



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **TOURISM DIALOGUE YIELD RESULTS IN THE FREE STATE**

**19 APRIL 2016**

To step up tourism initiatives in the Free State, The Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs together with Free State Tourism and National Department of Tourism held an inaugural meeting of the Provincial Tourism Forum and Provincial Tourism Council in Parys on the 19 April 2016. The aim of the meeting was to look into tourism plans of municipalities, provincial and private initiatives.

This is the first in a series of quarterly meetings to take place in order to lay a solid foundation of a tourism value chain within the province. During his key message address, MEC Sam Mashinini said, "Discussions on tourism in the Free State cannot exclude municipalities and planning because tourist attractions are situated within these municipalities", he reiterated that to step up efforts to improve tourism in the Free State, signage and tourism infrastructure is critical to tourism development".

Also the purpose of these structures is to create a platform for relevant stakeholders in the tourism value chain to provide for the systematic and integrated planning, development, promotion, implementation, infrastructural development, evaluation and monitoring of tourism in the province. Capacity building, allocation of adequate of resources and identification of attractions in every municipality are the pillars of these initiatives.

The council under the chairmanship of MEC Mashinini will consist of Mayors of the forum under the leadership of the HOD Matilda Gasele will be made up of experts in tourism, and municipality managers will provide technical advice to the council.

**Issued by: Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs**

**For more information contact Tshepiso Mokhali and Kagisho Leteane 073 323 1528/051 400 9631 or e-mail: [leteanek@detea.fs.gov.za](mailto:leteanek@detea.fs.gov.za)**