

# Africa's Travel Indaba 2025 opens with bold vision for inclusive growth

South Africa's Minister of Tourism, Patricia de Lille, officially opened Africa's Travel Indaba 2025 this morning, 13 May 2025, in Durban at the Durban ICC (Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre Complex), delivering a rallying call for inclusive, sustainable, and accelerate tourism growth across the continent.



Source: [Department of Tourism](#)

In front of an esteemed audience, including Deputy President Paul Mashatile, African Tourism Ministers, international buyers, media, and industry stakeholders, Minister De Lille positioned the Indaba as a catalyst for job creation, economic development, and African leadership on the global tourism stage.



**TOURISM**

G20 tourism meeting opens Durban's week of African tourism focus

12 May 2025

"This year, Durban is the host city of Indaba and a symbol of momentum for the entire African tourism community."

## Strong growth trajectory for tourism

De Lille shared the latest performance figures for the sector:

- In 2024, South Africa alone welcomed 8.9 million tourists, and their direct spending contribution was R91.6bn, supporting an estimated 1.6 million jobs.
- In the first quarter of 2025, South Africa welcomed close to 2.6 million tourists, reflecting a 5.7% growth

compared to the same period in 2024.

- 75% of South Africa's international arrivals come from the rest of Africa.

According to UN Tourism, "in 2024, tourism in Africa saw a sharp rebound, with a 96% recovery compared to 2019, positioning our continent among the world's fastest-growing regional tourism destinations."

## A continental gathering of significance

De Lille announced that "this year's Indaba welcomes over 1,300 exhibitors, delegates from 27 African countries, and over 1,200 vetted international buyers from 55 source markets." "We are especially honoured to welcome new participants from Chad, St Helena, and Burkina Faso, whose presence affirms Indaba's growing role as a truly continental platform."

She described the African tourism economy as one that is "diverse, youthful, digital, and green."

## New five-year growth plan

De Lille said the Department of Tourism is finalising a Tourism Growth Partnership Plan for the next five years, aiming to:

- Grow total employment from approximately 1,840,000 in 2024 to 2,500,000 jobs.
- Grow domestic spend by 25%.
- Grow GDP contribution from approximately 8.8% in 2024 to 10%.
- Welcome an extra one million international air arrivals annually. This means growing by 35% from 2.8m in 2024 to 3.8m and beyond.

"This is not a difficult ask if we all work together. Anything is possible if we work hard."

## New brand campaign launched

De Lille also introduced South African Tourism's new global brand campaign, titled 'South Africa Awaits – Come Find Your Joy.' She described it as "a heartfelt invitation to experience our country not just through places but also through people, culture, and emotion."



MARKETING

South Africa Awaits — Come Find Your Joy!

Danette Breitenbach 1 Apr 2025

"Joy is Africa's gift to the world, and our tourism offerings are its vessel."

## Africa's time is now

In closing, De Lille said, "This is our time. This is our Africa." She thanked delegates, buyers, and partners for their support and urged them to "use this platform to shape a stronger, more united tourism future for our continent—one in which Africa is included and leading."

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