

# Africa is global star again

In 2006, Africa was once again the star of the global tourism industry, registering an 8.1% growth and outperforming all other regions. This is the second year in succession that Africa has come top of the pile. And 2007 is projected to be even better.

Africa's growth rate was a key contributor to the global industry's larger than expected 4.5% increase over 2005.

The reason why Africa's performance is causing such excitement within the world tourism industry is that the 2006 growth rate is not an isolated spike but forms part of a sustained period of growth. After the dramatic drop in international travel following 9/11 and the subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, international travel and tourism, against all odds, began a steady climb, registering a phenomenal 10% growth in 2003/02. Even during the 'bad' season in 2003, when there were declines in practically all regions, Africa posted an impressive 5.2% growth, followed in 2004/03 with a bracing increase of 9.1% before settling down to 8.5% in 2005/04 and the current 8.1%.

According to the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), "the current trend of a gradually slowing growth rate is expected to continue in 2007. The increase in international tourist arrivals is projected to be around half a percentage point lower than in 2006, that is around 4% much in line with the forecast long-term annual growth rate of 4.1% through 2020". The projection is therefore that growth will slow down for all regions in 2007 – bar Africa. This is the only region that is expected to show a growth of 9%.

*Article by courtesy of [African Business magazine](#)*

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