

Cape Town, Western Cape sets new global standard for water-wise tourism

The Western Cape province has shown a continued resilience in building a sustainable and water-wise destination amid drought concerns in the region, which has received a rapid and pragmatic response from both public and private enterprises. In the last three years, the City of Cape Town has reduced its usage by nearly 60% - a model the rest of the world can look to emulate.



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In a joint statement with Wesgro – the Official Tourism, Trade & Investment Promotion Agency for Cape Town and the Western Cape – Marriot International has stated that it is ready to gear up after the hotel industry's successful implementation of sustainable measures.

"Responsible management of natural resources in our hotel operations has been a part of our business," said Neal Jones, chief sales and marketing officer, Middle East and Africa, Marriott International.

"With the rise in unpredictable weather patterns, stresses on natural capital and resources, air and water quality issues, there is a rising need for a more conscious and proactive approach to environmental performance. We aspire to be the global hospitality leader that demonstrates how responsible hotel management can create economic opportunities and be a positive force for the environment and I am delighted to see how our hotels in Cape Town and Western Cape have come together to find innovative sustainable solutions."

A variety of water-wise initiatives have provided confidence in the destination. These include finding alternative water sources, such as the installation of the desalination plant at The Westin Cape Town that has helped provide potable water to the city's three major hotels including The Westin Cape Town, Southern Sun Waterfront and Southern Sun Cullinan, together with a broader swing towards water-sensible lifestyles for local residents and businesses.

Unparalleled destination continues to entice

The industry is firm on the need for resource management; however, they concur that visitors should definitely continue to visit Cape Town and the Western Cape and explore the unparalleled attractions and experiences.

"We have acted with urgency to ensure that our businesses are visitor-ready, so it's time to come and see for yourself that the Cape is waiting. Throughout this period, we have coordinated as an industry to share the latest, expert information, and our current status is that the Cape is thriving. Whether you're looking to investigate trade and investment opportunities, business travel or simply enjoy a break, now's the time to do it," said Danny Bryer of Protea Hotels by Marriott.

This consensus view is echoed by Michael Tollman of Cullinan Holdings as well as Keith Randall, CEO of the Hospitality Property Fund and Martin Wiest, CEO of Tourvest Destination Management.

"We've adapted to our new normal and we are pressing ahead both as individual businesses and collectively as an industry to ensure all-round sustainability," added Bryer.

Wesgro CEO, Tim Harris praised both locals and tourists who had contributed towards building a sustainable, water-smart destination: "Cape Town and the Western Cape is setting a new global standard for water-wise tourism. Climate change is a reality in many places around the world, and we have shown that it is possible to adapt and grow, by working together and being sustainable. We encourage tourists from around South Africa and the world to experience our beautiful region - all of our jaw-dropping attractions and experiences are still here waiting for you."

Harris added: "Tourism helps support over 300,000 jobs across the Western Cape, and your visit to our province will make a real difference in the lives of so many people in our province. Thank you for being part of our water-wise tourism movement, and for boosting our economy and creating jobs in South Africa."

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