

Development Southern Africa

An assessment for enhancing sustainability in rural tourism products in South Africa

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Abstract

Rural tourism contributes towards socio-economic development. In South Africa, rural areas experience significant development challenges with limited opportunities. Rural tourism as an instrumental tool against poverty requires rural tourism products to be not only viable but also sustainable. Presented is a sustainability assessment framework to assist South African enterprises to assess the sustainability of their rural tourism products (RTPs). The framework has two functions: it provides RTP operators with an understanding of all aspects of sustainability for which they are responsible and it provides indicators to measure the sustainability of the product. The indicators are presented as a sustainability scale that acts like a road map to enable operators to improve the sustainability of their RTPs in successive years. The intention and purpose of the framework is to ensure that sustainability is central to the operation of RTPs in South Africa thereby contributing toward sustainable development goals.