

## Harnessing Africa's youth dividend in the continent's tourism sector

**Johannesburg, Thursday 1 August 2019** – Africa and the developing world in general is seized with finding sustainable solutions to the current challenges facing young people and the labour market of the future. The possibility of a digital economy, while real, presents a host of uncertainties which must be grappled with.

Coming against the background of increasing unemployment and a restless youth population, the challenges loom large.

These cannot be ignored when according to a January 2019 Brookings Institute paper entitled ***Harnessing Africa's Youth Dividend: a new approach for large scale job creation***, Africa can expect its working class population to reach approximately 450 million people—growing by about 3% per annum—between 2015 and 2035. “By 2050, Africa will have 362 million young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years old.”

While the need to prepare young people for the world of work of the future and digital economy cannot be underestimated, the same report also finds that “other non-traditional sectors such as tourism, agri-businesses, and some services based in information and communications technology show potential for large-scale job creation.” Indeed, these sectors are amongst the most dynamic on the continent with Africa's services exports growing more than six times faster than merchandise exports between 1998 and 2015.

In light of the potential of tourism sector to contribute to the continent's developmental agenda – including job creation, community development and the involvement of young people, South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal government and African Tourism Partners, will bring together representatives of the sector from 27-29 July 2019 at the Durban International Convention Centre for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual African Tourism Leadership Forum.

CEO of African Tourism Partners, Mr Kwakye Donkor says, “since according to the report by Brookings Institute that tourism accounts for at least 3% of sub-Saharan Africa's GDP, we must work collectively to harness the potential of the sector while increasing this contribution. It is said that except for a few countries, the sector is still in its infancy in Africa.”

“Africa has so much to offer the world with many of our strengths and resources being unique to the continent. We must however in building the sector ensure sustainability. If we are to achieve any of our objectives, we must have strong leadership in the sector. In this regard, the African Tourism Leadership Forum is unique in that we aim to build the sector, bottom up and top down.”

To infuse the thought leadership and innovation that will bring the dynamism to the sector, at least 30 world-renowned global industry experts and speakers will interact with business leaders, ministers, policy makers, and over 300 delegates from over 30 countries over the course of three days.

The 2019 Forum will also include:

- The inaugural Africa Youth in Tourism Innovation Summit on Tuesday 27 August 2019
- The Africa Travel and Tourism CEOs and Executives Forum on Wednesday 28 August 2019
- The Africa Business and MICE Tourism Master Class on Wednesday 28 August 2019
- The Africa Tourism Leadership Forum on Thursday 29 August 2019
- The Africa Tourism Leadership Awards on Thursday 29 August 2019

**Space is available to register as a delegate.**

**Register now <https://www.tourismleadershipforum.africa/registration-form/>**

**Or contact the Registration Hotline on +27 (0)81 303 7030 or [info@africatourismpartners.com](mailto:info@africatourismpartners.com)**

#### **Notes to the Editor**

##### **About Africa Tourism Leadership Forum**

The Africa Tourism Leadership Forum (ATLF) is a Pan-African dialogue platform that brings together key stakeholders from Africa's travel, tourism, hospitality and aviation sectors. It aims to provide continental platform for dialogue, networking, sharing insights and devising strategies for sustainable travel and tourism development across the continent. It also focuses on enhancement of Africa's brand equity and promoting intra-Africa travel. It is the only African Leadership dialogue platform designed and convened by Africans and hosted in Africa to promote tourism as a priority sector and major economic development pillar in African states