



# Tourism News

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Newsletter of The Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation - LTDC

## Lesotho Haeso



Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC), the Ministry of Tourism Environment and Culture (MTEC), and strategic partners in the form of Heads of Border Agencies (HOBA), Maloti Route, and tourism private sector commemorated the World Tourism Day on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2007. The theme for this year's World Tourism Day was a fitting "Tourism Opens Doors for Women". The day's celebrations were a culmination of a series of activities lined up for the

tourism Month which started in September. These events included sponsoring schools' poetry competition at this year's Morija Cultural Competitions, and a welcome campaign for tourists at key border posts on September 27<sup>th</sup>, which is the official World Tourism Day. The border post welcome saw lucky travelers receiving a Lesotho gift pack with information brochure, tourism branded pens, chocolates and miniature Basotho souvenirs.

The celebrations on 12<sup>th</sup> October, comprised of regional stakeholders in a float (walk), mini-exhibition displaying local arts & crafts, the official launch of the Lesotho Haeso, a domestic tourism awareness campaign, and the National Performing Troupe, by the Hon. Minister Tourism, Ambassador Lebohang Nts`inyi. This was important as a measure to continue to raise awareness about tourism as a means to contribute to current national goals such



Above: Minister of Tourism, Environment and Culture 'Me' Lebohang Nts`inyi making a speech at the Lesotho Haeso

as poverty reduction, job creation and income generation for the purpose of improving the lives of Basotho.



Above: LTDC CEO Mr. Mthwalo Mthwalo making a speech at the Lesotho Haeso Launch



Above: Cultural performance at the Lesotho Haeso Launch

## World Tourism Month and Day

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Above: A Tourist receiving tokens of appreciation at Mafeteng Border Post

In line with the current trend to empower women, the theme for this year's World Tourism Day was a fitting "Tourism Opens Doors for Women". The day's celebrations were a culmination of a series of activities that were lined up for the tourism Month which started in September 2007. The border post welcome for tourists on September 27<sup>th</sup> saw the lucky travelers receiving a gift pack of information brochure, LTDC



Above: Float celebrating World Tourism Day

branded pens, chocolates and a miniature Basotho souvenir.



The Corporation has been contemplating the launch of a Tourism Newsletter for a while now, but has hitherto been unable to do so due to pressure that this would place on the Corporation's resources. However, the Corporation has recently been strengthened with the appointment of a Public Relations Officer, and this has made it possible to produce this first Issue. The Newsletter shall act as the mouth piece of the Corporation, covering diverse areas of its tourism development and promotional activities. Whenever it is possible, it will also give platform to its cooperating partners. It shall come out quarterly for distribution to tourism stakeholders and other relevant target groups. The nature, style and format of the Newsletter will evolve according to feedback from readership and best practices. Stakeholders are therefore encouraged to give feedback. Contacts are provided at the back of this Letter.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

## MINISTER ATTENDS UNWTO CONFERENCE IN COLUMBIA



*From left to right: Director of Tourism, Mrs Mpho Moeketsi and the Hon. Minister of Tourism, Environment & Culture, Ambassador Lebohang Nt'sinyi, at the General Assembly of UNWTO*

In her address to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, UNWTO, held in Cartagena, Columbia at the end of November this year, The Honourable Minister of Tourism, Environment & Culture, Ambassador Lebohang Nt'sinyi, departing from the traditional approach of using the occasion as a platform to show case ones' country and showering praises to the management of the organization, instead focused on governance issues of the organization.

She appreciated the efforts made by the organization in the promotion of sustainable tourism. However, she decried of continued inequities in the tourism benefits between North and South despite the latter recording the highest growth in arrivals, especially the Sub-Saharan Africa.

Focusing on governance issues of the organization she said.

"It is a source of concern to my government that 84% of UNWTO budget goes toward personnel emoluments and administration and only 16% toward programmes. This is more worrying in the light of the proposed 2% increase in membership dues. I strongly recommend that the organizational structure of the organization be reviewed by the Executive Council.

My governments' position is that the filling of the Deputy Secretary General position must be the mandate of the General Assembly, and all other positions should always be sensitive to the language and or region that the incumbents originate.

Appointments of member countries

to councils or committees must be done strictly in accordance with rules and procedures of the organization. **There should be no exceptions to the rule.**

Membership must be seen to have been adequately consulted on important issues. We require that the General Assembly should also be given an opportunity to make inputs.

Concerning the 2010 World Cup event, UNWTO is expected to interface with FIFA on behalf of its membership on specific issues, and report to members accordingly.

Meetings during the General Assembly should be arranged and timed in such a way that it allows members an opportunity to con-

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## Corporate Social Responsibility

For several years now, the Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation, LTDC, has been a sponsor for the Morija Arts & Cultural Festival. In the category of Poetry and Film, this year, The Corporation provided four trophies for presentation to two winning primary schools and two high schools in the Poetry category at the Morija Cultural Competitions during October 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The trophies will be floating from year to year, presented to the winning schools.

In addition, the Corporation will have certificates presented to the schools that emerge as first, second, and third winners in the Poetry category. In subsequent years, the number of trophies shall be increased, while the certificates will also be awarded to individual students as a means to encourage them to participate in the sessions, and build up local poetry as an art form.

It was jointly decided, by a representative of the LTDC and the Morija Cultural Festival Organizing Committee through its Chairman Mr. Gill, that the intended hand over of the prizes should occur at the premises of the respective schools as a means to increase the popularity of the Arts among the students of the respective schools.



*Teachers and Students of St Louis Primary celebrating victory and the award from LTDC*

The prize-giving campaign began on Monday October 15<sup>th</sup> at St Louis Primary School in Matsieng. It is here that Ms Mpolai Khoali who is the member of the festival organizing team responsible for Theatre Arts awarded a certificate of competence to Lieket-seng Setipe, a class six scholar, for having won first place in the Lithothokiso category. This young lady also received a huge trophy on behalf of her school.

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## Inaugural of National Tourism Conference

The purpose of the National Tourism Conference is to bring all the stakeholders together to do soul searching, and to discuss the burning issues in the industry, mostly based on content from previous workshops.

As tourism is a relatively new and underdeveloped business sector in Lesotho, it is important for the LTDC to help local organizations to stay abreast with international trends, practices, and standards. The Head of Investment Promotion at LTDC Mr. Tatia Jasina said "This much needed global perspective on tourism shall be divulged to the local industry players by a panel of highly knowledgeable international tourism experts."

He went on further to highlight that "The topics that are to be discussed were carefully selected from a myriad of current issues of interest, based on the problems that Lesotho has with respect to tourism development."

The first discussion aims to highlight the possibilities of Collaboration in Cross Border Tourism between Lesotho and South Africa in the spirit of the Joint Bilateral Commission for Co-operation (JBCC). Second on the agenda is the exploration of competitive advantage and the key success factors that shall allow Basotho to make informed decisions with respect to Tourism Business. The ability of tourism to reach rural communities that have been ex-

cluded from current economic growth initiatives shall be investigated under the topic Community Based Tourism. Destination Branding is currently unexplored in Lesotho, and will therefore be the subject of the fourth topic, which shall serve as a basis of deciding our position in world tourism, and help us to position ourselves as a unique brand. The final discussion shall explore business and other opportunities that World Cup 2010 may bring for the nation at large.

It is envisioned that this type of symposium shall be convened on an annual basis with the aim of gradually improving the tourism sector in Lesotho.

The Conference is scheduled for **23 and 24th January 2008.**

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## LTDC Focus—The Organization

Established by the Tourism Act of Parliament in 2002, as amended in 2006, Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation, LTDC, is working within the government Poverty Reduction Strategy, hand-in-hand with the Ministry of Tourism, Environment & Culture, MTEC, toward a long term goal of making tourism sector a major employer and a key economic player in Lesotho. MTEC has produced an Update of the 1994 National Tourism Masterplan with the assistance of the UNWTO and the UNDP. The National Tourism Strategy has now been produced following interactive stakeholder workshops using the Masterplan as a guide. LTDC is planning on developing its own plan during in the last quarter of this financial year, especially as its current plan ends in March 2008. The Corporation, which is managed by a Chief Executive

Officer has the following divisions: Corporate Secretariat, Human Resources, Research and Development, Investment Promotion, Strategic Marketing, and Public Relations. There are also two Information Offices with one in the city centre near the Basotho Hat and the other at Thaba Bosiu.

Working in the context of the Tourism Policy of 2001, Tourism Act of 2002 as amended in 2006, the LTDC is making every effort to diversify the tourism product by developing two tourism routes meant to enhance the overall experience

of the visitor. As adjunct to the key objective of reducing poverty levels through employment and income generating projects, the LTDC is targeting inter-alia, hospitality, arts and culture, tour operation transport and handicrafts sub-sectors.

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*Above: The LTDC head office on the corner of Parliament and Linare Roads in Maseru.*

## Tourism Promotion with GoL Missions Abroad

An agreement between LTDC and GoL through its foreign missions has been reached regarding the promotion of tourism. The rationale for pursuing this collaboration is based on cost effective use of financial resources as embassies are resident in the target markets, making it cheaper for them to make sales calls, run workshops, road shows and attend fairs. This also provides better insight about the target markets and therefore it is easier to pick up the latest trends regarding the needs of international travelers.

One of the main requirements for this program is staff appointment that focuses on trade and tourism issues, with the main purposes of research, liaison with LTDC for strategic direc-

tion, and engagement in agreed promotional activities for specific markets. It is required that the involved staff be highly informed regarding Lesotho tourism attractions and that they be able to promote them to the right audi-



*Sponky of LTDC and Ms. Corcoran from Ireland sharing some the joys of Lesotho that are available to tourists.*

ences.

It is for this reason that in May, LTDC in

partnership with the high commission in Ireland undertook a familiarization trip for the trade/tourism attaché around Lesotho to enable her to promote Lesotho more effectively. The result is that packages of Tour Operators Association of Lesotho (TOAL) members have been included in Slattery Travel's 2007/08 catalogue.

Slattery Travel is one of the bigger tour operators from Ireland who run chartered flights to Cape Town, from where tourists need to connect to Lesotho. A similar arrangement with the embassy in Tokyo, Japan is in the pipeline. The trade/tourism attaché Mr. Naoto Kanamori was hosted by LTDC and other partners during the 12th-20th November 2007. He met with the Strategic Marketing Department of LTDC to chart ways for effective promotion of Lesotho to Japanese travelers and traveled to some tourist attractions.

## LTDC Focus—The Organization

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Community awareness campaigns will highlight these categories, as well as assisting community-based initiatives in improving their skills and the quality of their products. A new grading system will enable even the least endowed areas to play a part in these developments by providing over-night accommodation in their villages. This will be linked to hiking, 4x4 and pony trekking routes that have been mapped out and promoted by LTDC in tandem with private lodges and development authorities.

Although appropriate tourism programmes are already in place in various established institutions and privately run organisations, further development and expansion needs urgent attention.

Opportunities for investment in tourism include everything from tour operations, hot air ballooning facilities and cultural entertainment to accommodation facilities such as ski resorts. These are being progressively promoted and packaged for potential foreign

### WEBSITES UPGRADE & DEVELOPMENT

and local investors through efforts by the LTDC and its cooperating partners.

Earlier this year the management of LTDC decided that there was a need to review the effectiveness and usability of its [www.ltdc.org.ls](http://www.ltdc.org.ls) website.

Following this review, the website was reconstructed into a more attractive and functional website that passes the right messages to the target user. The reconstructed website is intended to support user interactivity with the LTDC information requisition and feedback, online surveys, marketing of investment opportunities, information on tourism products, products search facility, and direct links. The home page is designed to visually capture and excite the user's imagination about LTDC as a major point of reference in the tourism industry of Lesotho and compel the user to explore more about the corporation. The search facility has a user friendly design that allows easy access to information such as survey results, questionnaires, and an online web reporter. This website has links to short video clips, downloadable brochures and pictures, downloadable full length videos, current and archived research reports, also to other tourism websites. A feedback mechanism that is used to gather information from visitors to the site is included.

The Corporation is also in the process of creating a new, completely separate website, VISITLESOTHO. Travel, to specifically market Lesotho tourism products. This website is planned to market Lesotho tourism online to recreational and business travellers, and to provide comprehensive and detailed visibility online for all local tourism service and product providers. The website shall consist of two micro sites, one aimed at promoting tourism and the other aimed at promoting Lesotho tourism investment. Both micro sites will share a common look and feel, design, layout and a common content database.

## Media Familiarization—Getaway Magazine

Two journalists, Alison Westwood and Jazz Kushcke from Getaway Magazine based in Cape Town traveled to Lesotho to write feature articles on the country for the magazine.

During their stay from 9th-16th November Jazz was assigned to cover the Northern route of the country, while his counterpart Allison was in the South. Allison was being fully catered for by Malealea Lodge and Moorosi Chalets and Jazz's trip was under the LTDC and Highlands Natural Resources &



Rural Income Enhancement Project (HNRRIEP), Media Familiarisation.

Glenn of Malealea Lodge offered to take Alison on a tour of the South, leaving for Semonkong on the Tuesday and spending time in the South at Letsie's Lake, Ha Liphaphang, Mphaki, and Mount Moorosi. Mr. Mashapha Nkuebe of Khotso Travel did the tour guiding for the entire Northern trip with Jazz. Mr. Ts'iu Shale, PRO of LTDC accompanied them.

*Left: Thaba-Bosiu Tour Guide Mr. Rantaoleng and Journalist Jazz Kushcke of Getaway Magazine at Mokhorong oa Khotla on the plateau.*

## Upcoming Events

Month	Event	Date	Host	Contacts
December	Lesotho High Altitude Summer Marathon	Early December	Bothata Tsikoane	+266 58078164
	Annual African Melodies Festival	Early December	Standard Lesotho Bank	+266 22315737
	Tourism Jazz Festival and Tour	22nd December	Montoeli 'Moleli	+266 58731243
January	Mini Roof Enduro- Off road motorcycles.	18 th – 19 th Jan	LTDC supported by Ministry of Tourism, Environment & Culture	+266 22312238
	National Tourism	23rd–24th Jan		
	Semonkong Traditional Horse Race	Monthly, every last Saturday	Jonathan Halse	+266 27006037
February	Peach Festival (Maiden event)	Mid February	Lesotho Tourism	26622312238
	Semonkong Traditional Horse Race	Monthly, every last Saturday	Jonathan Halse	+266 27006037
March	Moshoeshoe's Day Celebrations, Thaba Bosiu	11 th March	Lesotho Tourism	+266 22312238
	Masali oa Seshoeshoe Competition	22 nd March	Lineo Sephelane	+266 22311669
	Katse Expo	March	LHDA	+266 22311280
	Semonkong Traditional Horse Race	Monthly, every last Saturday	Jonathan Halse	+266 27006037

## PRIVATE SECTOR TRAINING

sources & Rural Income Enhancement Project (HNRRIEP) area consisting of Botso, Lejone, Mahlatheng, Mahloane, Mphosong, Nkoka, Ngabeni, Papae, Papoea, Phahameng, Phelandaba, and Sesshote villages.

Out of the twelve participants seven qualified as trainers. The roll out of the beadwork training was later conducted in seven villages from the 5th to the 23rd of March 2007. Each of the qualified trainers received the opportunity to impart their production skills to different groups within their areas.

## UNWTO CONFERENCE

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tribute meaningfully and effectively to the development of the organization.

Supervision of Regional Offices should be intensified to ensure regular reporting to their constituencies, and that they also ensure regional and language balance, as well as that they follow rules and procedures of the organization appropriately."

The Honourable Minister's delegation comprised of Deputy Principal Secretary, Mr. Jobo Molapo, Director Tourism, Mrs Mpho Moeketsi and Chief Executive, Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation, Mr. Mthwalo Mthwalo.

## PRIVATE SECTOR TRAINING



**Photo:** Students, Instructors and some LTDC staff

During the 2006/2007 financial year, Private Sector Training for Caterers occurred in the country offered by South African College of Tourism in partnership with the Free State Central University of Technology under the auspices of the LTDC.

In Maseru, Accommodation Establishment Owners were divided into two groups and the first was trained in Accommodation Management and Front Office Skills from the 25th to the 29th of June 2007 while the second group was trained from the 2nd to the 6th of July 2007. The two groups were further trained on Food and Beverage Management during the 9th to the 13th of July 2007.

The Community Training program of the LTDC began with a course on production of beadwork from the 10th of October to the 3rd of November 2006. This program was offered to twelve members within the Highlands Natural Re-

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