

TO DO! 2005
Contest Socially Responsible Tourism

TO DO! Special Award Winner
FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA
(FTTSA)

represented by

Mrs. Jennifer Seif, Executive Director
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South Africa

Rationale for the Special Award

by

Klaus Betz

"We have set out on a quest for true humanity, and somewhere on the distant horizon we can see the glittering prize."

Steve Biko

1. INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Institute of Tourism and Development (Studienkreis für Tourismus und Entwicklung) the assessor toured South Africa, from 16 to 29 November 2005, in order to examine on site the application by the FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA (FTTSA) certification organisation.

As its objectives appeared to coincide largely with the criteria of the TO DO! contest (cf. section 4), the TO DO! jury had considered instituting as a novelty a TO DO! Special Award in recognition of the work done by FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA, should the latter's assessment turn out positive. The reasoning was that – unlike the TO DO! award winners in the past – an organisation like FTTSA does not operate economically comparable with a tourism enterprise, community-based or regional tourism project but rather engages itself in the wider area of tourism policy.

In addition to monitoring the operating principles and practices of FTTSA, the further examination also included probing into claim and reality about the FTTSA-certified projects. Given South Africa's long distances and the limited time available, it proved impossible to visit all operations bearing the FTTSA label. Instead, six tourism enterprises were chosen from the northern and southern areas of South Africa to provide a representative sample.

Result: In recognition of the organisation's objectives, conception and its implementation, this assessor recommends that FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA receive a TO DO! Special Award on the occasion of ITB 2006.

2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

Anybody travelling in South Africa today and getting involved with its everyday realities will gradually discover a country that still has not come over its recent history. Even though it is twelve years since apartheid ended, there are in the subconscious still enough of the old thought structures to act as a brake on change in the new South Africa. Especially in the economy. Yet at the same time there are many innovative and creative impulses signalling that a more equitable society can arise in South Africa, and how.

To be mentioned first and foremost in this connection is the BEE Act, which stands for the "Black Economic Empowerment" programme¹. This legislation-based project is intended to initiate in nearly all sectors a socio-economic process that will take place in several stages up until 2014 and will ensure that black people² participate in economic development, its management and control, and that income inequalities among the people are gradually equalized.

The implementation by businesses of the BEE Act as such is not enforced, but those standing aside risk being cut off from government funds and subsidies.

¹ Black Economic Empowerment is defined in the BEE Act as: "... An integrated and coherent socio-economic process that directly contributes to the economic transformation of South Africa and brings about significant increases in the number of black people that manage, own and control the country's economy ... as well as significant decreases in income inequalities."

² The term "black people" refers to African, Indian and Coloured South African citizens.

The BEE process started in such sectors as financial services, media, forestry and paper industry, oil and energy as well as agriculture and fisheries. Since May 2005 the labour-intensive tourism industry has also had its “Tourism BEE Charter and Scorecard”, which clearly specify how tourism establishments should be structured by the year 2014 – in terms of ownership and participation, the strategic representation in management, opportunities for further training and capacity building of staff, and not least employment equity (proportion of men and women, of “blacks” and “whites”)³.

The BEE Act is thus one of the prime movers for change in South African society (cf. www.southafrica.info/doing_business/trends/empowerment/bee.htm). Without this programme it would probably have been difficult to found an organisation like FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA and to establish this young company firmly as a promoter of fair and thus socially responsible tourism development in South Africa.

This is the background necessary to comprehend the need and reasoning for tourism establishments in South Africa to take action that will enable them to act conform to the BEE Act by 2014. (This notwithstanding, there have been pioneering enterprises, such as TO DO! 2005 award winning Kuvona Cultural Tours with Shiluvu Lakeside Lodge, which acted on necessary action in this direction long before the BEE Act and were then the first to be contacted by FTTSA). Those establishments which have received FTTSA certification already act as models for others. After all, there is mounting evidence that passing successfully through FTTSA’s demanding certification process almost automatically guarantees that an establishment will also meet the BEE requirements. Undoubtedly, however, such an establishment will not be the same any more at the end of the certification process.

Even though FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA will always favour a cooperative solution to interested tourism enterprises, there is no “letting up” on performance and standards. As a result, every one of the enterprises visited by the assessor satisfies many if not all of the TO DO! Contest criteria, high-priced private luxury lodges as well as community-based projects.

Still, this entire process does not lead to the disappearance of the violent contrasts running through South African society. But it marks a beginning. It does indeed matter if one tours the (rich) southern parts of the country, e.g. the Cape region, or the economically less developed northern or northeastern provinces, such as Limpopo (bordering on Botswana and Zimbabwe) or Mpumalanga (bordering on Mozambique). The new South Africa is still plagued by enormous differences in material well-being. It is one country but two worlds to travel in.

In the large cities of the south, and there particularly in the well-kept outskirts and suburban areas, this shows up in the many warning signs on the house walls saying “Armed response” (meaning “we’ll shoot back.”). Only few people there will get around on foot; there are cameras watching and infrared sensors that will set off burglar alarms. Security firms are much in demand and it is at such moments that South Africa is not at its welcoming best, at least not to visitors from an arms-shunning civil society. Such images contrast with the still impoverished livelihoods of those sections of the population that are forced to continue living in sprawling slum-like settlements known as townships.

³ Remarkably the tourism industry in 2003 managed to earn South Africa more foreign currency than the gold trade (previously its foreign trade branch number one), employing directly and indirectly more than 1.1 million people. New jobs are created at the rate of one per 8 tourists p.a. South Africa’s 6.5 million international tourists (2003 – 4.6m from Africa and 1.9m from other continents) made it the leader in Africa, topping even Tunisia (5m) and Egypt (4.9m). (Source: German Foreign Office et al)

In the north of the country such impressions are less common. There is no comparable wealth that needs to be defended by threatening “armed response”. On the contrary. Although these parts do have a fairly developed infrastructure (as evidenced by an existing network of roads), they still suffer from high unemployment rates (up to 40 per cent and more). The density of schools is moderate and public transport hardly exists. Modern communication technology and electricity tend to be limited to the central towns or – in the case of tourism potential – to “magnets” like the Kruger National Park with its lodges, or private game (and nature) reserves.

Accordingly, FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA finds itself in a position in which it can accompany and contribute to the reconciliation process in the new South Africa, as one important element amongst many. Its goal is to reshape the old structures in tourism, without condemning them, in such a way that a dynamic can arise that is needed for a fair society based on social responsibility. It is not surprising, therefore, to find among its supporters and companions in this endeavour the South African Government (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism) and the Tourism Business Council of South Africa.

3. THE ORGANISATION: FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 History of the Project

The non-profit organisation FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA (FTTSA) that exists today was initiated in 2001 by the South Africa Country Office of the “International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources” (IUCN), commonly referred to as the “World Conservation Union”. This IUCN initiative was preceded by a pilot phase lasting more than two years (1999-2001), which was accompanied by extensive talks with all tourism stakeholders. In 2004 FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA was founded out of the IUCN office, and it has since been an independent organisation with own rights.

From the very beginning, FTTSA’s objectives and business practices have differed from those of many organisations engaged in tourism certification. Its label (ranking as a trademark) is not an eco-label. FTTSA focusses on the social, cultural and economic aspects of tourism development. As is the case for the TO DO! Contest, its primary attention is to seek ways and means, through participatory tourism development to overcome poverty; to encourage, strengthen and preserve cultural identity; and to integrate a maximum number of social aspects (key issues in post-apartheid South Africa). Only then does the question arise that all activities also have to be in conformity “with the principles of environmental compatibility”.

Arguably FTTSA’s orientation reflects much more closely therefore the “traditional” Fair Trade movement (coffee, bananas, sugar, rice) than any other tourism “label” in existence. What is more, FTTSA’s approach may prove to be “exportable” yet, provided such practices can be adapted to suit the specifics of other countries and cultures, and given the political will in other countries – along the lines of the above-mentioned BEE Act – to adopt regulatory instruments to this effect.

3.2 The Structure

It is also vitally important – and requires novel thinking - that sponsors or supporters whose concern is the long-term development of society as a whole should care for organisations to have a good operational start. Accordingly, although FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA cannot support itself from the user fee revenue generated in South Africa by its certification scheme (covering only 17 painstakingly assessed (!) enterprises in two years). It can mobilise enough support to be able to implement professionally a project that is important for tourism and the labour market.

Assistance in the form of financial donations, material, logistic support, tourism know-how, and consultancy services has been received, amongst others, from the UK's Department for "International Development and Business Linkages Challenge Fund", the "Dutch Green Development Foundation", the "Human Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries", and New Zealand's development organisation "NZ Aid". There has also been support from the "Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation" (SDC) and "Bread for All" (Switzerland). Equally, South African consultancies, reputable law firms, tourism risk management specialists, as well as microfinance specialists catering for small enterprises and not least the South African branch office of DHL (i.e. German Post) are included in the list.

The staff of FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA's office are both multicultural and multinational, and there is a clear separation of competencies. The areas of marketing, development, research, public relations and administration are currently run by eight qualified female staff from the US, Kenya, Sweden, New Zealand, Netherlands and South Africa, supervised by a board of directors and governing body. Both meet regularly. The various certification procedures are assigned to specially trained external, but South African, assessors.

3.3 Principles and Methods

As FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA engages in a highly successful "domestic PR campaign" (various radio broadcasts, articles about FTTSA in prominent South African publications) alongside its clearly visible international publicising effort. On the one hand, the end of apartheid made the tourism industry come vigorous aware of South Africa's period of isolated tourism development⁴. On the other hand, the BEE Act and the work of FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA in particular offer the chance to bridge the gap with a bold step forward.⁵

Central to this forward strategy are the principles of FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA: if the applicants do not fulfil the criteria, there will be no FTTSA certification nor (at the end even more important) will there be socially responsible change in the spirit of the BEE tourism charter. Hence the FTTSA principles are as follows:

- Fair share
- Democracy
- Respect for human rights, culture and environment
- Reliability
- Transparency and
- Sustainability.

What it also means is this: Much as FTTSA is searching for potential applicants (newly founded and small-scale establishments are as eligible as are large mainstream operations) who are likely to conform to these principles. Increasingly now there are at least as many if not more tourism enterprises taking the first step themselves approaching FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA where their applications are treated strictly confidential. Nothing leaks to the public about striving or (temporarily) failed candidates. Names are only mentioned when certification has been completed successfully.

⁴ Without getting to know about the various ecological, social and cultural debates critiquing tourism development, nor the spate of rural and regional development concepts in other countries.

⁵ In addition, interested tourism stakeholders will find there a large number of sound information brochures such as the *Responsible Tourism Handbook* and a series of brochures including such titles as *Boosting Procurement from Local Business* and *Building Local Partnerships*.

As a rule, applicants for the FTTSA Trademark are first asked to do a self-assessment. Once this leaves no doubt about their seriousness, a panel of experts delves more deeply into the application, providing a first feedback and also looking into what deficits may still have to be overcome, e.g. in conjunction with the FTTSA's development section, to enable an applicant to clear the subsequent time-intensive and fee-carrying (about €180 per day and assessor) first part of the certification process.

This first phase will see the above-mentioned specially trained external assessors go into action, checking up on the applicant enterprise with the help of a complex catalogue of questions. The result is an assessor's report. Not until this documentation is in hand, the certification panel will properly (consisting of FTTSA's executive director and external representatives from consultancies) begin the scoring work. This scoring gradually building up into an analysis of strengths and weaknesses

The most important score criteria are:

- Legal fundament of the enterprise ("legal and general")
- Human resource practice
- Employment equity
- Procurement
- Environmental and conservation
- Quality and reliability
- HIV/Aids policies and approach
- Labour standards⁶
- Skills development
- Ownership and control
- Social/community investment
- Health and safety
- Workplace culture

The ensuing process is such that a typical applicant complies with some 70 per cent of requirements, with one or two of the 13 score criteria left wanting for the time being. In most cases this will entail a process of feedback and consultation lasting several months. Should it not be possible to get the applicant to improve on the "weaknesses" within a reasonable period of time, certification will be withheld. If on the other hand the certification process is completed successfully, the FTTSA Trademark will be awarded for twelve months.

Thereafter the enterprise has to submit to annual re-certification, which takes the form of a paper audit in the first year followed by an on-site re-assessment in the next. The minimum fee for the trademark licence amounts to only €75 per annum for very small enterprises, while mainstream businesses (of mass tourism) pay up to €3,000 per annum.

Evaluation in the way described above creates sustainable contribution in the aim of achieving FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM in South Africa. If the procedures were not handled so strictly, the organisation would have certified more than one hundred enterprises. As it is, only 17 tourism enterprises have been awarded the FTTSA label (as of February 2006).

How exactly the principles of FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA are translated into practice and compared with the TO DO! criteria listed in the following, may best be illustrated using examples from the establishments visited by this assessor. In order to highlight what

⁶ Wages and salaries in South Africa can be very low in rural areas compared to big cities. The minimum wage of a rural worker is about R 750 (somewhat below € 100). A teacher (lower scale) earns about R 3,900; the average pay for fairly-paid tourism workers is between R 1,500 and R 2,500 plus so-called benefits (e.g. accommodation and board) and possibly incentives (bonuses).

connections exist, the FTTSA's principles mentioned in 3.3 have been related to the relevant TO DO! criteria.

4. APPRAISAL

In the comparison of FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA with **the eight TO DO! criteria for socially responsible tourism, claim and reality** regarding the FTTSA's principles/criteria have been compared. This leads to the following valuation:

Involving of the different interests and requirements of the local people through participation
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corresponds to the FTTSA criteria

- Fair share and
- Democracy.

Claim: In the period prior to the foundation of FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA, the above criteria were already taken into account during the pilot phase by instituting a consultation and discussion process with the relevant groups of stakeholders, particularly so by prioritising support for networking with rural communities. It was also very beneficial that in doing so, FTTSA was able to rely also on "white" business people who already under the apartheid regime had not sympathised with the practice of race segregation and had sought a dialogue, be this by playing an active part in the famous "market theatre" of Soweto or, for example, taking the decision – life-threatening at that time for a (white) "Africaans" – of joining the ANC (Nelson Mandela's African National Congress). This was practically tantamount to high treason. Eventually, some of those "white" opponents of apartheid could only survive because they were hidden in the bush and protected by "black" South Africans.

Reality: This happened to Jurie Moolman, founder and leading partner of the FTTSA-certified Djuma Private Game Reserve, who talks of "building bridges" as part of his "lifestyle position". Meaning "the lion's roar" in translation, Djuma is a private nature and wildlife reserve covering some 9,000 ha in the Sabi Sands region, Mpumalanga Province, next to the Kruger National Park.

It offers the classic wildlife observation safaris (very well done and with much sensitivity) where visitors can spend the nights in various lodges (ranging from self-catering to high-end luxury bungalows costing up to R3,500 per night – a little less than €500). Of the 65 employees, 56 are from the adjacent villages (named "Utah" and "Dixie") that Moolmann and his partners are especially committed to, where they have started or built a school and a kindergarten. (Says Moolmann: "Educational establishments are so vital, we can't wait for the state around here.") His current drive is for the villages around to be supplied with electricity at long last.

But permanent electric power can only be afforded by those who also have a regular income. A number of the Djuma staff have already been there for more than eight years, and most workers there earn between R1,500 and 2,500 a month, not counting benefits, bonuses and tips. Djuma also allows its staff to offer interested visitors tours of their native villages (at R150 to 180), which they conduct on their own account. Conspicuously absent is the colonial style hierarchy that is still practised in other lodges. The entire staff have internalised their roles as solicitous and friendly hosts, without ever becoming submissive.

Strengthening the awareness among the local people with regard to the chances and risks of tourism development in their everyday economic, social and cultural life

corresponds to the FTTSA criterion of

- Transparency.

This criterion would have stood out rather as an absurdity in the context of the tourism practised formerly in South Africa, had it not more likely been completely ignored, as shown by the way the black majority was treated. This has obviously changed.

Even so, tourism has largely remained a “white” business, taking place along certain channels or on “islands” centred primarily on attractions rather than communities or lacking integration with the latter. This will probably not change until the BEE programme gathers momentum (ownership and control) and more enterprises will be certified by FTTSA.

On the other hand, bearing in mind the sheer size of the country, the present structure of tourism in South Africa is such that it does not bear comparison with the top destinations in the Mediterranean region or the Alps or others endangered by their cultural exotism.

Claim: This notwithstanding, FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA has since 2004 held more than 26 training sessions and workshops in various communities, familiarising about 300 participants with this issue (awareness raising), among them community representatives, students, workers in the tourism industry, and owners of enterprises. Besides, collaborating with the University of South Africa (UNISA), FTTSA succeeded in establishing courses on sustainable tourism. Last but not least the described PR activities of FTTSA are suitable to inform the public about the chances and risks of tourism developments.

Reality: As the example of TO DO! award winning KUVONA CULTURAL TOURS (with the FTTSA-certified Shiluvuvaru Lakeside Lodge as its centrepiece) shows, forging ahead in partnership with the local/regional population does bear fruit. The RIBOLLA TOURISM ASSOCIATION set up by local people there retains the initiative, taking their own decisions rather than bearing decisions taken elsewhere which could then only be responded to. Focussing the visitors’ interest on themes and offers of its own choice (such as drummers’ and dance ensembles, or arts and crafts), the association manages to strike a balance between seizing chances and avoiding risks.

Participation of broad local population strata regarding the positive economic, social and cultural effects of tourism

corresponds to the FTTSA criteria

- Fair share and
- Democracy.

Claim: The South African government regards tourism as a priority sector of economic growth. This view is shared by FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA. Accordingly, issues of Ownership and Control, Procurement, and Social/Community Investment constitute major features for certification. After all, they hold the key to achieving the broadest possible benefits.

Reality: Ideally, such broad benefit for a majority of people in the new South Africa will be ensured by setting up projects owned by a community, trust or fiduciary foundation. This is

the case with the FTTSA-certified Phumulani Lodge at Hazyview, Mpumalanga (also located right on the doorstep of the Kruger National Park). This 4-star lodge was opened in 2001 “in honour of the Mdluli Tribe”, or as its director Amos Mdluli has put it, “Phumulani is the pride of the community.” Boasting 17 chalets now, Phumulani has indeed been one of the first overnight lodges to be set up and run very successfully by “black” villagers. Amos Mdluli reports that during its construction 95% of the workers were drawn from the community, that the lodge currently employs 22 local inhabitants, and he adds, “One employee is feeding up to 5, 6 or 10 people within the family.”

With Phumulani’s construction a dream came true of the late tribal chief, who in 1998 had secured a grant of over R6 million for the Mdluli Tribe – because part of the tribe used to live in what is now the Kruger National Park (inhabiting an area of some 1,600 ha) but had been slowly pushed out in the 1960s.

It must also be mentioned here that even very large companies like the Spier Wine Estate, famously located at Stellenbosch (wine, leisure park, hotel, golf course, with 400,000 visitors a year), have risen to the challenge of broadening the benefit for the majority, irrespective of the fact that the FTTSA-certified Spier Village Hotel alone, with its staff of 300, already belongs to the big employers. Thus Spier Village has declared its readiness to go ahead with creating what are called enterprise linkages as part of the campaign of Pro-Poor Tourism Pilots. The goal is to procure materials and services from “small local and formerly disadvantaged individual enterprises”. As a result, one-time employees managed to set up their own businesses: starting a laundry, supplying firewood and kerosene, selling arts and crafts, gardening services, souvenirs, and repairs – all this taking place in the former heartland of apartheid.

<p style="text-align: center;">Guarantee of the attractiveness of jobs in tourism for the local people by improving working conditions in relation to payment, social security, working hours, education and training</p>
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corresponds to the FTTSA criterion of

- Reliability.

Claim: With its certification trademark, FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA sends not only a strong signal to the outside world, but is of equivalent importance to the company’s employees. The Fair Trade label guarantees that their remuneration is adequate to support themselves, it signifies safe and statutory conditions of work, and it ensures that employees get work contracts and are informed about their rights. Employers who wish to achieve certification have to disclose how they pay and treat their staff. The principle of in-company democracy also requires that employees are involved in decision-making processes concerning their enterprise. What this means can only be appreciated against the background of the institutionalized exploitation of labour and black communities that occurred under the apartheid regime.

Reality: Two enterprises, both certified by FTTSA and privately owned, both former estates and located in or near Swellendam, are exemplary in ensuring the attractiveness of tourism employment for local people. Swellendam is situated almost 200 km east of Cape Town at the foot of the Overberge.

The exquisitely tended two five-star country houses “Klippe Rivier” and the lovingly restored country house “Jan Harmsgat” have set standards in regard to the TO DO! Criterion mentioned above. In both houses, roughly two thirds of the staff come from a township located near Swellendam. Hardly any staff spoke English at the outset. All of them underwent intensive training (from guesthouse economics to cooking and to reception of guests). As a result, the staff today are qualified and motivated individuals whose long haul

from being, e.g., a young girl without any perspective to the self-reliant first-rate chef can hardly be noticed.

In addition to this, both the “Klippe Rivier” and the “Jan Harmsgat” pay really good salaries of up to R 3,000 and more, depending on the responsibility a job carries and including all benefits such as free accommodation in attractive houses, free electric power etc. In individual cases, even interest-free credits are provided for staff who want to buy a car. Also, “Jan Harmsgate’s” manageress, Judi Rebstein, founded a much frequented café, “The Old Gaol Complex”, in Swellendam, together with some former employees who run it completely independently and meanwhile have also become business partners in the operation.

<p style="text-align: center;">Reinforcement of the local culture as well as the cultural identity of those living in tourism destination areas</p>
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corresponds to the FTTSA criterion

- Respect for human rights, culture and environment.

Considering South Africa’s past history, it probably amounts to a breakthrough for the time being to make a fresh start on encouraging cultural identity and diversity, going beyond the measure of formal changes (changing the names of towns, using the names of tribes or ethnic groups, etc.). This is of particular importance in rural areas where the priority must be to recover the local history and culture of the black population that apartheid strove to bury, and reclaim them as something to be proud of, even as some villages may still be caught up in impoverished conditions. First steps have been taken but they tend to concern more the level of everyday culture, along the lines of “We are glad to show to whoever is interested how we are living, and how we used to live, but also what we are capable of”.

Claim: As a precondition for certifying tourism establishments, FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA insists on the communities concerned being involved in the planning and decision-making processes. Moreover, it wants to encourage tourism operators to thematize social and cultural diversity and to be sensitive to the host cultures. Formulations like these indicate how “soft” this notion still is, and how uncertain the terrain travelled on or towards each other can be.

Reality: If culture is not just perceived as some exotic show highlight appended to a day trip, or as shopping for souvenirs by the roadside, there are as yet essentially only five out of the fourteen FTTSA-certified establishments that make a practical contribution to the theme of “strengthening the local culture”: the aforementioned TO DO! award winner KUVONA CULTURAL TOURS (in cooperation with RIBOLLA TOURISM ASSOCIATION), the Djuma Private Game Reserve mentioned above (which allows its staff to conduct private tours of their native villages), and – though not assessed on location – Calabash Tours near Port Elizabeth, Masakala Traditional Guest House in the south of the Drakensbergs, as well as Singita Lodges near the Kruger Park. Calabash predominantly specializes in township tours, and whereas Masakala offers authentic insights into Sotho and Xhosa culture, Singita also features village tours around the theme “How does a Shangaan community work?”.

<p style="text-align: center;">Avoidance or minimisation of social and cultural damage caused by tourism in destination areas</p>
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corresponds to the FTTSA criterion of

- Sustainability.

Claim: One of the core principles of FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA is sustainability. As this consideration is applied to essentially all enterprises certified by

FTTSA, it may be taken for granted that all those involved are very conscious of the need to avoid or minimize tourism-related social and cultural damage in the destination areas.

Reality: In practice, it is indeed a crucial distinction that the employees are almost exclusively drawn from the local area and work in establishments that are not cordoned-off enclaves visited by planeloads of wealthy strangers who never come face-to-face with the locals. In contrast to the apartheid years, every one of the establishments is integrated in or otherwise connected with the communities. Most of the time, they will contribute to awareness raising through their employees as well as direct activities (workshops, adult education, engagement with schools). In the final analysis, the two sides depend on each other. Conscious of the fact that tourism creates employment and thus ensures the livelihoods of many families, all involved tend to work together rather than against each other. This has been illustrated by the examples discussed previously under the various criteria.

<p style="text-align: center;">Projects and measures entered into the contest must be in line with the principles of environmental compatibility</p>

corresponds to the FTTSA criteria

- Sustainability and
- Respect for the environment.

Claim: As FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA originated from the activities of the South Africa office of the environmental organisation IUCN (cf. p. 5, subsection 3.1), the principles of environmental compatibility are also central to its commitment and thus a standard component of its certification process. Besides, FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA takes the view that a tourism destination cannot be sustainable unless it simultaneously strives to protect and conserve nature and the environment. FTTSA is convinced that the issues of environmental justice must coincide with social and economic justice.

Reality: That such coincidence can be brought about, and how, is shown in practical terms by another enterprise that gained FTTSA certification. Its prime target is the South African public, but it welcomes warmly also visitors from other countries. Located on the city limits of Cape Town (Cape Flats), Imvubu Nature Tours was set up by a local group of blacks who under the apartheid regime were barred from entering the Rondevlei Nature Reserve right on their doorstep. Rondevlei is approximately 260 ha of wetland that is regularly overlooked by visitors to Cape Town (who visit the top attraction: the “Table Mountain”). It boasts 231 species of birds, botanical rarities, smaller wildlife, porcupines, and otters but also bigger mammals like steenbok and even rhinoceros (!). Imvubu Nature Tours is committed to combining the experience of nature with environmental know-how and excursion tourism, offering guided tours, boat trips, fishing and stays at the bush camp. It also has its own conference centre where classes from schools can be received and entertained and even specialists can meet in conference.

And what makes it special: this kind of tourism can also be afforded by South Africans on very low incomes. The admission fee to this gem (without guided tours) is only R5 (about 70 Euro cents). Because South Africa is no cheap tourism destination, many South African families cannot or can only seldom afford the various tourist offers, in contrast to most foreign visitors.

<p style="text-align: center;">Implementation of measures or mechanisms which can guarantee the economic and institutional sustainability of the project</p>

corresponds to the FTTSA criterion of

- Sustainability.

For the time being, FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA is not in a position yet to ensure its economic sustainability by itself. Its income from user fees amounts to just 5 per cent of the total. In line with its business plan, FTTSA expects a tangible rise only by the end of the next four to five years as significantly more tourism enterprises will have been certified by that time. Accordingly, FTTSA will for a considerable period of time continue to depend on national and international support. Provided that the vitally important work of FTTSA is recognized and duly appreciated and support is still forthcoming, the institutional sustainability of the project should be guaranteed since FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA's administrative structure and operational methods are sound and well-considered in their design.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA maintains a considerable international profile, having gained an excellent reputation abroad for its convincing and good performance until now. In order to give fresh impetus to its inherent dynamism it could well make sense now to work for an opportunity that would bring together political and tourism decision makers from South Africa with their counterparts from other countries with a view to discussing diverse practical examples worldwide and their relevance for the ways forward to a more equitable, socially responsible tourism.

This assessor declares himself in favour of granting a TO DO! Special Award to FAIR TRADE IN TOURISM SOUTH AFRICA (FTTSA) because it works professionally, with dedication and great profundity, interacts meaningfully with the goals of tourism and labour market policy in the new South Africa, and helps to initiate and sustain the socially responsible development of tourism in South Africa. Work this way its endeavour has no precedent in tourism practised worldwide and is thus exemplary.

With its fascinating scenery, its impressive wildlife and its chances for a new direction in society, South Africa is a tourism destination that lacks parallels in the world. Should the country succeed in overcoming the horrible consequences of apartheid and in leaving behind the social and economic dissimilarities, which are caused by this, it will surely be one of the most-sought-after holiday destinations our world has to offer.