will take approximately a minimum of two years.



11.1 Effective Date of the Policy

The first phase of this policy implementation will be brought into effect from 1 June 2011 and full compliance with the key objectives of the policy must be in effect no later than 1 April 2015.

11.2 Policy Targets

The following targets are set for all the coastal beaches in the province:

(i) 2013 Targets

The KwaZulu-Natal Beach Tourism Policy shall be driven by strict targets to ensure that coastal municipalities implement and comply with the policy by a date stipulated by the KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Economic Development and Tourism. The critical policy targets for 2013 are that:

- Coastal municipalities that already implement some form of coastal management programmes geared for beach tourism integrate their activities to the policy.
- Two municipalities shall volunteer to implement the Internationally Acclaimed Beach Classification System as recommended by the policy, as pilot projects by the province.

(ii) 2015 Targets

All coastal municipalities must be implementing the policy according to the Action Plan adopted by all stakeholders by 2015.

11.3 Implementable Beach Policy Programmes

Coastal towns and cities around the province of KwaZulu-Natal vary greatly in size and character from the city of Durban to small resorts such as St Lucia and semi-rural setting such as Umgababa. Tourism's contribution to local economies will vary with seaside resorts being particularly dependent on visitor spending. The concept of a "Resort" in this policy is used interchangeably between a "Coastal destination" and a "Coastal facility".



Critical policy implementation elements include a holistic package:

- a) Cities and town facilities
- b) Provision of coastal resorts and suitable accommodation
- c) Inclusive community participation
- d) Provision of attractive surrounding environment
- e) Recreational facilities and beaches
- f) Provision of visitor attractions
- g) Provision of adequate retail
- h) Effective traffic management systems for people movement and accessibility
- i) Development of marinas as waterfronts including provision of water berths
- j) Internationally acclaimed beach classification system.

These elements are discussed in more details below:

11.3.1 Cities and Towns on the Coast

Larger cities and towns on the coast should develop and promote a wide range of shopping; eating out, cultural, recreational and leisure attractions, as well as specific opportunities related to the coast for water and land based informal recreation. They must also provide a range of serviced accommodation to support business tourism and the short break leisure market.

11.3.2 Coastal Resorts

Coastal resorts are those towns on the coast where the local economy is dominated by tourism, such as Sodwana Bay, Margate and Port Edward. They vary greatly in terms of their size, character and accommodation base. Apart from staying tourists, many of the resorts attract substantial numbers of day visitors from home. However, there will continue to be competition, not only from other seaside destinations at home and abroad, but also from city and countryside destinations. Moreover, many resorts have been adversely affected by changes in tourism activity, remaining over dependent on long family holidays and having limited appeal to the younger generation and overseas markets. As a result, the tourism season in most resorts is short, with a high proportion of employment being seasonal and often poorly paid.



The future prosperity of resort communities will depend not only on tourism activity but also on strengthening the local economy to provide additional employment and income opportunities for residents. This will best be achieved by diversifying the local economy to provide a greater choice and range of employment opportunities, and by adding value from tourism activity. Successful regeneration schemes will depend on the public, private and voluntary sectors delivering a concerted package of projects tailored to meeting the needs and opportunities of individual resorts.

11.3.3 Marginalised Coastal Community Interventions

Provincial Government's approach should be to incorporate previously disadvantaged communities into mainstream coastal tourism economy. This will be done through focusing on building capacity within communities and engaging with all groups of stakeholders to define their role in beach tourism and advance economic activities and economic benefits by all the coastal residents. In supporting beach tourism activities, the provincial government will give particular attention to those areas where:

- The local economy is particularly dependent on tourism activities.
- Existing tourism infrastructure is not well adapted to changing market needs.
- There are opportunities for new development to meet emerging market demand.

11.3.4 Providing an attractive environment

A crucial objective for coastal municipalities will be to improve and maintain the public, natural and historic environment to ensure that they are attractive to residents, investors and visitors. The appearance of the approaches to the resort, the sea front and the town centre are crucial in forming the visitor's initial impressions of the resort. An environment which is shabby, ill kept with ugly and poorly sited street furniture will detract from the visitor's enjoyment of the resort.



Municipalities therefore need to ensure that they set high standards of design and landscaping for their public areas, including the provision of street furniture on the beach and adjoining areas. High standards of design, including innovative architectural approaches should be encouraged for new development and redevelopment schemes while conserving the best of the resort's heritage, which contributes to the unique character of the place.

The private sector can also play an active part in maintaining public frontages in good order, and contributing towards the costs of landscaping and planting in the town centres and promenades. The existing public and partnership initiatives already being undertaken to improve the urban seaside environment need to be strengthened and expanded. The objective is to provide an attractive urban and seaside environment for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike, which contributes to the unique character of each resort.

11.3.5 Beaches and Seaside

The beach and sea provide opportunities for a wide range of informal and active pastimes including swimming and sun bathing, sailing and beach games and more adventurous water based activities such as personal water craft and water skiing. The enjoyment of the beach experience can be enhanced by good management and provision of facilities such as launch points, fresh water showers and organised children's play provision during the peak periods for family holidays. Good design and landscaping of beach facilities, promenades and street furniture can also add to the experience. The management of intensively used resort beaches is a complex task involving health, safety and environment issues, conflict resolution between different beach and water users, and co-ordination and liaison with private operators.

The use of innovative management approaches could assist in enhancing the beach and seafront as a primary focus of visitor enjoyment. Beach masters or resort managers could be appointed with similar responsibilities and powers to manage and enhance the visitor enjoyment of the beach and immediate onshore and offshore areas, whilst involving the private, public and voluntary sector stakeholders in a co-ordinated approach to facility provision and maintenance.



11.3.6 Accommodation

The quality, scale and type of tourist accommodation vary greatly from resort to resort. If resorts are to continue to attract staying tourists in competition with other destinations, then it is essential that the accommodation provided meets or surpasses their expectations. No accurate figures currently exist for the coastal accommodation stock in KwaZulu-Natal. It is imperative that KwaZulu-Natal establishes an inventory of all types of beach accommodation and ensure that a high standard of service is maintained to attract beach tourists.

In order to adapt provision to the changing needs, a multi-pronged approach is needed including:

- investing in existing establishments to develop higher quality standards appropriate to their category and type, including serviced accommodation,
- caravan and camping sites and hostels
- the redevelopment or conversion of existing establishments which are not physically capable of being improved to appropriate standards to more viable uses
- the development of new establishments particularly where new opportunities and activities generate additional demand and investing in new mega beach resorts of international standards
- identify whether deficiencies can be met by the extension/improvement of existing operations or through the provision of new facilities.

11.3.7 Visitor attractions

In addition to the beach, resorts need to provide a wide range of activities and attractions for the visitor if they are to continue to attract and increase the volume of staying and day visitors. The coast already has a range of visitor attractions throughout KwaZulu-Natal, including Isimangaliso Wetland Park, Ushaka Marine and Sardine run, to mention a few. However, resorts offer opportunities for developing additional activities and specialist attractions drawing on the concentration of visitors to resorts without displacing visitors from existing attractions.



In particular, there should be opportunities to:

- Increase the number of opportunities for visitors to try new water and land based activities ranging from boat trips for wildlife watching to sports such as water skiing, dinghy sailing, paragliding and other activities.
- Provide additional wet weather facilities (artificial beach related facilities) such as indoor play areas, climbing walls, bowling greens and alleys and other recreational and leisure facilities.

There may also be opportunities to develop new attractions related to the heritage, culture or physical characteristics of the coast. However such developments will need a robust business planning including a consideration of the impact on existing attractions. Municipal Integrated Development Plans and Land Use Management Systems should therefore incorporate Beach Tourism and provide guidance on where investment relating to beach facilities should be attracted.

11.3.8 Retail and Catering

Statistics released in 2010 as per table 2 indicate that 72% of air arrivals and 96% of land arrivals visiting KwaZulu-Natal enjoy shopping, and even more enjoy eating out while at the seaside but the retail and catering offering in many seaside resorts is limited, reducing the potential level of expenditure by visitors.

The development of a wider range of specialist shops offering local arts and craft products together with high quality local produce could widen the retail offer and attract greater visitor spending. While there are individual restaurants which offer high quality cuisine in some resorts, there are no comparable concentrations of eating out opportunities in many coastal resorts in KwaZulu-Natal.

Visitors (including day visitors) are looking for a quality food experience in a variety of hospitality establishments. There are opportunities to raise the quality and choice of all types of catering establishments, using local cuisine. Resorts should make special efforts to encourage a wider range of shops, particularly specialist shops selling local arts and crafts.



11.3.9 Visitor access

Most domestic visitors to resorts come by car. While staying visitors can be accommodated within the resorts, day visitors from holiday accommodation outside the resort or from home can cause congestion and pressure on parking facilities within the resort, particularly during the peak holiday season. Pressure within the resorts can be eased by promoting alternative methods of travel such as cycle routes and public transport, or by establishing seasonal park and ride systems. The provision of dedicated land trains or bus services connecting car parks and the main attractions within the resort can also assist in reducing car movements while helping to distribute visitors to the range of destinations.

Every coastal municipality may develop traffic management schemes that can help to reduce congestion particularly at 'hot spots'. Advanced variable electronics signing on key approach routes can assist in directing traffic, as well as 'in car' traffic information or information from local authorities.

11.3.10 Marinas and Waterfront Development

Marinas are a huge untapped opportunity for coastal tourism in KwaZulu-Natal. Whilst it has not been possible to undertake a detailed financial viability or market demand assessment of the proposals to build new marinas or extend existing marinas within the context of developing beach tourism, marinas and waterfronts have proved to be a key attraction to unlock international tourist demand to destinations such as Cape Waterfront.

The development of marinas and waterfront will need to be considered against the stringent environmental consideration and enabling legislations. Given the nature of investments required for marinas and waterfront developments, private and public sector involvement is critical in ensuring successful investment.

The development of marinas and waterfronts will also result to other beach tourism enhancing developments including improved public space e.g. promenade enhancements, improved parking, identified trailer parking areas, improved slipways, additional fixed shore side moorings,



pontoon to give 24 hour shore access from drying out harbours, toilet and shower facilities. This will also result to the development of other ancillary activities related to accommodation, eating and drinking. Improved facilities will enable KwaZulu-Natal to further develop its high profile with regard to international and interregional sailing and watersports events.

11.3.11 Visiting Berths

It will be important to ensure that any new mooring facility includes the capacity to provide an adequate supply of visiting berths, to encourage visits to other areas around the KwaZulu-Natal coastline. Visiting berths are also very important for events, competitions and regattas. It is appreciated that visiting berths which are only used occasionally (but frequently during the peak season) do not generate the same income levels as the annual renting of berths and that they will require additional management.

11.3.12 Beaches in Protected Areas

Beaches in protected areas, such as Isimangaliso, are key tourism attractions for a wide range of activities including swimming, fishing, boating, diving, snorkeling, sun-bathing and beach games. They are also important habitats for the conservation of biodiversity. The rich bio-diversity also provides eco-tourism opportunities, such as whale watching and guided turtle tours. Protected areas can also be important eco-tourism resources for the region within which they are located and the Province of KwaZulu-Natal in general.

Protected areas are managed by protected area managers, and are managed for the purpose for which they are declared. Coupled with their role of biodiversity conservation, protected area managers, such as Isimangaliso Authority are responsible for facilitating optimal tourism-based development in Park, including key coastal development nodes and sites. Tourism development takes place within the zonation plan contained within the Integrated Management Plan and includes the provision of infrastructure to support the effective functioning of tourism facilities and resorts, such as Sodwana Bay. The management of the beaches, particularly



the use of the beaches by a range of different users and the resolution of any use disputes that arise, is the responsibility of the protected area manager to handle.

11.3.13 Internationally Acclaimed Beach Classification System

There are various beach classification systems used worldwide to manage and market beach tourism and the common factor among them is environmental management and water quality for bathers. There is a need for the province to adopt and pilot at least one common beach management classification system that is internationally accredited. Therefore the policy recommends that the province adopts the Blue Flag Programme to promote beach tourism in KwaZulu Natal. However, the recommended implementable programmes take precedence over the Blue Flag Programme in terms of overall beach tourism development in the Province.

The Blue Flag programme will be piloted in two coastal municipalities to ascertain the following:

- (i) The impact of using Blue Flag as a marketing tool
- (ii) The financial implications associated with the programme;
- (iii) Impact of the Blue Flag Programme on tourist arrivals, length of stay and tourism spend;
- (iv) Implications of the implementation protocol to relevant stakeholders;
- (v) Effectiveness of the proposed implementation protocol

The rationale for the recommendation is that the Blue Flag Programme is an internationally recognised beach management programme that is used by tourists when purchasing tour packages. Secondly, one coastal municipality is already enrolled in the Blue Flag Programme. It must be noted that the Blue Flag is a voluntary programme and no municipality can be compelled to comply with the criteria.

The Blue Flag was promoted by the Tourism Branch of the erstwhile Department of the Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT). The programme was subsequently formally handed over to the Department of Environmental Affairs upon realization that the Blue Flag Programme



predominantly entails environmental issues. The Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA) was appointed by DEAT as the implementers of the Blue Flag programme in South Africa. WESSA was then endorsed by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) who is the custodians of the Blue Flag programme internationally. The FEE conditions are that the Blue Flag programme must be implemented by the non-governmental organisation and that no government can implement the programme as a public institution. In the ten years since the Blue Flag programme was started, participation in this international beach accreditation programme has grown rapidly and sustainably in South Africa. In 2009/10 there were thirteen coastal municipalities participating in the programme with a total of forty beaches within the programme. See Annexure 1: Blue Flag Beach Criteria

11.4 Implementation Protocol

Chapter 3 of the Intergovernmental Relations Act (No. 13 of 2005) provides for organs of state to enter into an implementation protocol as an Agreement where the implementation of a policy, the exercise of a statutory power, the performance of a statutory function or the provision of a service depends on the participation of organs of state in different spheres of government.

The framework further extends the principles of participation and co-ordination between organs of state in the different spheres of government, in terms of the IGR Act, to also include integration, participation and co-ordination of joint programmes within a particular sphere of government. The Framework defines joint programmes as “Those programmes that transcend the conventional organizational boundaries in planning, budgeting and implementation resulting in a number of departments/agencies/ministries responsible for one aspect of the programme, although none is responsible for it in its entirety”. The KwaZulu-Natal Beach Tourism Policy lends itself as a policy that activates the Implementation Protocol as it has multi-faceted dimensions of environmental management, coastal management, beach management, tourism development and marketing. No one department or agency can be fully and solely responsible to achieve implementation of the policy.

The policy will therefore be implemented as follows:



- Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA); the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDT), and the Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Rural Development (DAEA&RD); Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and Coastal Municipalities to sign the Implementation Protocol
- Implementation Protocol to quantify funding need for municipalities to implement the policy
- Determine roles and responsibilities for each sector department within the programme
- Determine role of WESSA in partnering with the province
- Identifying and upholding implementation programme that will serve as a package and brand that enhances competitiveness of the province as an eco-friendly beach destination
- Emphasis to be put on ensuring environmental standards, safety of tourists, proper facilities and water quality as important criteria for municipalities to comply with.

11.5 Implementation Requirements

The following will be the critical requirements to facilitate and ensure the successful implementation of the policy:

11.5.1 Resources

- Financial Support to be provided to municipalities with a potential to enroll in the programme in the short term
- Operational Manual with guidelines to be drafted
- Collaboration and support from local business using local beaches for tourism purposes to market their business to be solicited
- Human resources – life guards, security guards, Tourist Buddies, etc
- Infrastructure – change rooms, ablution facilities etc
- Information boards - displaying aspects of eco-friendliness of the beach.



11.5.2 Incentives

- Training of life guards
- Inclusion of participating beaches in the Provincial Tourist Buddies Programme
- Financial support to municipalities to enroll for the programme in the short term
- Grant-in-Aid from the province for municipalities to maintain their complying beach status
- Best Beach Awards - to be devised to encourage implementation by coastal municipalities
- Province playing an intermediary role between WESSA and municipalities
- Coordination of the environmental and training functions at a national, provincial and local level for participating municipalities

12. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Integrated Coastal Management Act (No. 24 of 2008) (40) (i) stipulates that the MEC must determine the composition of the Provincial Coastal Committee, and in doing so must take account of desirability of ensuring the representation on the Provincial Coastal Committee of organs of State and community groups or bodies which have a material and direct interest in the conservation and management of the coast or use of the coastal resources including representatives of government who play a significant role in undertaking or regulating activities that may have an adverse impact on the coastal environment.

The DAEA&RD is in the process of establishing a Provincial Coastal Committee in accordance with the requirements of the Act. This committee however concentrates more on the environmental aspects of coastal management and does little or nothing at all to market provincial beaches as tourist destinations. In addition a loose partnership is being investigated between DAEA&RD and WESSA to advance the declaration and maintenance of Blue Flag Beaches in the province bearing in mind the department's environmental mandate.

The policy purports to market beaches as tourist destinations and thus the MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, through the Provincial Tourism Committee (PTC) established in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Act of 1996 as amended in 2002, needs to establish a committee that will integrate environmental issues in tourism marketing. The MEC for



Economic Development and Tourism shall be the custodian of the KwaZulu-Natal Beach Tourism Policy and shall have powers to approve and amend the policy in consultation with the PTC.

The MEC shall establish a Provincial Beach Tourism Management Committee (PBTMC) to oversee the implementation of the policy. The PBTMC however, does not replace the Provincial Coastal Committee as established by DAEA&RD but seeks to advance beach tourism and to integrate tourism issues in provincial coastal management activities. The PBTMC may therefore appoint a representative to serve on the Provincial Coastal Committee to ensure that tourism issues are integrated to higher strategic coastal management decisions.

The PBTMC shall comprise all coastal municipalities, Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Department of Co-operation Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, KwaZulu-Natal Sharks Board, the Department of Agriculture Environmental Affairs and Rural Development (DAEARD), tourism trade associations, ISimangaliso Wetland Park and other organisations as the MEC sees fit to invite to serve in the committee.

The purpose of establishing the PBTMC is to:

- Ensure that all coastal municipalities participate and implement the policy,
- Create a platform to share good practices and ideas,
- Ensure that critical deadlines with regard to implementation are met,
- Develop an action plan for implementation of the policy,
- Track current information and trends about the policy implementation,
- Undertake any revisions and adjustments to the policy which may arise from time to time.

Revisions will be approved and endorsed by the MEC for Economic Development and Tourism in consultation with the PTC.

The PTC shall develop comprehensive Terms of Reference for the PBTMC and the PBTMC shall report quarterly to the PTC based on these Terms of Reference. The appointment of the chairperson of the PBTMC shall be a prerogative of the MEC for Economic Development and Tourism in the province. It is however recommended that, the Head of Department or a senior official responsible for Tourism Development in the Province chairs the PBTMC.

12.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The effective implementation of the KwaZulu Natal Beach Tourism Policy cannot be achieved by municipalities alone as outlined in Section 10.3 above. A concerted coordinated approach must be employed to harness resources and expertise from a wide array of interested and affected parties. The recommended roles and responsibilities are as follows:

(i) Role of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism

The Department of Economic Development and Tourism will be responsible for:

- (a) Ensure compliance with policy in consultation with tourism stakeholders in the province.
- (b) Establish the Provincial Beach Tourism Management Committee
- (c) Coordinate activities of PBTMC.
- (d) Liaise directly with coastal municipalities on policy issues.
- (e) Monitor implementation against policy targets

(ii) Role of District Municipalities

- (a) Assist local municipalities in complying with the policy, especial where water quality is concerned by ensuring no sewerage leaks occur into the sea
- (b) Market complying beaches in the generic marketing materials and platforms.

(iii) Role of Local Municipalities

- (a) Identify beaches with potential for complying with the policy.
- (b) Apply for accreditation and ensure renewals on time
- (c) Ensure compliance with policy at all times.
- (d) Establish Municipal Beach Management Committees.
- (e) Ensure there is adequate staff to uphold safety and security of bathers,
- (f) Ensure compliance with environmental and coastal management legislation
- (g) Investigate optimum growth models for Beach Tourism in areas under their jurisdiction.



- (h) Develop a concerted programme to ensure water quality standards are maintained.
 - (i) Cooperate with protected area managers with regard to beaches in protected areas.
 - (j) Develop appropriate beach management by-laws to facilitate compliance
- (iv) Role of Tourism KwaZulu-Natal
 - (a) Engage in a robust marketing campaign for complying beaches as tourism destinations
 - (b) Conduct periodical market research on how participation in the Programme entices the participating coastal destinations
 - (c) Provide market intelligence on other provinces with similar accreditation and how KwaZulu-Natal is fairing in the beach tourism market share.
- (v) Role of KwaZulu-Natal Sharks Board
 - (a) Assist municipalities in complying with policy especially where safety and security issues of bathers are concerned.
 - (b) Incorporate policy implementation in the Annual Action Plan of the organisation.
 - (c) Assist municipalities with safety awareness campaigns
- (vi) Role of Protected Area Managers/ Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
 - (a) Identify beaches with potential for complying with the policy.
 - (b) Apply for accreditation and ensure renewals on time
 - (c) Ensure compliance with policy at all times where compatible
 - (d) Ensure compliance with environmental and coastal management legislation
 - (e) Investigate optimum growth models for Beach Tourism in areas under their jurisdiction.
 - (f) Develop a concerted programme to ensure water quality standards are maintained.



(vii) Role of the Department of Agriculture Environmental Affairs and Rural Development

- (a) Integrate tourism issues on the Provincial Coastal Committee agenda
- (b) Include all the participating municipalities in the Coast Care Programme.
- (c) Support all participating municipalities with their coastal management programmes.
- (d) Assist all participating municipalities in complying with the Integrated Coastal Management Act and other related environmental management Acts
- (e) Coordination of beach management in KZN

(viii) Role of Department of Water Affairs

- (a) Ensure proper catchment management in rivers flowing across municipal boundaries
- (b) Eliminate point source sewage disposal,
- (c) Ensure compliance with the Water Act
- (d) Ensure compliance with National Water Quality Guidelines
- (e) Fund new water treatment plants
- (f) Repair old water treatment plants

(ix) Role of Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

- (a) Support municipalities to draft appropriate by-laws to ensure compliance with various matters, bearing in mind that beaches are a municipal function in terms of Schedule 5 Part B of the Constitution
- (b) Assist municipalities to comply with policy where possible
- (c) Facilitate compliance with policy through SALGA structures
- (d) Use corridor funding where appropriate to fund/support local municipalities to meet the Blue Flag criteria
- (e) Providing support to local authorities to ensure that policy is implemented effectively.



(x) Role of the Trade

The private sector partners with establishments along the coast stand to gain immensely on marketing and financially from the promulgation of this policy. The trade therefore has the following responsibilities:

- (a) Partner with municipalities in financing implementation of the policy in their proximity, especially where the establishment has direct access to the beach.
- (b) Market their establishments using beaches as a draw card.
- (c) Comply with policy stipulations.
- (d) Forge Public-Private-Partnerships in achieving compliance with the policy.

(xi) Role of Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA)

WESSA is a non-governmental organisation that is the custodian of the Blue Flag Programme in South Africa. The role of WESSA is critical in:

- (a) Adapting KwaZulu-Natal Beach Tourism Policy into the Blue Flag Programme
- (b) Approving beaches to be enrolled as pilot and full status beaches
- (c) Conducting monitoring and evaluation of the Blue Flag programme
- (d) Assisting municipalities to comply

Each coastal municipality shall establish a Beach Management Committee comprising of the interested and affected parties in its jurisdiction. The municipal Beach Management Committee shall work with the PBTMC to facilitate compliance at a local level.



13. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The policy will be monitored and evaluated through the PBTMC using the WESSA stipulated monitoring criteria. The PBTMC shall develop a system to enhance monitoring and evolution before June 2011, if the WESSA criteria are deemed inadequate.

14. POLICY REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed in 2013 to ascertain if the targets set for 2013 and 2015 are achievable. The policy will be amended through the PTC process if adjustments need to be made to policy targets.

15. CONCLUSION

The Beach Tourism Policy is a comprehensive and proactive endeavour by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to ensure holistic and sustainable Beach Tourism Development in KwaZulu- Natal. The significance of collaboration amongst different spheres of government in ensuring effective implementation of this policy cannot be overemphasised. The Implementation Protocol that fosters partnership amongst all stakeholders will become a blueprint in defining areas of engagement and collaboration.

The successful implementation of this policy will put KwaZulu-Natal on a higher pedestal on responsible tourism issues. The province will be effectively branded and marketed, leveraging on the acquired Blue flag status of provincial beaches. The policy is not about Blue Flag per se but uses this international acclaimed ecological branding as a pilot.

The Provincial Beach Tourism Management Committee (PBTMC) will be central and pivotal in ensuring continuous engagements, assessments and monitoring of the implementation programmes. The onus therefore rests with all incumbent interested and affected stakeholders as coordinated through the PBTMC to play their respective roles.



ANNEXURE 1: Blue Flag Beach Criteria

The Blue Flag Programme is implemented through comprehensive beach management criteria as outlined in this section.

The symbols (I) and (G) are used to classify the level of compliance for the beach criteria as follows:

(I) *Imperative Criteria– beach must comply*

(G) *Guideline Criteria– encouraged to increase the standards at the beach but not mandatory*

(i) ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

- (a) Information relating to coastal zone ecosystems and natural, sensitive areas in the coastal zone must be displayed (I)
- (b) Information about bathing water quality must be displayed (I)
- (c) Information about the Blue Flag Campaign must be displayed (I)
- (d) Code of conduct for the beach area must be displayed and the laws governing beach use must be easily available to the public upon request (I)
- (e) A minimum of 5 environmental education activities must be offered and displayed (I)

(ii) WATER QUALITY

- (a) Compliance with the requirements and standards for excellent bathing water quality (I)
- (b) No industrial or sewage related discharges may affect the beach area (I)
- (c) Monitoring on the health of coral reefs located in the vicinity of the beach
(I - Caribbean, Brazil, South and East Africa; Not applicable - Europe, Morocco, Canada, Chile)
- (d) Compliance of the community with requirements for sewage treatment and effluent quality (G)
- (e) Algae or other vegetation should be left to decay on the beach unless it constitutes a nuisance (I)

(iii) ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

- (a) A beach management committee must be established to be in charge of instituting environmental management systems and conduct regular environmental audits of the beach facility (I)



- (b) The beach must comply with all regulations affecting the location and operation of the beach (coastal zone planning and environmental legislation) (I)
- (c) The beach must be clean (I)
- (d) Waste disposal bins/receptacles must be available on/by the beach in adequate numbers, regularly maintained and emptied (I)
- (e) Facilities for receiving recyclable waste materials must be available on/by the beach (I)
- (f) Adequate and clean sanitary facilities with controlled sewage disposal (I)
- (g) On the beach there will be no unauthorized camping or driving and no dumping (I)
- (h) Regulation concerning dogs and other domestic animals on the beach must be strictly enforced (I)
- (i) All buildings and equipment of the beach must be properly maintained (I)
- (j) Sustainable means of transportation must be promoted in the beach area (G)

(iv) SAFETY AND SERVICES

- (a) An adequate number of lifeguards and/or lifesaving equipment must be available at the beach (I)
- (b) First aid equipment must be available on the beach (I)
- (c) There must be management of different users and uses of the beach so as to prevent conflicts and accidents (I)
- (d) Emergency plans to cope with pollution safety risks must be in place (I)
- (e) There must be safe access to the beach (I)
- (f) The beach area must be patrolled (G)
- (g) A supply of potable drinking water must be available on the beach (G)
- (h) A minimum of one Blue Flag beach in each municipality must have access and toilet facilities provided for disabled persons (I)
- (i) Map of the beach indicating different facilities must be displayed (I)

[illegible]

[illegible]

KWAZULU-NATAL BEACH TOURISM POLICY



**Department of Economic
Development and Tourism**
Umnyango Wezokuthuthukiswa
Komnotho Nezokuvakasha
KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

**“BUILDING AN ECONOMY THAT CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL
AND MAKING TOURISM WORK FOR US ALL”**

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