

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

In light of recent reports regarding water challenges on the KZN South Coast, we at South Coast Tourism & Investment Enterprise [SCTIE] would like to acknowledge that, while this does have an impact on local tourism and our member tourism establishments, the necessary steps are being taken to rectify the situation. Unfortunately, the water shortages impacting certain areas do compound an already challenging situation for local businesses recovering from a difficult few years.

France Zama, the spokesman for Ugu District Municipality, has announced that static tanks are being replenished daily as an interim measure while the municipality is working around the clock to fast-track the restoration process to ensure supply is fully restored. There are also long-term turnaround plans in place, supported by Water and Sanitation Minister Senzo Mchunu, that will improve the water supply for the communities of the district. These include the installation of boreholes, major pipeline replacements, as well as refurbishing electrical and mechanical infrastructure, among other things.

We trust that the new measures being put in place and the commitments made by Ugu District Municipality to rectify the situation will have a positive impact on the water supply to the region.

Despite the water challenges, the KZN South Coast has enjoyed a boost in the tourism economy the past few months with Ugu District coming out tops provincially over the festive season with an occupancy rate of 97% in the last week of 2022. Over the Easter weekend, we noted overall occupancy rates of 60% which, when compared with other tourism regions is fairly consistent, particularly concerning the current economic climate.

The continued interest we're seeing on the KZN South Coast can be attributed to our many tourism assets from having the highest number of Blue Flag Beaches in the province and two of the world's top dive sites at Aliwal Shoal and Protea Banks, to our incredible adventure and ecotourism offerings - including newly established beach and hinterland hiking experiences – and 11 quality golf courses along our 'Golf Coast'.

The KZN South Coast remains a prime, family-friendly destination, home to the world-renowned annual Sardine Run which is currently underway, providing visitors with front-row seats to all the marine action. In addition to our incredible natural assets, the Paradise of the Zulu Kingdom provides visitors with incredible value for money, making it a top tourism destination of choice.

While water supply challenges remain, it is important to note that this is limited to certain areas and a number of our tourism establishments have made provisions, including installing water tanks and boreholes, to ensure guests are not impacted during their stay. We anticipate that, once these challenges have been fully addressed, our tourism numbers will only continue to rise as people continue to uncover the adventure and eco-tourism opportunities along the KZN South Coast.

- Phelisa Mangcu, CEO of South Coast Tourism & Investment Enterprise (SCTIE)

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