

## EASTERN CAPE PARKS AND TOURISM AGENCY MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

**MARKETING & COMMUNICATION | BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM | RESERVATIONS** | Palm Square Business Park | Ironwood House | Bonza Bay Road  
Beacon Bay | 5205 | P.O.Box 18373 | Quigney | East London | 5211 | Tel. +27 (0) 43 701 9600

**OFFICE OF THE CEO | HUMAN RESOURCES | CONSERVATION | FINANCE** | 6 St Marks Road | Southernwood | East London | P.O.Box 11235 | Southernwood  
East London | 5213 | Tel. +27 (0) 43 705 4400



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## **1) OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this marketing and communications strategy is to document the planned marketing and communications activities for the following periods

Period I April 2013 to end March 2014

Period II April 2014 to end March 2015 (summary)

Period III April 2015 to end March 2016 (summary)

## **2) BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS**

The ECPTA was established in July 2010 as a result of the merger of the Eastern Cape Parks and Eastern Cape Tourism Boards. The objectives of the ECPTA are to manage biodiversity in protected areas and tourism in the Province.

The Eastern Cape is identified as a Province with poor services and transport infrastructure as a result of the condition of our road and rail infrastructure and the fact that the Eastern Cape has no international airport, limited air access and infrequent flights. This poses a great hindrance for tourists to access the province and limits the growth of tourist visits into the Province.

The planning framework for tourism lacks consolidation, with provincial stakeholders continuing to develop competing and ineffective strategies to grow the tourism visitor base. The interventions co-ordinated by Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) have proven to be ineffective and inefficient.

A study conducted by Fuller Frost Associates (April 2010) indicates that the previous tourism entity, ECTB, was willing but not able to perform due to the lack of a clear marketing strategy, plan or budget leading to activities being undertaken in an ad hoc and often reactive manner. These activities tended to be once off in nature and lacked impact due to not being sustained. Many initiatives were poorly managed and evaluated, with no clear return on investment criteria resulting in very little meaningful growth of tourism to the province. With regard to the previous entity ECP a business case study (2009/2010) indicated that product advertising and tariff structure did not reflect the actual product offering, which is lagging behind industry standards and is in need of infrastructural attention.

The coming together of two entities, with two different organisational cultures and the introduction of a new brand, poses various challenges which need to be addressed in order to inculcate cohesion to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the entity going forward.

Limited capacity and funds calls for a focused approach to destination marketing for the first period, targeting four key markets:

- South Africa (the domestic market)
- UK & Ireland
- Benelux (The Netherlands, Belgium & Luxembourg)
- North America (USA & Canada)

In simple terms, going forward the Destination Marketing Unit's approach to marketing and communications will be:

- Understand the market
- Facilitate the removal of obstacles
- Select the product/service
- Facilitate the product/service platform
- Select the right marketing/communication channels
- Monitor and learn from the tourist

## **2.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The most challenging issues facing ECPTA with regard to marketing and communication are:

- Getting our own house in order first - organisational culture synergy, brand entrenchment, product knowledge
- Demonstrating value and lead in achieving public and private sector stakeholder alignment. All relevant stakeholders working cohesively together, leveraging funding opportunities and capacity through this
- Access to accurate provincial tourism research statistics and trends
- Creating top of mind awareness and desirability for what the Eastern Cape has to offer
- Creating an impact in an over cluttered media market with similar messages from every local provincial competitor targeting the same markets
- Instilling confidence in and support of ECPTA by private product owners
- Upgrading of accommodation and infrastructure facilities of provincial nature reserves to meet with industry standards
- Ensuring that an aligned/appropriate product marketing promotions strategy is implemented to increase revenue generated from the nature reserves
- Securing sufficient budget to implement an extensive through the line domestic marketing strategy and for the appointment of country representatives and signing of JMAs for international marketing
- Ensuring sufficient capacity and skills to implement required marketing activities
- Ensuring that service delivery is a high priority as marketing initiatives result in sales of destination/products.

## **3) AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The marketing and communication strategy is aligned to the following strategic goal and objectives of the ECPTA:

### **GOAL (ECPTA strategic goal)**

2. To serve as a catalyst for all dimensions of tourism in the Province
3. To establish and maintain an efficient and effective institution

### **BY (ECPTA strategic objective statements)**

- 2.1 To promote the Province as a preferred tourism destination
  - 2.2 To enhance Provincial tourism transformation
  - 2.3 To enhance Provincial tourism product development
  - 2.4 To facilitate infrastructure development for tourism growth
- 3.1 To utilise partnerships with key stakeholders successfully to achieve specific outputs

### **THROUGH (ECPTA performance indicators)**

- Providing appropriate, credible information on tourism in the province.
- Undertaking collaborative marketing of the Province as a tourism destination
- Promoting special events
- Enhancing infrastructure for tourism information and marketing

## **4) STRATEGIC APPROACH**

The marketing and communications strategy of ECPTA will:

- Develop, implement and maintain the ECPTA marketing and communications strategy
- Fostering organisational and stakeholder synergy
- Develop institutional alignments and strategic partnerships
- Build and maintain the market for increased local and international tourist visits and spend in the Eastern Cape Province through facilitation of provincial tourism product development in the holiday travel, business travel and events travel markets.
- Diversify and improving the tourist product base to appeal to the various target markets
- Facilitate tourism investment
- Promote the institutionalisation of biodiversity conservation in the Eastern Cape, the provincial nature reserves and internationally acclaimed protected areas through effective information dissemination
- Implement effective methods for dissemination of information and acquiring feedback, both externally and internally
- Develop and maintain strong media relations
- Continual enhancement of the image of the ECPTA through top of mind brand awareness and high visibility

### **Period I - April 2013 to end March 2014**

- Address the issue of corporate culture, brand buy-in and product knowledge
- Develop marketing collaboration between DEDEA entities (ECDC ELIDZ, ECGBB, and ECLB) SATOUR, TBC, NMBT, District Municipalities and ECTOUR to leverage additional capacity, optimise budgets and ensure a cohesive provincial marketing effort.
- Address the need for the Eastern Cape to strategically position itself in the domestic and international markets
- Generate the strongest possible market presence for the Eastern Cape and the provincial nature reserves with the funds available.
- Develop a communications intervention for excellence in service delivery.
- More effective use of social media and e-marketing.
- Finalise budget, roles and responsibilities and an implementation plan.

There will be an assertive pull by the Destination Marketing Unit during the first year of this strategy to ensure that full potential of available capacity is reached, duplication of effort, is eliminated and collaborative funds are more effectively utilised going forward.

The marketing focus for this period will be on through the line marketing to attract the domestic market to the Eastern Cape. International marketing will focus on trade shows, the acquiring of Joint Marketing Agreements with tour operators, informing tour operators about the services that the ECPTA offers and the appointment of country representatives in the identified international markets. With regard to international marketing SAT should be the collaborative partner in marketing the province within the South African context.

### **Period II – April 2014 to end March 2015**

To be informed by previous period; credibility through continuity; extensive media coverage; through the line advertising to the domestic marketing and targeted advertising to the international market; aggressive promotion of investment opportunities.

### **Period III – April 2015 to end March 2016**

To be informed by previous periods; credibility through continuity.

## **5) DELIVERABLES**

### **5.1 BRAND ROLL OUT AND CUSTODIANSHIP**

The Destination Marketing Unit of ECPTA, as the custodians of the brand, will continue to roll out the brand to ensure top of mind recognition of the destination, entrenchment of the brand personality and its elements amongst all stakeholders and that all marketing collateral, advertising material, point of display material, promotional items and merchandising products, adhere strictly to the brand specifications, as per the CI manual.

### **5.2 MARKETING COLLABORATION**

Critical to the execution of the tourism mandate to develop and grow tourism in the province, will be the leveraging of resources – both financial and otherwise – as well as cross-sectoral collaboration. ECPTA will look to enhance strategic partnerships with role-players in the tourism trade and public sector aimed at optimal resource utilisation and co-ordinated marketing of the province. The Destination Marketing Unit will actively maximise branding and tourism opportunities in the Eastern Cape by bringing together and harnessing the activities of these various sectors.

The key stakeholders who will assist and/or impact on Eastern Cape Tourism are:

#### **Strategic input/marketing collaboration/ funding and opportunities**

OTP - Office of the Premier  
DEDEAT - Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs & Tourism  
DSRAC - Department of Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture  
South African Tourism  
District and local municipality tourism offices

#### **Business support and services/marketing collaboration**

Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC)  
Eastern Cape Gambling and Betting Board (ECGBB)  
Eastern Cape Liquor Board (ECLB)  
Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC)  
Eastern Cape Provincial Arts and Culture Council (ECPACC)  
Chambers of Business – BKCOB and PERCCI  
Nafcoc  
Provincial Tourist Guide Association  
SATSA – Southern African Tourism Services Association  
Pemba (Guest House association)  
Fair Trade in Tourism

#### **Product development, delivery and product promotion/ marketing collaboration**

ECTOUR  
Eastern Cape tourism private sector  
District and local municipality tourism offices

#### **Exposure and publicity**

Media - local, national and international  
Marketing partnerships - public and private sector

### **5.3 PRODUCTS AND SERVICE (WHAT IS ECPTA MARKETING?)**

The Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency recognises the importance of understanding the close interrelationship between the tourism product and marketing efforts of the province. Essential to the success of ECPTA's marketing and communication efforts is that those responsible for the marketing of the province possess a thorough / experiential knowledge of the destination and product offering thereof.

The first exercise, with regard to the knowledge base, is the identification of iconic destination products, routes, events, flagship provincial nature reserves (historical heritage, icon landscapes, international status and cultural significance) and ECPTA services and the target markets to which these products/services should be promoted.

The selected products/services will represent the four brand pillars supporting the Adventure Province:

#### **Provincial icons**

- National parks – Camdeboo (Valley of Desolation), Tsitsikamma (Big Tree/Indigenous), Addo Elephant (ONLY big 7 nature reserve in the world), Baviaanskloof Wilderness Area ( World Heritage Centre), flagship provincial parks, many upmarket private reserves (Shamwari)
- Hole in the Wall - Wild Coast natural phenomenon
- Nelson Mandela Museum – exploring the legend
- The Owl House – Nieu Bethesda
- Jeffrey's Bay Super Tubes/Nahoon Reef (International surfing destinations)
- Stormsriver Bridge (highest commercial bungee jump in the world)
- Hogsback and Eco Shrine

#### **Routes**

- The Wild Coast
- Karoo Heartland
- Tsitsikamma
- Hogsback
- Kouga
- Route 72 (ex Sunshine Coast)
- Eastern Cape Midlands
- Eastern Cape Highlands
- Greater Addo Route
- Jikeleza
- Escape
- Heritage routes/trails, etc

#### **Cities**

- Port Elizabeth (the “Friendly” City – Nelson Mandela Bay)
- East London (Coelacanth /earliest footprint of man/river port – Buffalo City)

#### **Cultural icons**

- Historic icons (Xhosa villages, British frontier forts, KhoiSan rock art)
- Birthplace of some of South Africa’s finest people (Nelson Mandela (international icon and father of the nation), Dr Anton Rupert (business leader - born Graaff-Reinet), Allan Gray (business leader - born East London), Robert Sobukwe (father of the PAC), Steve Biko (Black Consciousness leader), Makhaya Ntini (boxing) Odwa and Aykona Ndungane (Rugby), Calvin Marlin (Goalie Bafana Bafana))

#### **Major provincial events/ partnership events**

- Ironman (April) and Ironman 70.3 (January)
- Billabong Pro (July)
- Africa Open Golf Challenge (February)
- National Arts Festival - Grahamstown (June)
- Isingqisethu festival - ECPTA’s own calendar event (September)
- Tourism Month (September) and World Tourism Day (27 September)
- World Environment Day (5 June)
- EC Horse Racing Event (October)

#### **Stories and legends:**

The Eastern Cape is a veritable treasure trove of history and legends. This is a unique opportunity to develop heritage tourism and yet very few of these intriguing stories are being well presented to market the province. To unearth these heritage icons ECPTA will develop a competition Are you up for the myths and legends of the Eastern Cape? inviting the Eastern Cape public to identify and submit the stories and legends of the province.

The best of these will be incorporated in the identified icons with which the Eastern Cape Province will be marketed to become the preferred tourist destination in South Africa.

#### **Other major features**

- Value for money packages
- Unspoiled, back to nature destination
- Wilderness
- Biodiversity hotspots and world heritage sites

- Malaria free destination
- Good all-year-round weather

#### **ECPTA Services**

- Custodianship of provincial tourism brand
- Assist registered product owners/SMMEs with marketing requirements and creating of platforms for product exposure
- Assist tour operators/agents with product information and contacts
- Assist with setting up of Private Public Partnerships within pre-identified locations within the provincial nature reserves.
- Provide stewardship support to landowners adjacent to provincial nature reserves.
- Provide branding assistance to private product owners and municipal and district tourism offices
- Serve as a conservation resource to ensure an informed public

Once identified, visual references for these products/events services will need to be acquired. A full set of professional, set-up photographs and creative descriptions as well as marketing tools for the identified offerings/services will be developed.

These products and services will be segmented according to target market appeal and, through various communications and marketing tools, will be marketed locally, nationally and internationally.

Informational tours will be developed for key employees to experience the product and services first hand.

## **5.4 MEDIA MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING**

Media management will see the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency focus on more of the below the line activities to create destination and experience awareness. This will be supported by limited above the line advertising in print and on radio to route consumers to the ectourism website.

Below the line activities will also include marketing workshops where private and public sector partners engage in direct selling to the Travel Trade and joint hosting of media journalists in return for editorial coverage. Further to this the perception of the Eastern Cape will be enhanced through building of strong media relations and increased, aggressive dissemination of information in the form of press releases (including magazine articles and captioned photographs).

The Destination Marketing Unit will also ensure that the channels for media contact and "crisis communication" are clear and efficient.

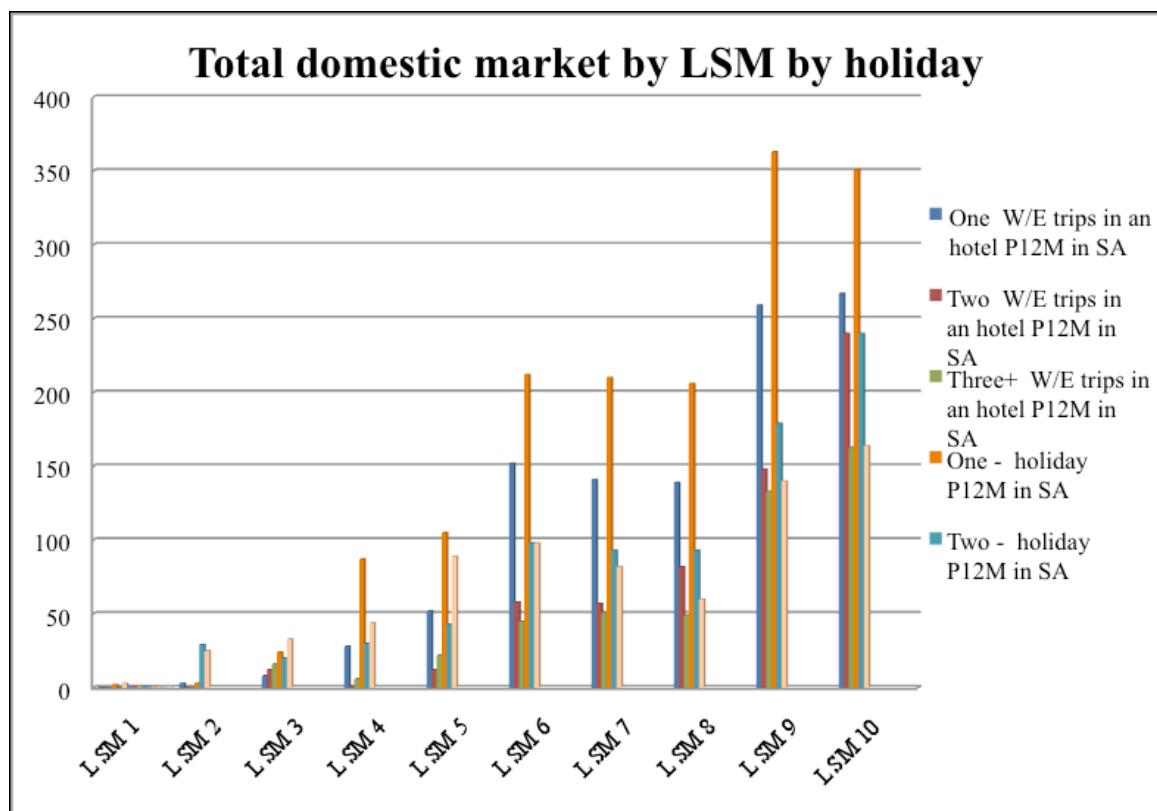
### **Media Planning Overview**

Using a media agency to plan, buy, place, monitor and analyse media will serve many purposes, the main advantages being:

- VALUE FOR MONEY – A media agency able to negotiate the best possible rates due to its spending power.)
- Media representatives are time consuming and persistent and take up an inordinate amount of time of key members of the Destination Marketing Unit. As the capacity of the department is limited, the introduction of a media agency would allow for more time being available to the Marketing Unit to focus on their many other areas of operation.
- Media planning, buying, monitoring and analysis is a highly specialised field best served by established organisations employing expert media buyers and planners.
- A media agency's expertise, competitive product knowledge and knowledge of media developments ensures that ECPTA receives exposure at the right place and right time.
- MEASUREMENT - Currently no monitoring or analysis of ad spend is available to ECPTA. As this spend forms a large part of the marketing budget of ECPTA, it is necessary that this spend be accurately reported upon. A media agency offers this service.

Media planning for the campaign will cover the three year period Period I - April 2013 to end March 2014, Period II - April 2014 to end March 2015, Period III – April 2015 to end March 2016. During this time the first priority is to get the focus on the province content, localised special offers for the destination and nature reserves and getting the international exposure on the wwweb.

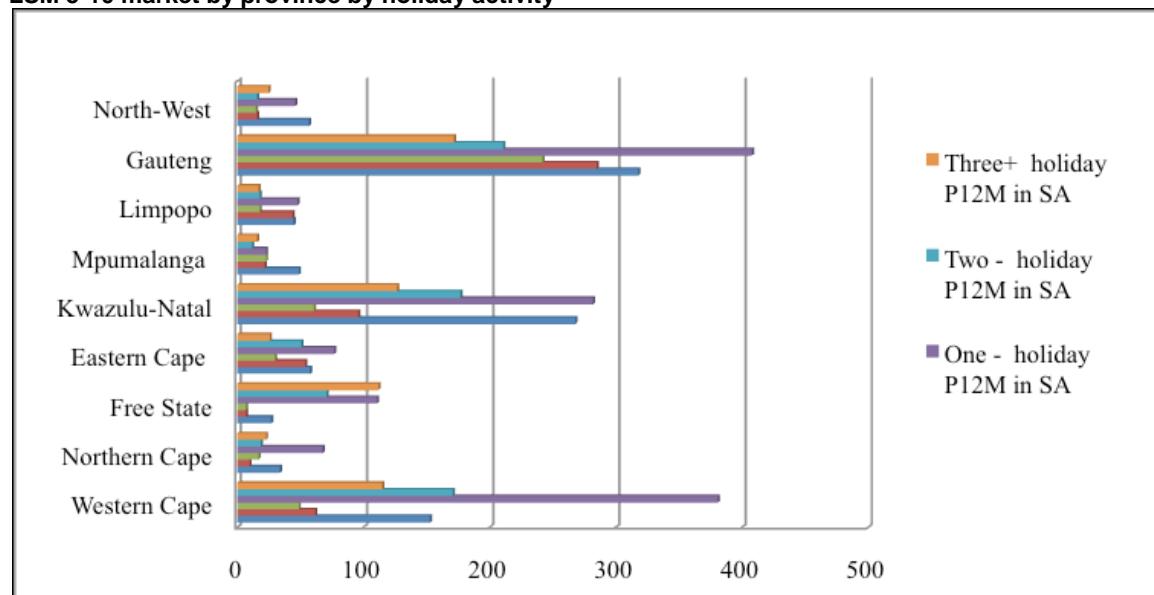
Because the market has been divided into 3 target areas of national, regional and international media these will be addressed as units. In analysing the market to set up reach parameters the following analysis has been lifted to highlight the demographic landscape;



There are two markets to look at – the LSM 5-7 emerging market and the established LSM 8-10 market. So the market is determined by LSM 5-10 as a descriptor.

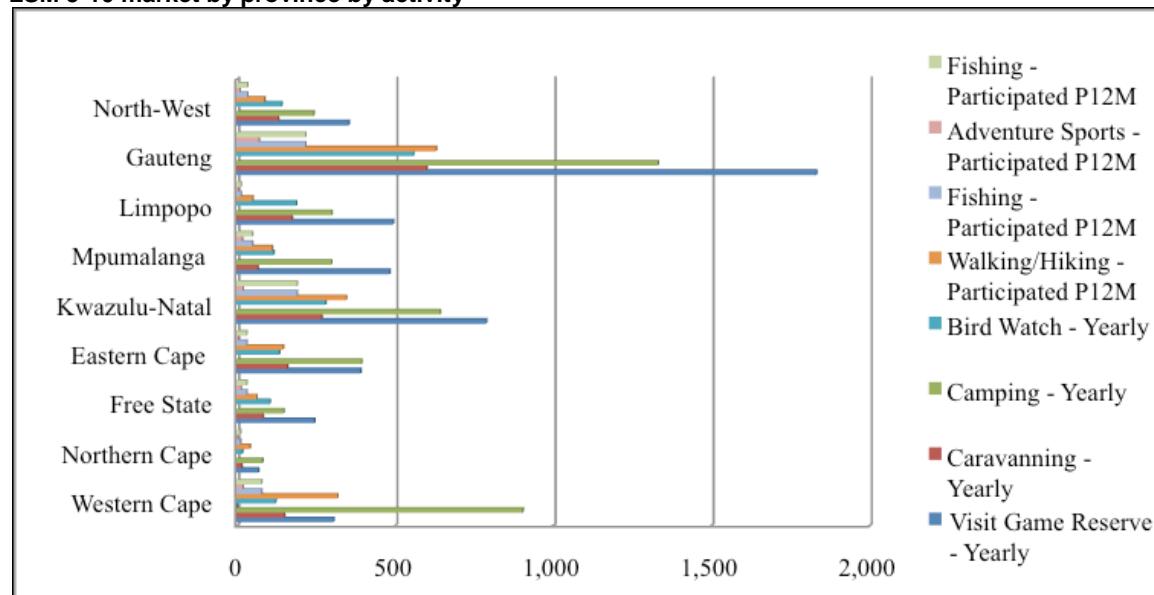
The following chart looks at the provincial breakdown of activities to show the potential market of each area

#### LSM 5-10 market by province by holiday activity



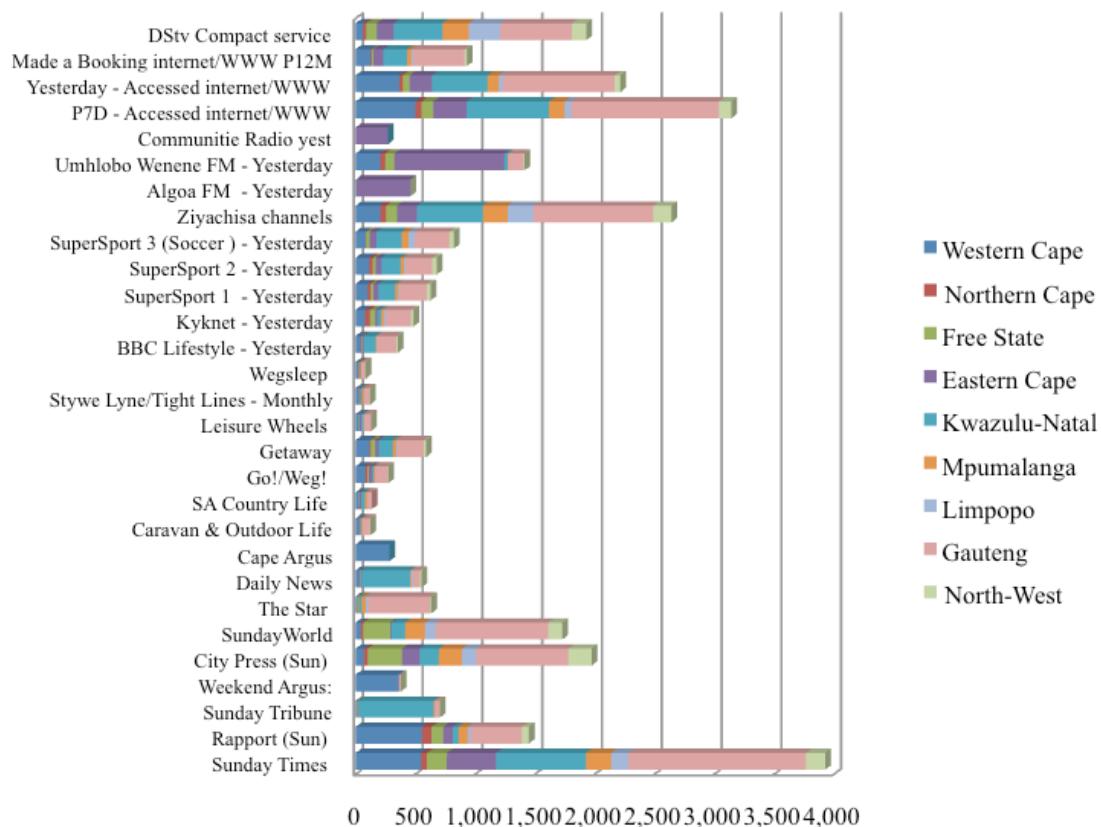
Gauteng is the major market segment followed by Western Cape and KZN whilst the rest of the provinces are low in numbers they are still important in terms of annual holiday destination marketing. The proximity of the Free State and Northern Cape to the Eastern Cape is also a plus in terms of accessibility.

#### LSM 5-10 market by province by activity



With regard to activities, again Gauteng is the major region to target. Camping, caravanning and visiting game reserves also show that the major draw areas are Gauteng, Western Cape and KZN.

## LSM 5-10 media consumption by province



The chart above illustrates the media consumption. The reach of the weekend papers via Sunday Times and Rapport as the print elements deliver the greatest reach of the total target market – with high reach into Gauteng.

The Ziyachisa DStv package also delivers audience – especially to the black diamond market (the emerging market).

Internet access for this market is also at levels where the impact of an in-line campaign can be achieved. Almost 1 million internet users have made online bookings in the past 12 months (this is a growth area!).

Magazines selected for their content (Getaway etc) do not have the high reach but do have the right editorial content and environment propensity for our target market and will also drive consumers to the ectourism website.

The regional radio stations will reach our target audience in the province to get exposure of the local special offers in selected nature reserves and other packaged products.

## **Media Selection**

The following media will be considered for their reach and content. A full media schedule incorporating these elements will be developed in line with available budget;

### **Domestic Market**

National Sunday press – travel sections - will set the tone and deliver the reach to the national market in the environment of travel – highlighting the province as a destination as well as activity options. Sunday times travel, Rapport Rits will form the main thrust and the regional KZN Sunday Tribune and the Cape Argus to upweight those key areas during strategic times.

In addition to the press - travel magazines Getaway and Go/Weg will also showcase the province as a tourism destination. These will cover both the adventure and nature reserve/lodge/hotel themes. All the print will be flexed over the year (a drip strategy) especially the pre-holiday periods.

TV: DStv will support the strategy during key periods. The channels selected cover both the emerging and established markets. (the growth of decoder sales especially the Ziyachisa\* packages reflects the consumption of DStv to that emerging market). BBC Lifestyle, Supersport1 and Supersport 2 as well as Kyknet are selected to cover the established market and the Ziyachisa package will cover the emerging market as well as younger established market.

Budget permitting, one of the options to use is the Branded Entertainment option on DStv where 120 second advertorial/information style TV ads are flighted at a highly discounted rate! These can be filled with action/fishing/leisure real time people and here user generated content (visitors to the province will be encouraged to send their videos for our use) chosen on their merit. This can involve quite a few of the action/adventure sport outfits like Red Cherry Adventures, Active Escapes, etc as well as the nature reserves, lodge experiences. In addition the cultural option should be considered as it will add value and ethnicity to the campaign. A campaign run over a 6 month period will allow for high ad involvement as well as entries to start to build up.

Outdoor hoardings particularly billboards are a great branding opportunity as well increasing visibility in the key Gauteng area but the site selection as well as the timing will be developed during the year – budget permitting. On a short term basis street pole ads are proposed in the Gauteng region as the suburban coverage is good and will work for short term campaigns.

### **Provincial Market**

At province level, radio will be used to sell the flagship nature reserves through special offers on relevant stations – Algoa, UMhlobo WeNene as well the opportunity to use the community stations to drill down into selected areas. These can be supported with specific nature reserve/price/date offers in local press like Daily Dispatch and EP Herald, etc. Most radio stations have websites – for links to be posted onto.

### **International market**

High cost of media internationally precludes the use of international traditional media but there are opportunities on the wwweb. Network buys on international inventory (on a cost per click basis) are proposed as well as search engine optimisation and geo targeting specific countries. Also the travel sections of Media 24, Yahoo, MSN, I-Africa, Google and IOL will have local impact. The trend of using the web both locally and internationally for travel and destination selection and availability is increasing rapidly and we must take advantage of this opportunity. This can be tracked and measured.

The facebook page will be utilised through network share and competitions can be run to increase traffic as well as creating opportunity on click throughs. All forms of print media must reflect the website address to prompt visits. As the membership grows high levels of buy-in through critical mass can be generated - but the site needs constant development and constant monitoring.

During the first year the buy in from the province tourism industry must be sought to increase the media pressure through co-initiatives like the Wild Coast attractions and developing specific theme ads for magazines like the selection of flagship nature reserve specials or Wild Coast hotels with co-operative/joint funding from those private nature reserves and hotels. This co-operative venture if supported by province and private enterprise will increase the budget and therefore the media exposure for the campaign – ensuring that the objectives are exceeded.

Period II and III will be developed along the themes from period I – with refining of both the media and creative to ensure that we maintain the reach of existing markets whilst pushing the reach boundary into new markets identified –

both nationally and internationally. As we develop the media relationships we will leverage more exposure as well added benefits on costing options.

### Budget apportionment

In keeping with the campaign objectives media budgets will be apportioned to ensure that all the key areas are addressed –

Nationally – high visibility across key periods

Regionally – impactful and measureable campaigns

Internationally – measured web traffic as well as the growth of the facebook page through connections.

## 5.5 JOINT MARKETING AND INTERNATIONAL COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES

ECPTA has already enjoyed some success with the signing of Joint Marketing Agreements (JMAs) and appointing of country representatives in the UK, USA and in the Benelux countries. JMAs or co-operative marketing is international best practice in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and more recently in South Africa. It offers the ECPTA the advantages of a solid return on investment, the ability to influence spread, timing and product, to work with operators that know their markets and the ability to leverage off known brands

With the focus on the domestic market, ECPTA will seek to sign JMAs with local tour operators to increase the Eastern Cape's share of visitors mainly from Gauteng, the Western Cape and KZN also, due to close proximity, the Free State and Northern Cape.

The engaging and contracting of inbound and outbound tour operators to ensure that they directly increase tourism traffic towards the Eastern Cape on both a national and international level is expected to yield the desired results and more efforts will be made to ensure the availability of packages to enhance visitor experiences to the province. The investment made in signing up joint marketing agreement (JMA) contracts with agents in key markets ensures that language and other cultural barriers do not deter potential tourists from visiting the province.

ECPTA will also seek out product partners for joint promotional marketing initiatives. Specific promotions e.g. seasonal promotions, event promotions, product promotions, etc will be developed and executed jointly with the private sector, aimed at increased occupancy at the nature reserves with particular emphasis on off-peak seasons. Suppliers of outdoor products for partnership marketing initiatives will be identified and planned promotions will be developed and implemented twice per annum. Other promotions will be linked to public holidays and significant calendar events. Potential joint marketing partners include: Weber, Outdoor Warehouse, Nestle, Landrover, Johnson & Johnson, Fuji Film, Bushnell, Discovery, Mercedes Benz, Nikon, etc

## 5.6 MARKET PRESENCE

### 5.6.1 Advertising

#### 5.6.1a Concept and Design

ECPTA is required to advertise/promote/ create visibility for the following:

- The destination (ADVENTURE PROVINCE and its icons)
- The provincial reserves (selected flagship nature reserves, promotional packages, hunting packages)
- The conservation mandate (successes/projects/international status biodiversity hotspots/ world heritage site)
- The investment opportunities (commercialisation projects – PPP, sustainable harvesting of natural resources, etc)
- The services of the ECPTA (to private product owners - benefits of registration, etc- tour operators, other stakeholders for collaborative marketing)

Advertising the Adventure Province as a preferred destination in South Africa is a challenge with strong competition from other South African and African destinations. All these competitors have similar messages placed in the same cluttered media channels. The Eastern Cape will have to ensure that:

- Its proposition is well established

It is essential that the marketing approach to the destination ensures that the unique nature of the province and the fact that the Eastern Cape is not for sissies is a desirable proposition. We have to acknowledge the challenges with regard to infrastructure, roads, the lack of an international airport, etc. BUT we can use this disadvantage to our advantage in creating a strong Adventure Province brand personality. The slogan ARE YOU UP FOR IT? Not only gets across the

fact that the Eastern Cape is an Adventure Province but also poses an irresistible challenge – nobody (young or old, Xhosa or Afrikaans, British or German, Christian or Buddhist) likes to believe that he/she is not up for it.

- Uses normal and tactical media channels

The media plan will ensure careful selection of the best media for the selected target market for the destination/product being advertised.

- Has sufficient marketing budget to ensure high reach and frequency of its campaign to identified target markets  
Through the collaborative marketing exercise, budgets available throughout the province be leveraged for cohesive marketing. The Destination Marketing Unit will then reexamine the available budget and rethink the media mix, considering the application of multi-media, radio and television.

### **5.6.1b Print Advertising**

Print advertising in its various forms - newspapers, magazines, directories and guides, maps, posters and billboards will be developed and strategically placed, to communicate the following

#### **The unique destination and its icons**

Predominantly to the provincial and domestic market (KZN, Gauteng, Free State, and the Northern Cape) and to the international market (where appropriate trade show publications etc)

#### **The Provincial Nature Reserves**

Promote the flagship nature reserves, game hunting, auctions, product packages (value for money experiences), etc. Seek joint advertising opportunities - e.g. land rover, partnerships with key stakeholders, leveraging resources and opportunities.

#### **Partnership destination advertising**

Seek partnership marketing with private product aligned to the benefits of Adventure travel and the Great Outdoors e.g. Discovery Health's vitality programme, SAA's flight packages to extend the brands reach.

#### **Conservation**

Develop advertisements featuring biodiversity conferences, stewardship services and land owner information, hunting packages, game auctions, information regarding values and benefits of biodiversity to non conservation stakeholders, information on bio diversity pressures e.g.: alien species, wild fires, erosion, poaching, unsustainable harvesting of natural resources, etc, as and when required

#### **Investment opportunities**

Assist with the promotion of investment opportunities for PPPs within the nature reserves.

#### **ECPTA**

Promotion of the entity and its services, private product owner registration.  
Instill a public sense of pride in the entity and brand ambassadorship of the destination.  
Promote internal brand values and the customer service pledge.

#### **Cohesive branding**

A full set of advertising templates will be developed to encourage private product owners and municipal entities to market the province cohesively by using the Adventure Province brand.

### **5.6.1c Radio Advertising**

In terms of a regional broadcast footprint, advertising will be placed on Radio Algoa and Umhlobo WeNene with consideration given to Eastern Cape community radio stations where appropriate (Alfred Nzo, BayFM, Radio Graaf Reinet, Grahamstown, Inkonjane FM ,Radio Khanya, Radio Kingfisher ,Kowie FM, Link FM Stereo, Nkqubela Radio, RMR (Rhodes), Takalani Radio, Radio Unitra, Unique FM , Radio Vukani).

## **5.6.2 E-Marketing**

The website and the intranet are excellent marketing and communications tools and, as such, the effective management of the website and its contents and the introduction of an intranet facility will be a key focus of the Destination Marketing Unit, with the IT department providing the required back up service and technical expertise to ensure effectiveness and back-end support. Critical to the success of the increased revenue at the provincial nature reserves is the inclusion of an on-line booking facility on the website.

An e-newsletter will be developed and distributed bi-monthly to all stakeholders, informing them of developments within ECPTA and within the tourism and biodiversity conservation arena.

The use of social media will be expanded, as detailed in the media proposal.

A significant component of the marketing mix as drawn up by the appointed international country representatives includes e-marketing and use of social media.

## **5.6.3 Tourism Offices**

There are currently four tourism offices in the Eastern Cape, manned by information officers. The Destination Marketing Unit has undertaken an audit of the current tourism information centre situation – location, size, pod stands, collateral, staffing, point of information displays at airports, other information centres not directly linked to ECPTA - throughout the Eastern Cape and has developed a plan for the ECPTA tourism offices and officers to make a meaningful contribution to the marketing of the province.

Budget permitting, each of the ECPTA Tourism Offices will be developed to reflect the Adventure Province brand. The point of display stands will be impressive with relevant, updated tourism information well presented. This will include maps, destination and tariff guides, nature reserve brochures, route guides, etc as well as product brochures of registered private product owners, landmark institutions and travel directories. The strategy also includes a mobile office – a branded vehicle kitted with mobile promotional displays - for off-site/event promotional opportunities. An opportunity exists to further extend the brand and generate revenue through merchandising of relevant branded items.

## **5.6.4 Event Marketing**

The ECPTA will aim to partner with major provincial events on an annual basis in order to provide marketing support, secure brand exposure and improve the tourism aspect of these events. Opportunities exist to partner with the following major provincial events/activities in the province:

Ironman (April) and Ironman 70.3 (January)  
Billabong Pro (July)  
Africa Open Golf Challenge (December)  
National Arts Festival - Grahamstown (June)  
Tourism month (September) and World Tourism Day (27 September)  
World Environment Day (5 June)  
Isingqisethu festival– rhythm of the adventure province. (September) - This is to become ECPTA's own calendar event with the domestic heritage tourism market as its main target.  
Buyel ekhaya jazz festival  
Silly Summer Festival  
EC Horse Racing Event

Other events that support the Adventure Province brand and provide platforms for brand exposure such, as the Baviaanskloof Trail Run, Christmas in July in Hogsback, Imana Wild Ride mountain bike race, etc, will be considered for support by the Destination Marketing Unit , budget permitting. An events strategy has been developed to ensure effective leverage from event partnerships.

## **5.6.5 Business Tourism**

In co-operation with other tourism stakeholders and the private sector, the ECPTA will communicate with delegates attending conferences and exhibitions in the province. The ECPTA will also proactively begin to compete for more national conferences and exhibitions to take place in the province by raising the profile of conferencing and exhibition venues within the province.

The programme will aim at enhancing the delegates' tourism experience, extending the duration of their stay in the province, and encouraging return visits and word-of-mouth recommendations for the Eastern Cape. To this end the ECPTA will develop a series of pre- and post-tours which will be made available to the national conferencing industry to ensure that delegates attending major international conferences in other parts of the country are exposed to the tourism attractions of the province. The ECPTA will actively seek closer co-operation with the professional conference organisers active in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban.

### **5.6.6 Trade Shows and Exhibitions**

Local travel trade shows are excellent for promoting the destination and product to the domestic market. The major South African international travel trade show, INDABA, has proved effective in marketing to the international market. Trade shows provide an excellent opportunity to generate leads, find new customers, and maintain or improve current customers' perceptions and will be used for the introduction of the new brand. The ECPTA will continue to attend the following South African Trade Shows and Exhibitions: INDABA (May), the Beeld Holiday Show (February) and the Getaway Show (Cape Town - March and Johannesburg - September) and will engage with and exhibit at various shopping centres such as Gateway Mall Exhibition and Bloemfontein Mall Exhibition.

Participation in international trade shows held in major source markets is effective but expensive. ECPTA will continue to attend the following international trade shows: WTM in the UK (November), USTOA in the USA, (January), ITB in Berlin (March) and Vakantiebeurs in The Netherlands (January), as ECPTA's reception at these Trade Shows has been extremely positive.

ECPTA will also support SA Embassy initiatives in the core source markets as well as in secondary markets by ensuring sufficient and effective marketing material is dispatched to them for destination promotions.

### **5.6.7 Knowledge and Relationship Building**

Personal selling is extremely powerful and important for destination marketing and remains the most basic technique for travel trade stimulation. The aim is not only to provide information on tourism products, but also to establish and build relationships with the travel trade, essential to successful destination marketing. Workshops are the preferred form of trade stimulation, using video/powerpoint product information presentations. The key targets of personal selling are the trade (tour operators and travel agents), and to some extent key media contacts.

ECPTA will invite and host international tour operators, media representatives, country representatives and representatives of the JMAs to the province for experiential/informational sessions to gain a first hand impression of our unique destination, to develop product knowledge and to build relationships.

Workshops will also be held to develop relationships with national media and inbound tour operators who work hand in glove with international tour operators and who serve as an invaluable link between ECPTA and the international tour operators.

### **5.6.8 Marketing Collateral**

The Destination Marketing Unit will ensure that all marketing collateral correctly depicts the brand messaging and visual applications and will continue to develop and implement the following:

- Destination and Tariff Guide for Nature Reserves
- Individual Nature Reserve brochures - Baviaanskloof, Great Fish River, Ongelusknek, Double Mouth, Hluleka, Dwesa, Silaka, Mkhambathi
- Tourism Map of the Adventure Province Eastern Cape
- Tourism Video, 30' and 60' TV commercial
- Various brochures and flyers for all ECPTA departments e.g. tourism directory, tourist routes/attractions, investment brochures, Private Product Owner registration forms, stewardship brochures, game auction catalogue, baboon management brochure, Honorary Conservators registration form, etc. (also available on CD/DVD and various languages as required by target market)

- Annual Report: The Annual Report serves not only to meet with compliance requirements but is also regarded as a useful marketing tool, reflecting the achievements and successes of the ECPTA. As such, the Annual report is distributed to all stakeholders to further entrench the invaluable role that ECPTA plays in tourism and biodiversity conservation in the province.
- Banners
- Branded promotional items, etc
- Uniforms  
The Adventure Province brand will be applied to all nature reserve and tourism information office's staff uniforms and the marketing unit will liaise with the reserve managers to ensure that this is strictly in keeping with CI guidelines and that the uniforms are being properly presented.

### **5.6.9 Signage**

Currently, throughout the Eastern Cape, no correctly branded signage exists and visitors have no idea where the Adventure Province begins and ends. Route marking signage must be co-branded with the Adventure Province brand to alleviate the confusion associated with route marketing.

An audit of all signage – vehicle, product and destination – and develop a strategy for the application of the new brand should be conducted during the first period of this strategy. Although destination (external) signage falls within the Destination Tourism Development Unit, correctly branded, durable and highly visible signage is essential to the success of our marketing efforts. We will therefore liaise closely with this Unit to ensure effective implementation of all signage.

### **5.6.10 Internal Marketing**

Ensuring effective channels for internal communication is the responsibility of the Destination Marketing Unit to ensure that employees are well informed brand ambassadors. Effective internal marketing requires that employees get to hear of new developments, campaigns, structural changes, etc, before the external audience and the internal communications channels must allow for this.

The internal newsletter is a strong and meaningful tool in the communications mix, providing employees with current, motivating and useful information. The internal newsletter is a valuable communications tool for use during the change management intervention. Effective distribution is essential to the success of this communications tool and it is planned that this publication also be distributed to stakeholders and to the public via the tourism offices. The Internal Newsletter – VENTURE will be published and distributed on a quarterly basis.

## **5.7 MARKETING FORUM**

Strong links with the private sector must be maintained in order to ensure the successful implementation of the ECPTA marketing strategy.

The Destination Marketing Unit will establish a marketing forum which will include a wide representation from the private and public sector. The forum will meet quarterly to discuss and provide input to the marketing activities of ECPTA. The forum will include tourism and non-tourism stakeholders to ensure input from all sectors of business in the Eastern Cape.

## **5.8 MARKET RESEARCH**

The Destination Tourism Department's research unit will focus on the establishment and maintenance of an effective market research programme to determine ECPTA's current and prospective target markets, determine levels of customer satisfaction and monitor the success of all internal and external marketing and communications efforts inform its own decision-making and to provide a service to private and public sector partners and stakeholders. This will assist tourism partners in making informed decisions regarding their marketing and business activities.

The key elements of this research programme will be:

- The monitoring/sourcing of tourism trends and market research undertaken by international and national tourism bodies and agencies;
- The commissioning of industry and qualitative research to investigate and develop new market opportunities; to determine the psychographics, demographics and perceptions of potential and current visitors to the Eastern Cape and will also conduct Customer Care research at the Provincial Nature Reserves;
- The establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive database and directory of public and private sector tourism products, operators, attractions and establishments within the Eastern Cape Province;
- The use of information from the website to gain insights into key trends within the industry;
- The use of Visitor Books placed at key establishments to establish tourism trends and a data base of visitors for customer relationship management;
- Internal research and climate surveys will also be conducted to evaluate the success of the change management intervention on employees; the impact on employee attitude towards customer satisfaction; and the effectiveness of the channels of communication.

## **6. ACTION PLAN**

An action plan will be developed for period I on confirmation of budget available.

## **7. RISK**

It is critical that an environment conducive to tourism growth is created which includes heightened and proactive action to create as safe and hazard free an environment as possible for visitors to the province.

In addition, ongoing improvements in product and service standards will be imperative for the overall improvement of the environment in which tourism takes place.

Furthermore, the strategy has taken into account a number of other significant factors which are beyond the jurisdiction of ECPTA, e.g. that there is no International Airport in the Eastern Cape which affects the province in terms of South Africa as a long haul destination. Available statistics are unreliable and skewed due to the significant number of migrant travelers to the province visiting home.

Critical to the success of maintaining its unique selling feature is the Province's ability to maintain its leading edge with regard to biodiversity conservation whilst, simultaneously developing a conducive environment for tourism.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

This strategy document has outlined the need to adopt a getting the house in order first strategy, focused and practical in character. This is advocated largely as a result of poor performance to date in driving tourism to the province but also as a result of the merger and the need for the entity to establish a cohesive culture in order to perform effectively. The strategy also advocates that the ECPTA serves to get the tourism players in the province to take a good hard look at their wasteful, disjointed marketing approach and make a concerted effort to collectively harness available resources and skills to market the province collectively and cohesively.

The document extends beyond the tactical market mix aimed at delivery in the short term, to consider four key areas of strategic investment that must be considered. These include a collaborative marketing approach, a products and service assessment - identification of icons, and products that best represent the province and services that best reflect the entities abilities to engender a closer and more meaningful working relationship between the ECPTA and the private sector, both within the province and suppliers in source markets and a continued and aggressive roll out of the new brand.

Although the Eastern Cape is regarded as the second most visited domestic destination in the country statistics are unreliable and we cannot breathe easy regarding domestic tourism - a substantial domestic drive is essential to the success of tourism to the province.

The above offers a focused approach to getting the house in order while stimulating tourism growth to the Eastern Cape. Only when the ECPTA has an organisational culture of unity and brand ambassadorship, with the ability to harness capacity and resources for marketing cohesion throughout the province, and is able to market the province with sustained continuity, will it be ready to meaningfully grow tourism to the province and make a significant contribution to the economy of the rural spaces and the overall GDP of the province.

It must be noted that this is an overarching strategy documenting, in summarised form, marketing and communication activities that will be supported by comprehensive plans for implementation. All of the above initiatives are subject to budget availability, both ECPTA funds and fund acquired through our collaborative efforts and partnerships.