

WTM Africa launches Responsible Tourism Programme

World Travel Market Africa will bring wider issues of responsible tourism to the forefront during its leading event programme at the inaugural show, which takes place at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) from 2-3 May 2014. WTM Africa is launching its WTM Africa Responsible Tourism Programme, which will form a key component of the education sessions.



The Responsible Tourism Programme will be brought together by industry leader and organiser of the WTM Responsible Tourism Programme in London, Professor Harold Goodwin, Manchester Metropolitan University. With a pan-African cast of speakers including, amongst others, Fabrice Leclercq, CEO T.R.I.P. Ghana, Agams Group and Heidi van der Watt, director ICRT South Africa, who will offer a lively debate and will share case studies and best practice advice.

The WTM Africa Responsible Tourism Programme kicks off on Friday, 2 May with a topical debate on whether responsible tourism is good for businesses, local communities and economies and how principles of responsible tourism can be used for business advantage. This panel debate, which includes Fabrice Leclercq and Heidi van der Watt will focus on the business case for responsible tourism and case studies using examples from Africa with an aim to inspire, push the boundaries, raise questions and highlight good practice.

Environmental responsibility

The Responsible Tourism Programme will continue on Saturday, 3 May with a session focusing on environmental responsibility. Looking after the environment can benefit not only our surroundings, but also the bottom line of any business and ensure that a destination is maintained for long-term business benefits.

With travellers increasingly aware of the impact they have on the environment, businesses that offer environmentally responsible options can often see tangible benefits. The expert panel will include Wilfred Cheval, Dyer Island Cruises and Marine Dynamics and Dr Anne-Kathrin Zschiegner, Zeitz Foundation and both will offer insights into their work and success stories.

Social responsibility and child protection

Concluding the WTM Africa Responsible Tourism Programme is a debate on social responsibility and child protection. There is increasing awareness of the child protection issues, which arise in the travel and tourism sector, at WTM in London last November the Responsible Tourism Awards showcased what is being done to combat the sexual exploitation of children.

The industry is addressing issues of neglect and abuse of children travelling with their friends and relatives, child labour, trafficking, orphanages and the sexual exploitation of children. The panel will feature amongst others, Anne van der Tuuk of inbound tour operator Abang Africa Travel, who believes that the industry should stand strong together to protect, create awareness, prevent and protect, and Andre van der Marck of Khiri Travel (Thailand).

With extensive experience and a wealth of interesting case studies to share the session is a must attend for anyone interested in the issue of child protection within the travel and tourism industry.

WTM Africa exhibition manager Polly Magraw commented: "Responsible tourism is a key focus for the whole World Travel Market portfolio of events and we are extremely pleased to be able to expand this programme at WTM Africa, especially as the continent is home to many responsible tourism success stories. I am confident that the Responsible Tourism Programme will offer everyone at WTM Africa the chance to be involved in engaging and practical debates covering issues that at WTM Africa we feel are core to the continued development and growth of tourism on the African continent."

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