Regional Cross-Border Tourism: Recommendations for the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

A Study on Opportunities and Constraints for Regional Tourism in SADC States conducted by Fair Trade Tourism (FTT) for the German International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (RETOSA)

Executive Summary
Pretoria / Cape Town
July 2015

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**Fair Trade Tourism on behalf of GIZ 'ProSpect' supporting the SADC Secretariat:
"Strengthening the Economic and Trade Policy Capacities and Performance in SADC"**

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Abbreviations

10YFP	10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production
AfDB	African Development Bank
AHTPI	Associação de Hotelaria e Turismo da Provincia de Inhambane – (Inhambane Provincial Association of Hotels and Tourism)
ANG	Angola
ATA	Africa Travel Association
BOT	Botswana
CAWS	Central African Wilderness Safaris (Malawi)
CDE	Centre for the Development of Enterprise (EU)
COMESA	Common Market in Eastern and Southern Africa
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAC	East African Community (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda)
ETH	Ethiopia
EUR	Euro (€)
FTA	Free Trade Area
FTT	Fair Trade Tourism
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Germany
GIZ	German International Cooperation
GIZ ProSpect	German International Cooperation - Regional Project supporting the SADC Secretariat 'Strengthening the Economic and Trade Policy Capacities and Performance in SADC'
GLTP	Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (TFCA straddling the borders of South Africa (Kruger NP), Mozambique and Zimbabwe
GPST	Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism (now absorbed into the 10YFP for SCP)
IATA	International Air Transport Association
INATUR	Instituto Nacional de Turismo (Mozambique Tourism Authority)
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
KAZA	Kavango Zambezi TFCA (straddling the borders of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe along the Kavango and Zambezi river basins)
KEN	Kenya
KZN	KwaZulu/Natal (Province of South Africa)
LAM	Linhas Aéreas de Moçambique (operating as LAM Mozambique Airlines)
LES	Lesotho
MAD	Madagascar
MAL	Malawi
MAU	Mauritius
MOZ	Mozambique
MTC	Malawi Tourism Council
NAM	Namibia
NDT	National Department of Tourism (South Africa)
NL	Netherlands
NP	National Park
NTO	National Tourism Organisation
NYU	New York University Africa House
P	(Botswana) Pula (€ 1.00 = P 10.60; March 2015)
PA	Protected Area
PPP	Public Private Partnership
R	(South African) Rand (€ 1.00 = R 13.10; March 2015)
RETOSA	Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa

RIDMP	Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (of SADC)
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SA	South Africa
SAA	South African Airways
SACU	Southern African Customs Union (comprised of Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAIIA	South African Institute of International Affairs
SANParks	South African National Parks
SAT	South African Tourism
SBP	Strategic Business Partnership (former Small Business Project)
SEY	Seychelles
STCAA	Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa
SWA	Swaziland
TAN	Tanzania
TBCSA	Tourism Business Council of South Africa
TFCA	Transfrontier Conservation Area
TGCSA	Tourism Grading Council of South Africa
TSA	Tourism Satellite Account
TTCI	Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (World Economic Forum)
UK	United Kingdom
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
VFA	Visa-free access
VFR	Visiting Friends and Relatives
VOA	Visa on arrival
VR	Visa required
WEF TTCR	World Economic Forum – Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2013
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
ZAM	Zambia
ZAR	South African Rand (€ 1.00 = ZAR 13.10; March 2015)
ZIM	Zimbabwe

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Executive Summary

Unlike economic sectors that are based on the production or processing of physical goods (agriculture, manufacturing) or other service sectors, the tourism sector is inextricably linked to the physical location of the touristic production, namely the destination. A destination that has unique tourist attractions has undoubtedly a comparative advantage over other tourist destinations. The SADC region is blessed with an unparalleled concentration of unique natural attractions with its many wildlife and game reserves, hosting the highest concentration of endangered big game species, including the "Big Five" of African elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion and leopard. The variety and quantity of its natural game resources puts Southern Africa apart from other tourist destinations around the world. However, not all SADC states translate the comparative wealth of their natural tourism attractions into a competitive advantage.

The 15 SADC member states are at very different levels of tourism sector development. Besides South Africa as the regional tourism centre (with almost 10 million visitor arrivals) and the only international/regional transport hub (Johannesburg OR Tambo Airport), there are a few other successful standalone tourist destinations, namely Botswana, Namibia, Tanzania, Mauritius and the Seychelles. Most SADC countries, however, are still at the stage of (re)emerging tourist destinations, e.g. Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Madagascar. Other SADC countries are mainly attractive as business destinations, i.e. Angola and the DR Congo, while Lesotho and Swaziland are still at a pre-emerging stage of tourism development. Most of their visitors are South Africans travelling there for business and employment. Only few international (overseas) tourists visit these destinations and for short trips mainly. The following table provides an overview of tourist arrivals in the 15 SADC countries:

Country	SADC Visitors	Rest of Africa	Overseas Tourists	Total Arrivals
Angola	200,603	23,742	425,688	650,033
Botswana	2,227,190	29,076	329,537	2,585,803
DR Congo	14,470	58,231	118,713	191,414
Lesotho	402,620	1,143	18,739	422,502
Madagascar	9,461	25,413	161,501	196,375
Malawi	524,321	106,786	138,615	769,722
Mauritius	114,820	159,336	764,812	1,038,968
Mozambique	1,352,232	59,096	532,797	1,944,125
Namibia	767,133	17,447	242,650	1,027,230
Seychelles	16,840	8,841	182,238	207,919
South Africa	6,669,966	243,817	2,703,181	9,616,964
Swaziland	1,164,047	15,712	145,879	1,325,638
Tanzania	179,345	344,293	572,246	1,095,884
Zambia	562,050	158,415	194,111	914,576
Zimbabwe	1,545,753	25,046	261,784	1,832,583
Total SADC Region	**15,750,851**	**1,276,394**	**6,792,491**	**23,819,736**

Table 1: Visitor Arrivals in the SADC region 2012-2013. Source: UNWTO 2015a

Overall, in 2013 there have been a total of 23.8 million "tourist" arrivals recorded by the 15 SADC states. This number is made of 15.8 million visitors from other SADC countries and 6.8 million tourists arriving from overseas markets. The balance is made of 1.3 million arrivals from other African countries.

15.8 million SADC visitors in other SADC countries   **6.8 million Overseas tourists in SADC countries**
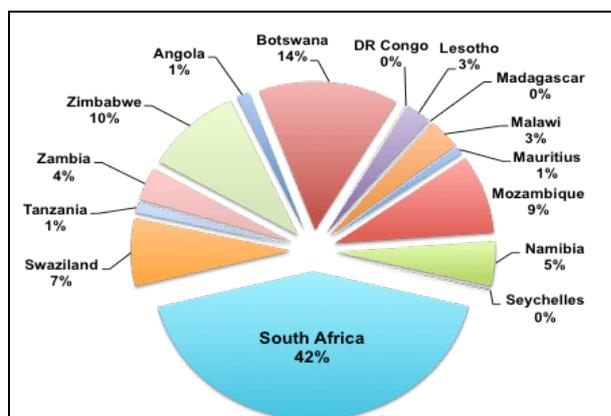
Figure 1: SADC visitor arrivals in SADC (2013)
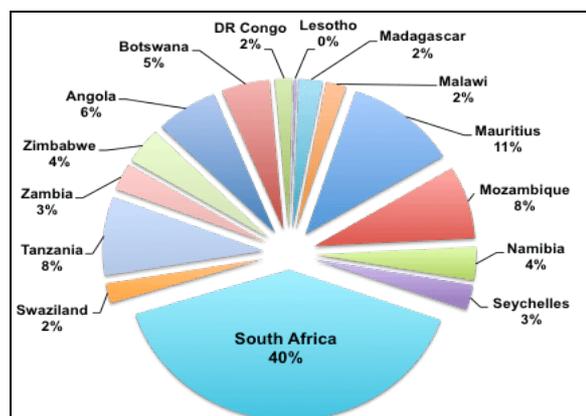
Figure 2: Overseas tourist arrivals in SADC (2013)

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The above figures show the extremely uneven distribution of tourist arrivals with the SADC region. While South Africa receives over 40% of both regional and overseas tourists, some other countries have hardly any overseas tourists arriving at their borders, e.g. Lesotho, Swaziland, and the DR Congo. However, South Africa's overseas arrivals numbers may also include international tourists in transit to other regional destinations, if those visitors decided not to stay inside the transit lounge at the airport, but to pass immigration controls, no matter how short or long their actual stay in South Africa was. Also Mauritius, Tanzania, Mozambique, Angola and Botswana receive large numbers of overseas tourists. Considering the small size of the Seychelles' tourism sector, the number of their arrivals is also substantial.

The total number of visitors from other SADC countries is more than twice (factor 2.3) as high than that of overseas arrivals. Particularly South Africa receives the bulk of all SADC visitors, but also Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique record very high regional arrivals. On the other hand, due to their island status Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles receive very few regional tourists from SADC markets. Also, Angola and the DR Congo have little appeal to the regional travel market.

The elementary question, however, is whether the regional visitor numbers are made up of genuine tourist arrivals according to the UNWTO definition, i.e. visitors who travel (to another country) for leisure, business, visiting friends and/or relatives, or for medical reasons. Observation and experience suggest that a large percentage of visitors from the region travel for other reasons, namely cross-border shopping (mostly same day), but also job-hunting, clandestine immigration, or transit to another destination (again for job-hunting and/or immigration).

While cross-border shopping clearly has a positive impact on the destination's economy (even though of very limited benefit for the tourism sector), the undeclared migration for job-hunting by many unemployed poor is clearly survival-driven without any immediate benefits for the destination or transit country. Since employment is prohibited for travellers on a 30-90 day visitor's permit issued at the border, most survival-driven migrants end up over-staying their permit and ending up in the undergrounds of the informal economy, i.e. as domestic workers or unregistered construction workers in the better-off destination country, i.e. mostly in South Africa. Job-hunters en-route to South Africa usually travel by public transport over land, hence add to the "visitor" figures of their respective transit countries, particularly Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Mozambique.

In the absence of detailed immigration statistics and visitor surveys, it is difficult to estimate the accurate number of regional tourists crossing the borders of SADC countries[1]. However, It must be assumed that the number of real tourists from the region, especially in the economically better off immigration economies such as South Africa, is significantly less than the declared and published tourist arrival figures. Hence, the real number of tourist arrivals in South Africa is probably closer to 5 million than to the published 10 million number.

So, does this imply that regional cross-border tourism is economically negligible? Certainly not. Observation and anecdotal evidence clearly suggest that there is an increasing number of both SADC citizens and overseas tourist visiting the various countries of Southern Africa. In all SADC countries there is a growing middleclass of citizens who travel to neighbouring countries for leisure, business and VFR, both by air and by land. However, it is important for the analyst not to allow him-/herself to be deceived by the overstated tourist arrival numbers in existing published tourism statistics.

The tourism sector in all SADC countries is a growing economic sector, creating jobs and incomes for an increasing number of people in and around the tourist destinations. For those SADC countries that are not stand-alone destinations, the regional network of destinations provides an opportunity to pool their tourism assets and resources to provide the overseas visitor with an integrated travel experience of

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[1] In order to distinguish tourists (in terms of the UNWTO definition), same day visitors, and clandestine labour migrants, it would help if computerized immigration systems would record not only the nationality of the passport, but also the duration of stay, and the entry and exit port of the travellers. A SADC visitor entering Botswana in the North at Kazangula and exiting the country (via a different border post) within 48 hours to South Africa, cannot be considered a genuine tourist in Botswana. If the same passport holder is not leaving South Africa within the permitted period of 30-90 days, this person should not be counted as a tourist to South Africa, but as an (illegal) immigrant. Such an analysis of immigration data would allow a far more correct estimate of SADC cross-border tourism volumes as compared to the current system, where every traveller entering on a visitor's permit is considered a tourist. Same day visitors can be accounted for separately within the same computer system.

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complementary tourism products. Many overseas tourists who have visited one regional country during a previous trip, may feel tempted to combine a second journey with a selection of neighbouring countries and their tourist attractions. The spread of the tourism income will contribute to much needed employment in the region, particularly in underdeveloped rural areas, because that's where the national parks and game reserves are, the core attractions of nature-based wildlife tourism in the SADC region.

Popular cross-border tourist destinations in the SADC region include the Kavango-Zambezi TFCA with its attractions of the Victoria Falls, Lake Kariba, the Okavango Delta and the various game parks (Chobe, Moremi, etc); the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park incorporating the famous Kruger Park; the Serengeti and Kilimanjaro national parks in Tanzania; the Mozambican and Tanzanian coast with its beaches and cultural heritage sites (Zanzibar, Pemba, Inhambane, the Quirimbas and Bazaruto archipelagos); the Namibian desert and game reserves; Lake Malawi and the Zambian national parks; the Maloti and Drakensberg mountains; the variety of South African coastal destinations (from the West Coast via the Garden Route, Wild Coast to the KZN beaches); and the various city and business destinations (Cape Town, Johannesburg, Maputo, Luanda, etc).

However, despite these obvious opportunities there are numerous challenges standing in the way towards increased regional cross-border tourism. These constraints can be categorized as follows:

Accessibility, transport and infrastructure-related constraints

Except for the regional and international hub Johannesburg, there are few airports in Southern Africa that have both regional and international air connectivity. Most SADC countries depend either on Johannesburg for their international connections, or a hub outside the region, i.e. either Nairobi (Kenya) or Addis Ababa (Ethiopia). With the exception of Johannesburg, flight connections between most SADC countries are few and expensive. Generally, prices of air ticket into and within the SADC region are very high in international comparison, making a journey into Southern Africa rather uncompetive. According to analysts, this lack of price competitiveness is mainly due to a lack of competition in the region's airline industry.

The regional road network is sufficient for cross-border travel, however, road conditions and safety are poor in some countries. Border posts are few and often with limited opening hours only. More critical are the complex border procedures, resulting in long queues and delays at border crossings. Some of the reasons for the cumbersome border procedures include the overwhelming bureaucracy (lengthy immigration and customs procedures, temporary work permits for tour guides and drivers, vehicle insurance requirements, etc), the organizational inefficiency (few immigration counters, no separate lanes and/or counters for domestic, SADC and international passport holders, truck drivers etc.) as well as the poor work ethic of border officials.

Renting a car is a vital holiday option for many individual travellers worldwide. However, in many SADC countries car rental options are mostly local, comparatively expensive, and not always up to international standards. In some SADC states foreign-registered rental cars are either not allowed to cross borders, or only against substantially higher rates.

Status of tourist attractions and natural resources

Tourist attractions in SADC countries are not always in good shape. Access paths, nature tracks, boardwalks and sightseeing platforms may have been neglected and are in a dilapidated shape. Other tourism assets lie dormant due to lack of access, management know-how, community involvement, signage, marketing or funding.

There is a multitude of existing tourism products available and successfully marketed established primary destinations. These are particularly the safaris in national parks and game reserves, the beach holidays on the coast, and the sightseeing tours for visiting the natural wonders of the region. However, the variety of tourism products in emerging and pre-emerging destination countries is quite limited

Few countries have public facilities available (such as public toilets) that are in good shape. In many countries there is a widespread absence of direction signs, making it difficult for potential visitors to find their natural and cultural tourist resources. For those enterprises and communities along the way - bypassed by the stream of tourists - this means loss of potential income and business opportunity.

However, in almost all SADC countries local residents and communities are believed to have a very positive attitude towards visitors; with a possible exception of Mozambique, Angola and the DR Congo.

By and large the natural environment in most SADC countries is considered unspoilt by construction and land degradation, especially in Botswana and Namibia; but a large number of tourism professionals has a different opinion, especially regarding Madagascar, South Africa, DR Congo, Mozambique, Malawi and Mauritius. This may point towards the absence of a destination management plan, which would require an environmental and visual impact assessment of built structures and industries that may disturb the natural environment – before they are being built.

In most SADC countries flagship species (big five), which are among the biggest tourist attractions, are not well protected. Poaching of animals is reducing wildlife as a tourist attraction, which is a particular problem in Angola, DR Congo, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Tanzania, Madagascar, Zambia, Lesotho, Malawi and South Africa. Overall, the level of entrance fees for national parks and attractions is considered appropriate in most countries, except maybe for Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Angola.

However, many trans-frontier conservation (TFCAs) areas are not well managed. Tourism infrastructure in most TFCAs is unevenly distributed; e.g. in the Greater Limpopo TFCA most tourism establishments are located on the South African side (Kruger), while the Mozambique and Zimbabwean areas are devoid of substantial tourism income opportunities. National park authorities – often understaffed, ill-equipped and poorly funded by Government – cannot maintain the integrity of the national park boundaries. Villagers invade parks areas in search for food, firewood and agricultural land, hence hunting protected animals and destroying biodiversity in the sheer need for survival.

Tourism and hospitality services

Most SADC countries possess a wide range of tourist accommodation options ranging from luxury hotels and lodges to low-priced budget accommodation and camps, particularly the mature tourist destinations such as South Africa, Namibia, Mauritius and the Seychelles. Other less developed tourist destinations lack that variety, namely the DR Congo, Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique and Malawi.

Except for the popular holiday destinations of the Seychelles and Mauritius hotel rooms are in short supply throughout the SADC region. Supply side shortages probably contribute to the comparatively high prices of tourist accommodation in hotels, B&Bs, guesthouses and game lodges. Comparing with other tourist destinations around the world, some observers say that tourism-related services in Southern Africa are overpriced compared to the mediocre quality provided.

Considering the high flight and accommodation prices in the SADC region, one may say that this is due to a lack of competition in the region's economy and the low levels of business acumen of Southern African tourism entrepreneurs. Others blame the high costs of doing business in Southern Africa; starting from remoteness of enterprise locations to the lack of infrastructure; the high costs of excessive business regulation, the shortage and costs of qualified labour, to excessive taxation and corruption in the region.

Many accommodation and hospitality enterprises in Southern Africa do not offer internationally comparable quality and service standards, despite the high prices. This may sometimes be due to the low socio-economic standards in some SADC countries which may also impact on the tourism standards that the countries can afford. Another reason for the poor quality standards in the accommodation sectors of SADC states is the absence of hotel certification schemes. Outside South Africa there is very limited evidence of fair or responsible tourism standards.

Many tourism professionals (and tourists) think that Southern Africa isn't good value for money. This applies particularly to Angola, DR Congo, Mozambique, Seychelles, Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia. Compared to other world regions SADC destinations are considered as overpriced. Some tourists seem to be disappointed about the value for money equation.

Most SADC countries seem to have a shortage of qualified staff for the hospitality and tourism industry. Tourism executives believe that hospitality staff in SADC countries is less productive than their peer elsewhere. The low levels of staff productivity may also contribute to the comparatively high prices in SADC tourism and hospitality enterprises, because more staff has to be employed for the same costs.

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Many tourism executives see a strong need for more expatriate managers in the SADC hospitality industry. This is expected to bring in more professional competences, but also – as one respondent said - to "translate" foreign tourist preferences for local tourism staff.

Tourism executives expressed a strong demand for more tourism-related training of hospitality staff, from vocational to management levels. They also expressed the need for better education, awareness creation and service orientation of government officials at immigration, customs, police force etc. to provide visitors with better and friendlier service, enhancing the overall tourism experience.

Health, safety and security risks

Many Tourists are worried about contracting tropical and/or infectious diseases when enquiring about Southern Africa travel. It may be required to educate the tourism markets about the health risks in SADC countries. Poor road and vehicle conditions as well as lack of driver training make road travel dangerous for overland tours. Roadblocks by armed police officers checking for driver's licenses and car registration certificates may make tourists feel unsafe.

Southern Africa has one of the highest crime rates compared to other world regions when it comes to murder, assault, rape, car hi-jacking, robbery and other violent crimes. Also burglaries and theft are omnipresent, especially in urban areas. Since most international tourists visiting the region travel via the regional hub Johannesburg, the high crime rates in South Africa have a negative influence on the whole SADC region. The risk of violent crime is a major scare for tourists worldwide.

Political instability in some SADC countries may lead to increased civil disorder and protests which affect tourism in these countries. Civil unrest may also scare tourists away from the region as a whole, namely the ongoing political crises and armed conflicts flaring up in Madagascar, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, DRC and Angola.

Travel advisories issued by foreign ministries in major originating markets scare tourists away, if light-minded warnings are taken as official positions of their governments in Europe, North America, and Australasia. Travel advisories and media reports are often over-exaggerating the risks of Africa travel, however, unless the underlying real safety and security risks are being tackled by SADC governments, the negative afro-phobic media hype will not disappear and tourism is unlikely to grow substantially.

Tourism regulatory framework

Southern Africa is not an easy, self-explanatory destination for the average uninformed tourist. The bureaucratic requirements are often inexplicable and the penalties for their non-compliance are often draconic. Tourism regulations that directly regulate or restrict the tourism sector by preventing harmful impacts, e.g. tourism quality standards, mandatory classification and grading of accommodation and other tourism activities, may be beneficial to the tourist visitors.

However, the regulations made by other Government departments and/or authorities often impact more critically on the tourism sector. These include entry and visa requirements for tourists issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs or the Bureau of Immigration, the vaccination requirements issued by the Department of Health, the work permits for foreign staff (determined by the Departments of Labour and/or Home Affairs), etc. Visa requirements can make it complicated for tourists to enter a country, both for their costs as well as for the time and hassle factor. In the SADC region tourist visas are hard to get for Angola, DR Congo and Mozambique. For some nationalities it also seems to be difficult in Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa and Tanzania.

Some SADC states appear to have harmonized their mandatory vaccination requirements, especially regarding a valid yellow fever vaccination when arriving from a country with yellow fever occurrence. Diplomatic missions of some SADC states are not always helpful and informative for potential visitors. Occasionally they provide wrong and/or inconsistent advice on visa applications and/or health regulations, which in the worst case may result in refusal of entry at the border point.

The border procedures of most SADC countries are highly inefficient and cumbersome. The worst performers are Angola, DRC, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania. At some border posts delays of many hours and even several days have been reported, especially at busy holiday weekends. This is mostly due to bureaucratic processes and operational chaos at border posts. The

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problem is worsened by the behavior of immigration and customs officials at SADC borders who are often considered to be rude and intimidating to visitors and locals alike.

Tour operators often face the challenge that their tour guides are not allowed to work across borders. If tour operators have to employ local tour guides in both countries, the tour costs may also rise significantly, hence making cross-border itineraries more expensive and less competitive. SADC countries require the payment of 'temporary import' duties for tour operator vehicles during their stay in the country. Such 'temporary import' duties may require substantial cash amounts that drivers or tour guides have to carry along, running the risk of loss or theft. Tour operators complain that the insurance requirements for their vehicles and passengers differ from country to country. A mutually accepted insurance card, similar to the "yellow" vehicle insurance card in COMESA does not yet exist in the SADC region. Business taxation is also considered too high and cumbersome in some SADC countries.

Tourism professionals criticize that in almost all SADC countries there is too much bureaucracy and paperwork at border points required for the crossing of persons and vehicles. The large number of regulations and the amount of bureaucracy make cross-border travel complicated and prone to corruption. Tour operators complain that in almost all SADC countries there is need for so-called spontaneous fees and informal payments to border officials

Tourism policy and government support to the tourism sector

Some SADC governments do not yet fully appreciate the potential of tourism development for their national economies. These governments are often not aware of the tourism sector's contribution to GDP and employment. This is partly due to the fact that reliable data and statistics do not exist. The lack of understanding the role of tourism by some governments is evidenced by the fact that they have not developed (nor implemented) a coherent framework for the development and growth of the sector, i.e. a tourism master plan or similar policy document outlining the long-term strategy for the tourism sector.

In tourism often the left hand doesn't know what the right hand does. There is usually no coordination of various government departments and statutory agencies involved in the regulation of the tourism sector. This appears to be the case in South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia. A positive example appears to be Botswana. Only few SADC countries seem to have a practice of involving the private sector in tourism policy-making, i.e. Namibia, South Africa and Botswana. Other governments have little or no experience with multi-stakeholder dialogues for tourism and destination development. Few SADC governments are believed to use their policies and regulatory frameworks to promote private investment in the tourism sector.

Tourism marketing and branding are critical to attract tourists. Simply said: the more effective the marketing message, the more tourists are attracted to a country, provided that the tourism products and services are right. National tourism organisations (NTOs) in SADC countries tend to exclusively promote their own national destinations and tourism products. Apart from the political rhetoric at SADC meetings few efforts are being made to promote cross-border tourism in the region.

Considering the status of tourism products available, the connectivity between SADC countries and to markets overseas, and the international competitiveness of regional tourism destinations, it is obvious that for most SADC states the only promising strategy for national tourism development lies in regional networks of cross-border itineraries and marketing the participating countries as a joint tourist destination. However, realizing the need for a regional tourism strategy has not yet led to an adaptation of national marketing campaigns, which tend to market each country in isolation. It is unclear how individual SADC countries with small budgets for tourism marketing can be recognized in the global market place.

Almost all survey respondents agree with the statement that joint tourism marketing of SADC countries could be improved. In fact, regional tourism marketing of the SADC countries is almost non-existent because the Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (RETOSA) is not yet fully functional. According to observers and eye-witnesses it was mainly due to South Africa's unwillingness to support RETOSA, that after 18 years the organization hasn't got off the ground as yet. Joint marketing of the tourism products in the region requires that SADC governments provide RETOSA with the financial and technical resources that the organisation requires to fulfil its mandate. Insiders to the debate expect that in 2015 a new start will be made to revive regional tourism development and marketing by RETOSA.

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SADC Tourism Aspects for Improvement – TOP 10 Priority Issues to be addressed

Rank	Respondents' disagreement with the following statements:	SADC average
1	Joint tourism marketing of SADC countries is done well	91%
2	Travel advisories and negative media don't deter tourists away from Africa	83%
2	NTO promotes cross-border tourism	83%
4	Sufficient training of government officials interacting with tourists	69%
5	Sufficient training in the tourism industry	67%
6	No need for expatriate managers in hospitality industry	66%
7	Tourism assets are properly utilised in this country	64%
8	Public facilities available and in good condition	62%
9	Government invests public resources in infrastructure and tourist attractions	58%
10	Temporary import of vehicles possible without customs payment	56%
11	Endangered species are effectively protected (poaching is prevented)	53%
12	Productivity of staff in hospitality industry similar to other countries	52%
13	Number of permits and certificates at borders is adequate (no bureaucracy)	51%
14	Coordination of government agencies involved in regulating tourism	50%
14	Corruption and bribery are limited, making cross-border travel easy	50%
16	Qualified tourism personnel available at reasonable costs	49%
16	Vehicle insurance requirements are aligned between SADC countries	49%
18	Tourists are not worried about tropical and/or infectious diseases	47%
19	Border procedures are efficient and not cumbersome at all	46%
19	Sufficient direct scheduled flights between SADC countries	46%
19	Limited border opening hours are not restrictive for tour itineraries	46%
19	Accommodation is competitively priced (value for money)	46%
19	Border crossings are efficient without causing delays	46%
24	Traffic infrastructure is in good condition	45%
25	Nature areas are cleaned regularly and are free of rubbish	44%
26	Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) are well managed	43%
27	Quality and service standards are similar to those in other countries	42%
27	Tourist attractions are well sign-posted and easy to find	42%
29	Road blocks and police caprice are rare and do not intimidate tourists	41%
29	Government promotes private investment and enabling policy environment	41%
31	Road travel is generally safe (few accidents)	40%
31	Business taxation is appropriate and similar to other countries	40%
33	Serious crime is rare and usually doesn't affect tourists	39%
34	Vaccination requirements are coordinated with neighbouring countries	38%
35	Strategy for development and growth of tourism sector is implemented	36%
36	Customs and immigration officals are friendly and welcoming to visitors	35%
37	Diplomatic missions abroad are helpful and informative	34%
37	Private sector is engaged in multi-stakeholder dialogue on tourism development	34%
37	Fair / responsible tourism standards and sustainable business practices applied	34%
37	Road network extensive enough for cross-border itineraries	34%
37	Tourist attractions are professionally managed and in good shape	34%
42	Wide range of accommodation options available	33%
43	Wide variety of (innovative) tourism products available	32%
44	Our tour guides are allowed to work there	31%
44	Natural environment is unspoilt by construction and degradation	31%
46	Tourist visas are easily available for most visitors, or not required at all	30%
47	Political instability is rare and usually doesn't affect tourism	29%
48	Entrance fees for national parks and tourist attractions are appropriate	28%
49	Government appreciates role of tourism in creating income and jobs	27%
50	Foreign rental cars allowed to cross borders into this country	23%
51	Local residents have a positive attitude towards visitors	18%

Table 1: Responses to the FTT Online Survey, averaged across all SADC countries and ranked by priority

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Conclusions

Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in Sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly in Southern Africa. The 15 SADC countries have completely different tourism sector characteristics. They do not only differ by size, the number of visitors, the contribution to GDP, their attractions and tourism products, but also regarding their tourism development potential.

Considering the varying levels of tourism development, availability and attractiveness of tourism resources, as well as access to regional and international markets, a differentiated tourism development strategy for different SADC states is needed, which will have implications for tourism marketing and promotion. While South Africa, Mauritius, the Seychelles, Tanzania and (to some extent) Namibia have good potential as stand-alone destinations in the international market, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Lesotho and Swaziland are typical secondary destinations that lack sufficient attractions and tourism products to go it alone.

Type of Destination	Established Destinations	Mature Destinations	In Crisis Destinations	Emerging Destinations	Pre-emerging Destinations
Regional Hub / Stand-alone Destinations	**RSA**				
Stand-alone Destinations	**MAU, SEY**	**TAN, (NAM)**		**ANG, MAD**	**DRC**
Secondary Destinations		**BOT, NAM**	**ZIM**	**MAL, MOZ, ZAM**	**LES, SWA**

Table 2: Categories of SADC tourist destination countries

A realistic tourism development strategy of these countries builds on regional cooperation in creating cross-border circuits and tour itineraries. Since all these secondary destinations depend to a large extent on Johannesburg as the international and regional air transport hub, the regional strategy needs to incorporate South Africa as a core partner.

However, this report also shows that SADC countries must address their constraints to tap tourism's full potential. As the World Bank (2013) concluded: "African destinations must address their unpredictable business environments, institutional weaknesses, inadequate access, low level of linkages and a price/value mismatch in order to attract serious investors and travelers".

Recommendations

It is suggested that a comprehensive and sustainable growth strategy is developed to make the tourism sector in the SADC region more competitive.

Objective 1:   Access to SADC tourist destinations improved
- Increase the number of airlines by allowing investors to operate low cost carriers on domestic / regional routes linking the SADC gateway (Johannesburg) with regional airports, but also allowing competition on domestic routes.
- Increase the seating capacity utilization of regional carriers by introducing modern yield management programs into ticket reservation management.
- Improve price competitiveness of regional carriers by introducing competition and reducing airport taxes and charges
- Facilitate cross-border travel by minimizing and/or harmonizing bureaucratic obstacles in visa regimes, border procedures and licensing of business activities in tourism.

Objective 2:   Average length of stay and expenditure of tourists expanded
Currently, most SADC countries don't possess stand-alone destinations and tourism products that can attract a significant number of overseas tourists (except South Africa, Namibia, Tanzania, Mauritius and the Seychelles).

SADC tourism planners should accept the fact that for the time being it might be a more realistic strategy to position a country as a secondary destination in conjunction with the main international hub and gateway into the region, namely Johannesburg, South Africa.

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A possible tourism strategy for countries such as Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland may involve offering a greater variety of tourism products by combining selected destinations, attractions and potential activities in a regional itinerary spanning several SADC countries.

Objective 3:   Value for money of Southern African tourism services improved

Expand the range of accommodation facilities to include more affordable mid-range establishments in the 2-3-4 star categories to attract the large middle-income market segment which cannot afford 5-star luxury and exclusivity, but demands good value for money. The middle class market is the key to expanding the tourism sector and its socio-economic benefits, especially when catering to the requirements of the growing middle classes in the domestic and regional markets

Expand capacity in the accommodation sector to enhance competition without compromising carrying capacities, especially regarding nature and biodiversity protection. Finding the right balance between economic, social and environmental considerations is particularly critical in protected areas and TFCAs.

Enhancing competition and encouraging market forces in SADC tourism development should bring prices down, especially in the main sub-sector of tourist accommodation. Reducing red tape and the costs of doing business in SADC member states will facilitate cost reductions. Smart and 'green' business solutions such as resource-saving technologies and bulk-purchasing schemes can further contribute to the bottom line, allowing tourism enterprises to become more price-competitive.

Where necessary, quality and service standards for tourism enterprises have to be established, strengthened and/or harmonized between SADC countries. Essentially, a 3 star hotel in one country shall have the same (or at least similar) standards as a 3-star hotel in any other SADC member state.

Responsible tourism standards are not to be seen as external to quality standard grading but intrinsic to it: e.g. service quality is directly tied to decent jobs via employee satisfaction; smart technology reduces energy costs, while freeing up opportunity costs to invest in experience-quality enhancing facilities.

Objective 4:   Conservation through tourism in National Parks and TFCAs improved

Conservation and tourism have a mutually reinforcing relationship: without nature conservation tourism would loose its most prominent product; and without tourism there won't be sufficient financial resources available to fund the required conservation efforts. Hence the following actions should be considered by bringing conservationists and tourism experts into a professional dialogue:

- Increase park entrance fees to a level that visitors will still find acceptable.
- Increase concessionary fees for national park concessions to market-related fees.
- Use additional income from park entrance and concessionary fees to fund effective anti-poaching measures, including more, better-paid and equipped park officers.
- Enhance competitiveness of lodges by better use of market research, enhancing quality and value for money, increasing occupancy rates and sales, and reducing costs through better resource efficiency.
- Expand decentralized tourism establishments in national parks and concessions, but stay below visitor carrying capacities to be established by biologists and natural resource managers.
- Promote value-added services in and around protected areas, hence creating incomes and employment for local residents.
- Promote supply linkages with local farmers in the surrounding village communities to create jobs and incomes for the poor.

Objective 5:   Regulatory impact assessment introduced

Tourism has potentially the power to transform economies in Southern Africa and create incomes and jobs for the poor. Governments can support and/or stifle the development and growth of the tourism sector. However, policies affecting the sector are not only made by the respective Ministry or Department of Tourism. It is often the unintended consequences of well-meant but thoughtless regulations of other government departments that have most negative impacts on tourism. Here the proverbial statement "the left hand doesn't know what the right hand does" applies.

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A government committed to harnessing the power of tourism development should be very considerate of the unintended consequences of its own policies. Such government should review its proposed legislation (prior to legislating it) by conducting a regulatory impact assessment (RIA) jointly with the private sector concerned. This review would help avoiding some counterproductive regulatory measures that harm a potential growth engine of the SADC region, namely the tourism sector.

Objective 6:   Regional cross-border itineraries developed

Selected cross-border tour itineraries should be developed in collaboration with tour operator associations representing both inbound and outbound operators. Besides a detailed value chain analysis of the tourism products and service providers, a destination assessment should be conducted reflecting on the status of tourist attractions, the infrastructure requirements, regulatory obstacles, investment needs and government support required from the participating countries.

Such a destination assessment would involve the private sector and NGOs in a multi-stakeholder dialogue. The action plan would probably include the following reforms and activities:

• Reduce red tape and bureaucracy at border points; assist tourists in navigating through the complex border procedures
• Train police, immigrations and customs officers on the specific situation of tourists visiting their country and establish a 24/7 tourist helpline for reporting corruption and bribery.

Potential Cooperation Partner for SADC Tourism Development: RETOSA

The Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa (RETOSA) is the principal partner for developing regional cross-border tourism in the SADC region and mandated by the SADC secretariat. However, RETOSA lacks substantial funding to carry out its mandate effectively. It hasn't been equipped by SADC member states with sufficient financial resources, which leaves the organization handicapped in implementing tourism development services to the satisfaction of its members.

GIZ should consider providing both institutional support and project-financing to RETOSA. An organizational development consultancy could identify appropriate membership and management structures as well as efficient administrative and decision-making processes that also involve the private sector effectively.

Project Proposals for Tourism Development

Building further on the organizational strengthening of RETOSA GIZ could support selected tourism development projects, e.g. for cross-border destination management, value chain development for regional tourism products (e.g. tours/safaris), quality and sustainability standards, marketing and promotion. The activities should follow a multi-level approach ranging from micro (enterprise) level via the meso (sector) level to the macro issues (policy) at regional and national level.

Considering the low levels of tourism awareness at all levels some educational and public awareness campaigns may also be aimed at the general public (meta level). A good starting point would be to conduct a road show in all SADC countries presenting and discussing the research findings of this regional tourism study with all relevant stakeholders in a county. Based on the opportunities and constraints identified during this study, the proposed projects may include some of the activities below. However, a destination-specific upgrading strategy is subject to a detailed value chain analysis.

a) Potential Project Activities at Micro Level

At the micro level, tourism enterprises in selected destinations are supported with pilot activities in the following areas:

• Assistance in establishing business linkages between local tourism services (hotels, lodges, local tour operators, attractions, etc) and regional/international tour operators.
• Business development services for preparing and guiding tourism & hospitality firms for quality and sustainability audits.
• Assisting tour operators in creating seamless regional cross-border itineraries for customers visiting more than one SADC country.

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- Training of tourism workers on hospitality and sustainability issues to improve the guest experience.
- Promotion of 'green' tourism services through enhancing resource efficiency

It is not suggested that GIZ provides regular direct services at the enterprise level. Instead, pilot activities should be developed and tested by GIZ before private BDS providers will be capacitated to provide such activities to a larger number of tourism enterprises on a commercially viable basis.

b) Potential Project Activities at Meso Level

At the meso level, municipalities and (sub)sector associations in selected cross-border tourist destinations can be supported in the following areas:

- Cross-border destination planning and management based on empirical evidence, e.g. tourist satisfaction surveys. Visitor feedback shall be used to inform the multi-stakeholder dialogue on exploiting opportunities and overcoming constraints to sustainable tourism development.
- Tourism product and value chain development to expand and diversify the touristic offers and extend the average length of stay by tourists visiting the destinations.
- Workshops for peer-learning and experience-sharing among tourism stakeholders of different destinations in the SADC region, e.g. by bringing tour operators from different countries together for potential partnerships spanning across multiple entities.
- Strengthening of (sub)sector associations and tourism councils to represent the private sector and play a constructive role in the public-private dialogue in the tourist destination(s), e.g. by capacitating them to make policy proposals for (de)regulation and destination development.
- Supporting the setup of destination management organisations (DMOs) in cross-border destinations (including trans-frontier conservation areas) to plan, coordinate, implement and monitor destination and value chain development on a continuous basis. This includes suitable financing models for the sustainable funding of DMOs.
- Assistance in destination branding and marketing of cross-border travel, including the joint participation in tourism trade fairs.

c) Potential Project Activities at Macro Level

At the macro level, national governments and regional stakeholders in SADC can be supported in prioritized policy reforms, e.g. in the following areas:

- Easing tourist visa regulations (univisa, e-visa, visa on arrival) and immigration policy for tourism staff (including work permits for foreign tour guides, expatriate managers and kitchen chefs, etc).
- Establishing tourism statistics based on reliable immigration data collected at all SADC border posts to be connected via an IT network. The system should establish purpose of visit and duration of stay for aggregated demographic groups.
- Collecting market intelligence on travel preferences of selected incoming tourist markets, e.g. the new Asian, Latin American and East European markets as well as the traditional Western source markets in Europe, North America and Australasia.
- Liberalizing air traffic regulations and introduce competition (open skies) to improve connectivity between regional destinations and enhance price competitiveness of domestic and regional airlines. This would bring ticket prices down and increase the number of tourists in the SADC region.
- Improving infrastructure and transport development for cross-border itineraries. This may include public-private partnerships (BOT) for airport construction and upgrading as well as road infrastructure and border terminals facilitating the smooth and efficient border clearance of persons and vehicles.
- Promoting investments and reducing the cost of doing business by simplifying government regulations (e.g. duration of starting a tourism business, licensing of tourism enterprises, land laws relating to tourism investments, labour regulations, business taxation and VAT, import and export regulations for capital equipment, etc).
- Involving the private sector in a multi-stakeholder dialogue with the relevant government authorities on tourism-related policy issues, e.g. travel and visa facilitation, air and ground

transportation, environmental affairs, taxation and customs, immigration, labor affairs, human rights, health regulations, safety and security, etc.

- Regulatory impact assessment to evaluate the future potential effects of policies and regulations of government actions impacting on the tourism sector, including those enacted by other departments and agencies.

d) Potential Project Activities at Meta Level

At the meta level, tourism awareness will be generated among all strata of society:

- Tourism impact studies will be an important means to ascertain – on an empirical basis - the societal benefits / risks of tourism development in selected destinations (incl. incomes and employment generated, contribution to GDP, socio-cultural and environmental impacts).
- Awareness creation among political decision-makers regarding the socio-economic benefits of tourism development in terms of jobs and incomes created, SMME development, supply linkages with local producers (farmers, fishermen, crafts people), balanced regional economic development, corporate social responsibility (CSR) by tourism enterprises, etc
- Societal awareness for the interests of tourist travellers regarding hospitality, cultural encounters, hassle-free travel, environmental protection, safety and security concerns, avoidance of health risks, etc.
- Minimizing red tape, corruption and bribery when dealing with authorities (e.g. in business licensing, non-bureaucratic customs and immigration procedures at border crossings, minimizing the hassle factor for visitors and tour operators).
- Publicity campaigns in originating markets counteracting the negative media headlines and travel advisories warning against travel to 'risky' Africa. These campaigns should cover topics such as Ebola, crime and HIV/AIDS, and put forward a positive but realistic picture of Southern Africa to the outside world.