



Namibia's Tourism Sector Recovery Plan 2022-2024

[Document subtitle]

ABSTRACT

The Tourism Recovery Plan sets out a framework for tourism strategic approach to policy intervention with situational-based revisit & update to ensure the right policy and strategic programs are in place at each stage of the recovery phase. This document provides targeted strategic interventions, programs and activities to be carried out for the next three years for the revival and support to the tourism sector in Namibia.

[Namibia's Tourism Sector Recovery Plan](#)

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
INTRODUCTION	4
VISION OF TOURISM IN NAMIBIA:	4
IMPACT OF SARS COVID-19	4
GOVERNMENT SUPPORT	0
SNAPSHOT OF THE TOURISM VALUE CHAIN AND IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES	0
ADOPTED STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS FOR NAMIBIA’S TOURISM RECOVERY PLAN	3
Strategic Intervention 1: Policy Matters and Covid-19 Tourism Regulations and Measures	3
Program 1: Restore International Traveler Confidence	3
Program 2: Extend Financial Support to the Businesses in the Sector	1
Strategic Intervention 2: Aggressive Online Marketing and Promotion Campaigns	1
Program 3: Build a Strong Namibian brand using multiple advertising platforms.	1
Program 4: Create Synergy with Key Stakeholders in the Industry	1
Program 5: Promote & Digitalize Tourism Investment Opportunities	1
Program 6: Develop Domestic and African Travel Market	1
Program 7: Adopt Aggressive Marketing Campaigns in International Source Markets	1
Strategic Intervention 3: Attract New Geo- and Special Segments of the Global Travel Markets ...	1
Program 8: Create New Tourism Routes and Expand Tourism Product Offering	1
Strategic Intervention 4: Increased Tourism Market Intelligence through Statistics, Data Collection and Analysis	1
Program 9. Develop a National Spatial Tourism Master Plan	1
Program 10. Collection of Domestic Traveler Statistics	1
Program 11. Digitalize International Arrival and Exit Processes	1
Program 12: Application of Big Data in Tourism	1
Strategic Intervention 5: Improve Accessibility and Connectivity	1
Program 13: Easing of Visa Requirements for Tourism and Business Travelers	1
Program 14: Improve Air Access to Tourism Flagships of Namibia	1
INVESTMENTS REQUIRED	1
CONCLUSION	8
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	8

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry of Environment Forestry and Tourism under its Directorate of Tourism and Gaming is mandated and charged to spearhead the government efforts and coordinate with all stakeholders in the sector the drafting and adoption of the national Tourism Recovery Plan during the short, medium- and long-term period.

It is common cause, that the tourism sector was the hardest hit by the pandemic and was felt immediately after the first lockdown in March 2020. The tourist arrivals declined damagingly by 89.4% to a mere 169 565 arrivals at the end of that year.

The Namibian government launched its Tourism Revival Initiative (TRI) in September 2020 to help kick start the recovery process. A Tourism Task Force (TTF) comprising key stakeholders was established as part of the TRI.

In order to achieve a sustained sectoral recovery in the next three years, policymakers and stakeholders must act quickly and creatively to introduce policy framework and necessary support to safeguard the immediate future of the tourism sector and its related economic activities uniquely exposed to the pandemic.

This document consists of introduction that provides a background, vision for tourism sector in Namibia, impact of SARS Covid-19 on the sector, government support received so far, snapshot of the tourism value chain and adopted strategic interventions, programs and activities, investment required, conclusion and acknowledgement.

The tourism sector recovery plan adopts the following five strategic interventions, and fourteen programs and activities support by an implementation plan and budgetary requirement:

Strategic Intervention 1: Policy Matters and Covid-19 Tourism Regulations and Measures with Program 1: Restore International Traveller Confidence and Program 2: Extend Financial Support to the Businesses in the Sector.

Strategic Intervention 2: Aggressive Online Marketing and Promotion Campaigns with 5 programs; Program 3: Build a Strong Namibian brand using multiple advertising platforms; Program 4: Create Synergy with Key Stakeholders in the Industry; Program 5: Promote & Digitalize Tourism Investment Opportunities; Program 6: Develop Domestic and African Travel Market and Program 7: Adopt Aggressive Marketing Campaigns in International Source Markets.

Strategic Intervention 3: Attract New Geo- and Special Segments of the Global Travel Markets with Program 8: Create New Tourism Routes and Expand Tourism Product Offering only.

Strategic Intervention 4: Increased Tourism Market Intelligence through Statistics, Data Collection and Analysis has four programs; Program 9. Develop a National Spatial Tourism Master Plan; Program 10. Collection of Domestic Traveller Statistics; Program 11. Digitalize International Arrival and Exit Processes and Program 12: Application of Big Data in Tourism.

Strategic Intervention 5: Improve Accessibility and Connectivity has two programmes; Program 13: Easing of Visa Requirements for Tourism and Business Travelers and Program 14: Improve Air Access to Tourism Flagships of Namibia.

INTRODUCTION

The country's tourism sector and its business model are so dependent on attracting visitors and tourists. Any travel restrictions or international border closures has therefore a direct impact on such a model of business. The economic impact of Covid-19 and subsequent travel restrictions has been catastrophic to Namibia. During 2020 Q2 and Q3, statistics showed a year-on-year drop of over 80% in hotel and other short-stay occupancy rates and, not surprisingly, very few international tourist arrivals given the restrictions imposed. There were an 89.4% decline in international tourist arrivals (169 565) in Namibia in 2020 as compared to 1,595,973 in 2019.

The crisis for the tourism sector does however present certain opportunities to rearrange, reboot and rebuild it for an even more successful and sustainable future based on targeted interventions.

This document is an outcome of an engagement process within the sector and its key stakeholders. It incorporates recommendations from a macroeconomics assessment report done by the MEFT as funded by UNDP in 2020 (Bollman, 2020 report), input from the private sector on domestic and international marketing strategies obtained through Namibia Tourism Board, input from tourism stakeholders engagement platforms countrywide, input from tourism regional forums, and input from the resourceful references such as MEFT Tourists Arrivals Report 2020, Tourism Revival Statistics report of September 2020 to March 2021, Bank Of Namibia GDP report 2020, projections by UNWTO and WTTC, etc.

This document provides a framework for identified policy interventions, strategic programs and specific activities to be implemented by the Government through MEFT, relevant developmental partners and tourism stakeholders over period of 3 three years, from 2022 to 2024 under the National Tourism Recovery Plan.

This document consists of various sections such as the Vision for the tourism in Namibia, the impact of SARS Covid-19 on the sector, government support to revive the sector, snapshot on the tourism value chain and prevailing challenges in various industries, strategic interventions 1 to 14, programmes under each strategic intervention and activities, investment required, conclusion and acknowledgement. This document will have an implementation plan as a substantive attachment.

VISION OF TOURISM IN NAMIBIA:

The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism has set a vision for tourism in Namibia for the sector become

“A mature, sustainable and responsible tourism industry contributing significantly to the economic development of Namibia and the quality of life of all her people, primarily through job creation and economic growth”.

IMPACT OF SARS COVID-19

The SARS COVID-19 pandemic has devastated Namibia's tourism sector with an unprecedented impact on firms' employment and earnings. Based on GDP data, the hotels and restaurants subsector which serves as proxy for the tourism sector was severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic which led to a halt in tourism activity, particularly regional and international travel. Most of the firms in the sector are small and medium enterprises with limited access to financial resources, thus limiting the ability for some of the firms to survive the shock for a prolonged period. In response to the pandemic, some of the enterprises closed while others significantly cut their operations, consequently resulting in loss of revenue and reduced employment. (Bon Report 2020).

The sector has seen a decrease in tourist arrivals of 89.4% ↓ from 2019 to 2020 and the sector came to standstill from March 2020 and with a slow start from July 2021. Over 1000 companies applied for financial assistance through the stimulus package offered by central government. A lot of ccompanies reduced salaries, retrenched employees with other opting for liquidations. over the 18 months period, ± 100 tourism businesses closed temporarily or permanently (e.g. Swakopmund Hotel, Welwitchia Travel Agency, Wild dog Safaris, etc.) it is estimated that over 1000 tourism direct jobs could be lost in 2021 if the recovery is further slowed due to travel restrictions, etc.

the impact of Covid-19 on the tourism sector has been across the entire value chain. it is therefore important that the recovery plan recommends strategic intervention that cuts across the sectors and industries.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

This section contains highlights of the government’s efforts achieved or geared towards the recovery of the tourism sector. Amongst others the government has set in motion the following initiatives in place to reboot the tourism sector:

- Implementation of the International Tourism Revival Initiative (TRI) since 01 September 2020 & establishment of multi-sector Task Force on the ‘Tourism Revival Initiative.
- Opening of air – connected arrivals for international leisure travelers since 1 September 2020.
- Resumption of issuance of entry Visas upon arrival at HKIA for leisure and business travelers.
- Offered N\$8 billion stimulus packages for businesses through MoF in 2020.
- Approved funding through its Project, NAMPARKS V for the domestic marketing campaign through Namibia Tourism Board and NBC.
- Offered wage subsidies to tourism organisations and conservancy employees through the Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilience Facility in mitigating the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic, facilitating investment in communal areas.

SNAPSHOT OF THE TOURISM VALUE CHAIN AND IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES

The tourism value chain consists of the following facets. These aspects require targeted and specific interventions to reset and ensure inclusivity, empowerment and transformation.

a) Tourism Industries:

Figure 1: Tourism Industries and respective market share of registered businesses

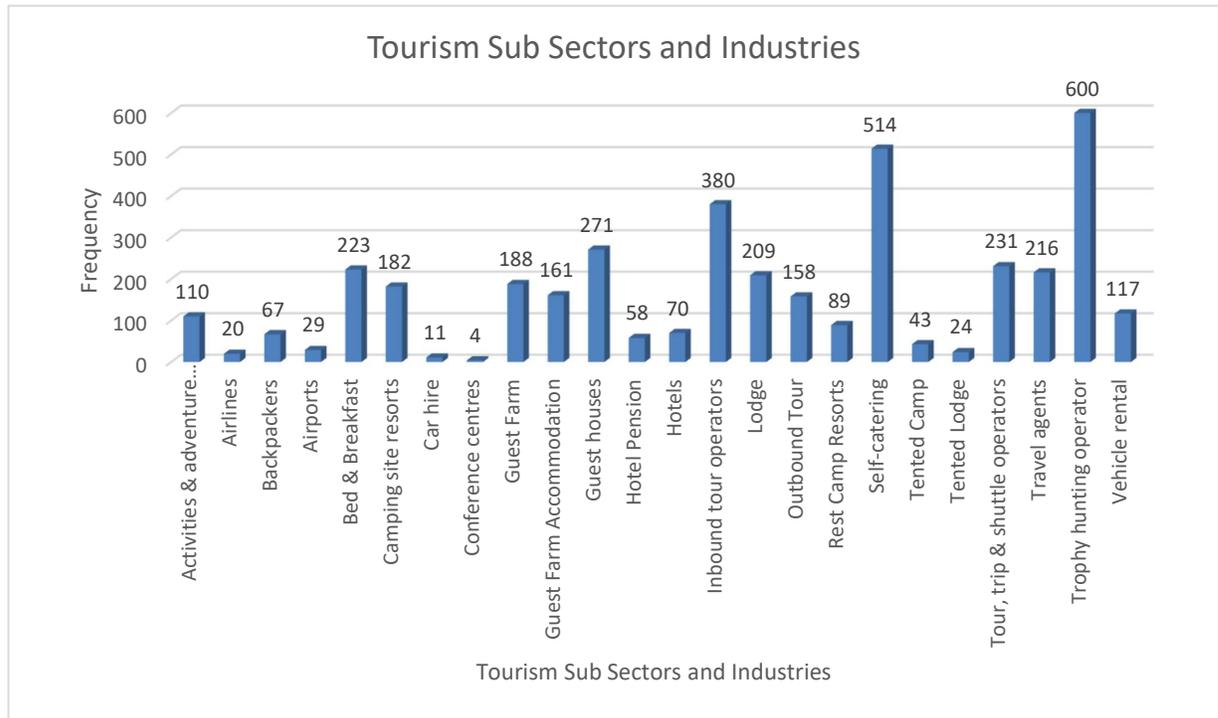
Tourism Sub Sectors and Industries	Count	Percentage	Prevalent Industry challenges during Covid-19
Activities & adventure operators	110	2.77%	
Airlines	20	0.50%	The aviation industry is susceptible to external threats like recession, natural disasters, and disease outbreaks. These threats severely affect global air travel by increasing flight cancellations, causing the grounding of aircraft, travel bans, and closure of international borders. Social distancing, staff protection measures and additional processes have a massive impact on passenger flow, system capacity and transfer times.
Backpackers	67	1.69%	
Airports	29	0.73%	Two (2) are international airports (HKIA and WVBIA). The rest are regional, and domestic/private airstrips More international airports, at least one more is required in Zambezi region to support the

			growth of tourism in the KAZA Trans Frontier Conservation Area.
Bed & Breakfast	223	5.61%	Not all are registered due to lack of meeting minimum national registration criteria of NTB.
Camping site resorts	182	4.58%	
Car hire	11	0.28%	The industry was not considered an essential service provider, had to follow strict lockdown measures and wait for the restrictions to be lifted before resuming operations. The number of available seats were reduced and required to install seating charts to promote social distancing.
Conference centres	4	0.10%	Limited convention venues to host major international events. No official convention bureau to market Namibia's attractiveness to MICE market.
Guest Farm	188	4.73%	
Guest Farm Accommodation	161	4.05%	
Guest houses	271	6.82%	Not all are registered.
Hotel Pension	58	1.46%	
Hotels	70	1.76%	
Inbound tour operators	380	9.56%	
Lodge	209	5.26%	
Outbound Tour	158	3.97%	
Rest Camp Resorts	89	2.24%	
Self-catering	514	12.93%	
Tented Camp	43	1.08%	
Tented Lodge	24	0.60%	
Tour, trip & shuttle operators	231	5.81%	Freelance tour operators are not required to register with any authority.
Travel agents	216	5.43%	
Trophy hunting operator	600	15.09%	
Vehicle rental	117	2.94%	
Total	3975	100.00%	

Source: NTB Data base.

b) *Tourism Industry Chart*

Figure 1. *Tourism subsectors and industries chart.*



c) *The following industries are not regulated under Namibia tourism board hence, not included the above table due to lack of formal statistics:*

Tourism Sub Sector and Industries	Registered Business	Current Status	Challenges/Response
1) Retail & crafts			
2) Restaurants			
3) Casinos	7		
4) Exhibition centers & ICCs			
5) Attractions – museums, heritage, cultural & other			
6) Sporting facilities & events			
7) Festivals, performing arts & creative industries			

ADOPTED STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS FOR NAMIBIA'S TOURISM RECOVERY PLAN

The government has adopted a comprehensive and stakeholder approach to achieve the desired outcome for the recovery plan. The sector has identified the following aspects as key success factors, referred to as strategic interventions or pillars of the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan. For the purposes of presentation, these factors are organised into set of strategic interventions, programs and key activities, spread over time in phases and provides for estimated financial and budgetary requirements.

The comparative advantage of Namibia's tourism sector lies in its ability to provide an unparalleled nature and wildlife-centered experience without surrendering key sustainability initiatives. (UNDP, 2020).

Strategic Intervention 1: Policy Matters and Covid-19 Tourism Regulations and Measures

The objective for Strategic intervention 1 is provide for policy matters related to Covid-19 that are calibrated with travel and tourism economic sector and without compromising the health of guests and employees in the tourism industries.

Program 1: Restore International Traveler Confidence

Program one (1) is aimed to address doubts of the safety of the 'Destination Namibia' in the global travel market. this program therefore provides consistent messaging of the compatible Covid-19 public health measures and regulations in the country to the minds of travelers and international outbound tour operators in the source markets with the resulting aim to increase the level of confidence in Namibia as a safe tourist destination even during the Covid-19 era and beyond.

Promote or implement features that would further improve traveler confidence such as Namibia's wide-open natural spaces that eases adherence to social distancing requirements, using unobtrusive technology to track and trace visitors, and creating a temporary certification standard for hotels or lodges that accommodate more than ten people to indicate all COVID-19 related health and safety requirements are being met.

The result of Strategic Intervention 1 is to implement Covid-19 entry and travel health measures that encourage ease travel of tourists to and in the country.

The following activities are planned under program 1:

1. MEFT to encourage the tourism sector to offer and implement flexible and friendly reservation/cancellation protocols to accommodate unexpected circumstances of Travelers, Agents, Operators caused by continuous changing Covid-19 public health measures globally and in the country.
2. The Government to maintain the entry requirements of 7 days valid SARS PCR negative test at the point first entry to accommodate travelers from far source markets.
3. The Government through the Ministry of Health and Social Services to relax the extra medical insurance required for potential Covid-19 hospitalization costs as international travelers take up medical insurances that already includes Covid-19 hospitalization costs before traveling to Namibia.
4. MEFT to support public Covid-19 vaccination campaigns to increase population coverage and for the tourism sector employees.
5. MEFT to support Ministry of Health and Social Services to help leverage digital services and apps to foster e-health and support healthcare systems related health information.

6. Encourage the sector to use of special materials with antimicrobial coatings for walls and surfaces to high traffic areas.
7. MEFT to advocate for automation in the tourist sector of necessary services such as reservations and payments to limit the spread of the virus without compromising jobs.
8. MEFT to encourage the tourism sector to reconsider changing the check-out time in the accommodation establishments from 10H00 to 12H00 to accommodate changing post Covid-19 travel patterns.

Program 2: Extend Financial Support to the Businesses in the Sector

The following activities are planned under program 2:

1. The ministry to lobby for support of extended livelihood benefits to workers who have lost their jobs during the pandemic.
2. The Ministry to support the industry and NTB by financing targeted professional marketing and promotion campaigns in key tourist markets across multiple and transboundary platforms, with a renewed emphasis on Namibia's compatibility with international health and safety demands.
3. Build on the successes of the Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilience Facility in mitigating the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic, facilitating investment in communal areas.
4. Engage NAMRA on possible provision of Tax breaks or other forms of tax incentives for tourism businesses, in particular those who remained committed to fixed capital investments and maintenance expenditures during the pandemic.
5. Align medium and long-term government / MEFT budget allocations with the need to invest in general productivity-enhancing aspects of the Namibian economy such as public health, safety and security, transport infrastructure and technology which also serve as important tourism-enabling devices that make visitors feel safe and at ease. Government to increase its contribution towards delivering quality public infrastructure and a tourism-friendly environment in which businesses can thrive and improve its relative standing as a tourist destination.
6. Engage with financial institutions (DBN, Social Security Commission, EIF, Commercial Banks etc.) to provide further financial support in the form of concessionary and accessible credit, and ensuring access to loans, support struggling tourism enterprises by offering flexible financial products to encourage previously disadvantaged Namibians to enter into the tourism sector.
7. Engage NTA to cater for tour guides training and development using training levy funding.

Strategic Intervention 2: Aggressive Online Marketing and Promotion Campaigns

Program 3: Build a Strong Namibian brand using multiple advertising platforms.

Namibia has one distinctive brand “*Namibia Endless Horizons*” as tagline for tourism marketing. The purpose of this program is to build a strong appealing national brand for the country serving both the national pride and tourism attractiveness. The current brand is based on the vastness and open spaces of the country especially on the coastal line and it has run its course.

The following activities are planned under program 3:

1. A combination of traditional (magazines, television) and modern (Facebook, Instagram, Influencers) media will be used to broaden the reach and desirability of Namibia as a top tourist destination within Sub-Saharan Africa.

2. Secure global and continental media services or platforms and partnerships such as Netflix, YouTube, DSTV, Voyage Afrique, Expedia, African Tourism Partners, and other platforms linked to UNWTO.
3. Coordinate stakeholder input into the rebranding of Namibia and to ensure coherence between the National Brand and the Tourism sub-brand (creating catchy tagline (safest and unparalleled)) for the “*Tourism Destination Namibia*”.
4. Develop the positioning of “*Swakopmund / Walvis Bay Tourism Destination*” as a hub for tourism in Namibia.
5. Develop other sub-hubs as destinations for different tourism related activities.
6. Facilitate familiarization trips with the private sector and NTB for local and international journalists to create positive image on the destination.
7. Increase Namibia’s visibility on search engine marketing and optimization platforms.
8. Support NTB marketing efforts and create tourism products / routes in the KAZA transboundary initiatives.
9. Develop a brochure with “*Top 10 Best Tourist Attractions not to be missed when visiting Namibia*”.

Program 4: Create Synergy with Key Stakeholders in the Industry

The objective of this program is to create a strong synergy between Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and OMA’s, the private sector stakeholders and Development Partners for better coherence in the planning process, policy development, coordination and collaboration in major national marketing and promotion campaigns. The ministry will create a structured engagement approach through a revival of the Tourism Advisory and Competitive Council within the tourism sector.

The following activities are planned under program 4:

1. Revive a more dynamic Tourism Advisory and Competitive Council.
2. Accelerate the establishment of Regional Tourism Forums in all the 14 political regions of the country.
3. Implement targeted collaboration with private sector to develop initiatives for the creation of route & product content; awareness of various regional destinations in the country, create new generic promotional materials, activate communication channels at all levels to through tourism regional forums and encourage smart partnerships with private sector.
4. Develop a strong synergy and collaboration with regional inter-governmental organizations, SADC, AU, UN Agencies, and Development Partners for technical and funding support.
5. Liaise with NBC to develop a program for the creation of public awareness and for general promotion of tourism.
6. Engage Road Authority to enhance road signage and road connectivity to main tourism attractions and destinations.
7. Engage the private sector to include the immigration and customs officials in educational and familiarization trips.
8. Engage the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety & Security and NAMRA on customer care and staff development programs / training for point of entry staff.

Program 5: Promote & Digitalize Tourism Investment Opportunities

Currently, no single website / internet platform provides a comprehensive list of current investment projects and opportunities within the tourism sector. The aim is to collaborate with Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board and develop a comprehensive tourism investment opportunities and projects for national promotion.

The following activities are planned under program 5:

1. Create a comprehensive digital profile / database, e-flyers, audio & video visuals, etc. of tourism investment opportunities and projects to be shared with all Namibian Foreign Missions, relevant Offices abroad and potential Investors in Tourism Sector.
2. Promote tourism opportunities in protected areas in line with the Park Management Plans and Tourism Development Plans in accordance with other applicable legislations.
3. Expedite the awarding and implementation of concessions as provided for in the Park Management and Tourism Development Plans.
4. Identify and promote public private partnership (PPP) opportunities in the sector in collaboration with relevant Agencies.

Program 6: Develop Domestic and African Travel Market

A strong domestic travel market is a key requirement for the sector to become resilient against future shocks and ensure its long-term sustainability. Local leisure and business travels must be aggressively promoted to stimulate local tourism economy to lessen the impact of Covi-19 on the sector and its dependency on international travel markets.

The following activities are planned under program 6:

1. The industry to develop two tier or multiple pricing strategies for the three distinct market segments; *domestic, regional* and *international market* to ensure competitiveness to attract and stimulate travel demand.
2. Ministry to consider offering reduced park entry fees especially for the domestic market during the low and festive seasons and the duration of the Covid-19 to stimulate local travel demand.
3. The industry to collectively and across the value chain, offers special holiday packages, rates, discounts to Namibian residents (citizens, diplomatic community, Expatriates working in Namibia. etc.), South Africans, SADC countries and citizens, etc. to stimulate travel demand in those geographical and African leisure and travel markets to promote intra-Africa travel.
4. The industry and across the value chain offer special educational / fam trip and promotional packages to travel trade, media, etc. to attract and develop new geo / source markets and identified niche segments of the markets.
5. Sign collaboration agreements with media and communication channels to produce new marketing/promotional contents and publications using local print, marketing channels, electronic media and other social media platforms.

Program 7: Adopt Aggressive Marketing Campaigns in International Source Markets

Program 7 is prioritized for the sector's immediate survival and long-term sustainability. The country needs to sustain its promotion campaign in the traditional main overseas source markets such as Germany, Italy, France, Netherlands, Belgium, United Kingdom, United States of America and China. Equally, Namibia must launch an aggressive marketing campaign in the new markets such as Scandinavian countries, India, North America, UAE, Argentina, Brazil, Russia, China, South America, and other selected African countries.

The following activities are planned under program 7:

1. Sign marketing agreements with Airlines to offer discounted educational seat rates/tickets of media communications, influencers, tour operators, etc. and collectively offer special holiday packages that include, accommodation, seats, transfers, etc. to passengers in collaboration with the airliners.

2. Allow more international airlines to fly into the country, examples, Qatar Airlines, British Airways, Emirates Airways, American Airways, etc. to improve air connectivity to Namibia.
3. Launch a global digital/online marketing campaign in collaboration with global communication companies such as Expedia, YouTube, Netflix, DSTV, etc.
4. Implement a 360-degree strategic approach to reach the targeted international travelers and maintain its visibility in the source markets by means of partnerships with leading product brands to reach millions of consumers in the special interest segment.
5. Re-activate and adopt a new business model for participation in Namibia networking events, roadshows, expos and trade fairs, educational strategic interventions.
6. Allow and facilitate ease of entrance for tourists, trade visitors, visiting journalists, incentive groups and conference delegates in collaboration with MIRCO, Namibia Airports Company and the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration, Safety and Security, airlines, etc. through online systems and ease / quick issuance of entry, tourist visas.
7. Develop an annual tourism and cultural events calendar and promote the events in conjunction with Regional and Local Authorities, Stakeholders, etc.
8. Support and collaborate with new and emerging tourism platforms and initiatives to strengthen marketing capacity and effort of the Sector and Industries.
9. Collaborate with MHAISS in the training of Customs and Immigration officials on customer care and client services

The result of Strategic Intervention 2 is a developed domestic and African travel markets, digital profile of major tourism investment opportunities and adopted marketing strategies including agreed upon communication channels using global online and digital platforms.

Strategic Intervention 3: Attract New Geo- and Special Segments of the Global Travel Markets

Namibia has much depended on primary source markets such as Germany, Europe, UK, South Africa, etc. More effort should be made post Covid-19, to market to new potential source markets across the globe. Equally, the country needs to attract new niche and new special market segments such as high-end travelers in those source markets to achieve a high value and low volume objective.

Additionally, Namibia needs to create and promote new types of visitor categories with relaxed visa requirements such as work nomads, sports training, higher education, and hosting of academic and professional conferences. Where appropriate, private and public investments in infrastructure to facilitate such visitor categories should be considered.

Program 8: Create New Tourism Routes and Expand Tourism Product Offering

Key to the attractiveness of any tourist destination is continuous development of new products, routes and destinations that increases continued value to the guests.

The following activities are planned under this program:

1. Develop cultural and heritage tourism products / routes through the full implementation of the National Strategy on Sustainable Heritage Tourism Development and Employment Creation Opportunities at Community Level (2020-2030).
2. Develop packages, promote Namibian gastronomy and create an annual event calendar.
3. Develop digital content and product/route profiles for the promotion of adventure tourism products such as cycling, hiking, running events, etc.

4. Develop new tourism products offering such as, mining, agritourism, sports tourism, aqua tourism, astronomy, etc.
5. Namibia to sign and fast-track the implementation of the KAZA Univisa initiative.
6. Identify, develop and promote tourism routes and products in the KAZA area and in other transboundary areas; encourage Tourism Operators in Namibia to take full advantage of tourism opportunities in those areas.
7. Develop digital platforms to profile all tourism destinations, activities, etc. for re-issue to marketing and promotion channels to attract new international travel segments.
8. Promote Flying Safaris to major tourist destinations to attract high value tourism activities and upper market segments.
9. Promote / market existing and new tourism routes/destinations such as the Four Rivers Route, Arid Eden and Omulunga Palm Route.
10. Support the development and promotion of community tourism products such as village home stays, arts and crafts to induce local economic development.
11. Develop programs in collaboration with private sector, development partners and relevant institutions to train youth at community level to become community tour guides to support the development of heritage and cultural tourism in their regions.
12. Collaborate with National Heritage Council to engage communities to identify, develop and profile historic, national heritage sites and places of interests.

The result of Strategic Intervention 3 is to develop new market segments, expand secondary source markets using online, digital communication channels through smart partnerships with global marketing companies.

Strategic Intervention 4: Increased Tourism Market Intelligence through Statistics, Data Collection and Analysis

The objective of Strategic Intervention 4 is for the government authorities and private sector alike to collect as much tourism data and client feedback as much as possible to understand the and track trends in the sector and traveler's behavior, travel patterns, spending, etc.

The following programs, amongst others and specific activities are planned to be carried out to achieve the objectives of this strategic intervention:

Program 9. Develop a National Spatial Tourism Master Plan

Spatial development and tourism development are two interconnected concepts. Tourism activities take place in localities which make tourism to have a spatial character. Tourism locations, facilities, accessibility issues, standard definitions, quality of built environment, attractions sites, location of major transport services, impacts of tourism development on local architectural styles and heritage sites are thus subject to spatial planning and development. In the context of tourism development, spatial development is an important concept for synchronizing both macro and micro economic aspects towards the achievement of maximum benefits for tourism localities, communities and public at large.

The aim of National Tourism Spatial Development Master Plan is to guide sustainable tourism operations in hotspot areas; guide the appropriate development of new tourism products, destinations and associated infrastructure; attract and encourage new investment into sustainable tourism; manage tourism development and the carrying capacity at different tourism destinations and ensure equitable distribution of tourism benefits countrywide.

Develop the National Tourism Spatial Development Master Plan. This program will take more than 3 years to be completed. Its early development will assist the Ministry to set a legislative framework for the entire tourism sector.

The following activities are planned under program 9:

1. The Ministry to engage Development Partners for technical and Financial support to develop the Tourism Spatial Master Plan
2. The Ministry to convene a consultative workshop with stakeholders in all regions.
3. The Ministry to appoint a local consultant to facilitate, coordinate and support the development of a Tourism Master Plan.

Program 10. Collection of Domestic Traveler Statistics

The objective of program 10 is to estimate domestic travel arrivals at local establishments. these data will contribute to an estimated value and contribution of domestic tourism to the National Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Data will be sourced from all tourism players and operators especially establishments, registered businesses with relevant authorities such as BIPA and NTB and such information to be used to track the trend, room and bed occupancy of domestic travellers. This information will be fed into the Tourism Satellite Account.

The following activities will be undertaken under this program:

1. Develop mechanism and or systems in collaboration with NTB and other relevant business registration authorities to collect domestic tourist data from the identified tourism establishments.
2. Develop an online platform on the Ministry's website and relevant offices, NSA, NTB, etc. for submission of these data for analysis and compilation of occupancy and travelers' reports.
3. The Ministry, NSA and BON to collaborate with relevant partners to conduct regular national domestic tourism surveys to estimate its contribution and value to the national GDP.
4. Develop and or update the National Domestic Tourism Strategy.
5. Conduct frequent easy-to-use and quick electronic tourism surveys.

Program 11. Digitalize International Arrival and Exit Processes

The main objective of this project is to develop and implement a consolidated computerized border system, which will facilitate the creation of a credible database of border statistics. Currently there are 33 points of entry throughout the country and each point of entry has its own database for the collection of border statistics. The border computerization will allow all the points of entry to be linked to the main control system at the MHAI Head Office. Data on travellers (both residents and non-residents) will be collected electronically by scanning the travel documents. This data collection method will provide real-time data on travellers from all points of entry.

The following activities are planned under program 11.

1. Full integration of electronic Border Management System (eBMS) at all points of entry.
2. Link the Directorate's Research Office to the MHISS eBMS for statistical purposes.
3. Produce timely quarterly and annual tourism statistics.

Program 12: Application of Big Data in Tourism

The objective is to allow tourism players to have access to valuable information predicting tourist demand, enabling better decision-making, managing knowledge flows and interaction with customers, and providing the best service in a more efficient and effective way. This can result in improved productivity, increased customer satisfaction, personalized marketing campaigns, and more efficient operations. It allows the industry to evaluate its competitiveness such as accommodation and gastronomic establishments and to strengthen product and service development strategies.

The following are activities planned under this program:

1. Create online platforms for sharing of good practices on tourism planning, development and management
2. Create a one-stop shop on major tourism trends and forecasts (updated and relevant)
3. Ensure access to and affordability of digital services.
4. Improving processes in strategic destination planning.

The result of Strategic Intervention 4 is to develop internal research and statistics capacity and to collect needed statistics in tourism using available technologies and in partnerships with relevant Agencies and Offices.

Strategic Intervention 5: Improve Accessibility and Connectivity

The objective of Strategic Intervention 5 is to provide ease of access to leisure travellers to the country for tourism and business purposes to increase the country's competitiveness in terms of reaching the destination, to provide for quick visa application protocols and for creating tourism landing strips for flying safaris at major tourism destinations to attract upper - segments of the travel market.

The following programs and activities are planned under Strategic Intervention 5:

Program 13: Easing of Visa Requirements for Tourism and Business Travelers

The country to promote and expand the VISA upon arrival policy and issuance of visas upon entry for leisure and business travellers to encourage the travel for holidays and business to Namibia.

The following activities are planned under program 16:

1. MEFT to work in close relationship with Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security, Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, Embassies, etc. to have a flexible VISA regime for leisure and business travellers.
2. VISA requirement exemption for leisure travellers to targeted source markets.
3. Namibia to finalise and sign the KAZA Univisa regime with Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and Angola.
4. Introduce online VISA Application System.

Program 14: Improve Air Access to Tourism Flagships of Namibia

Namibia is geared to attract high-value and low volume tourism and MICE markets. In this connection, air access to its national tourism flagship such as Namib Sand Sea (Sossusvlei), Fish River Canyon, Etosha, Skeleton Coast, etc. will become the best mode of transport and enabler.

The following are specific programs and activities under this Strategic Intervention:

1. Promote network resilience among airlines.
2. Sign an agreement with reputable air service or chartered airlines to provide affordable, regular and easy access to the tourism flagships.
3. Promote flying safaris for tourists to Sesriem airstrip for ease access to Namib Sand Sea UNESCO World heritage site.
4. Promote flying safaris for tourists to Etosha for ease access to Etosha National Park, surroundings and to other major tourism flagships/destinations in the country.
5. Develop, upgrade and promote Mpacha Airport in Katima Mulilo as an International hub for tourism in KAZA area for international link to Victoria Falls, Okavango Delta, KAZA countries.

The result of Strategic Intervention 5 is to improve VISA Issuance protocols and exemption regime for leisure and business travelers and increase fly – in services to major tourism destinations in the country.

INVESTMENTS REQUIRED

The following are estimated budgetary provisions that will be required to implement the set strategic interventions, programmes and activities:

The Central Government through Offices, Ministries and Agencies, supported by development partners must make budgetary and financial provisions to fund or co-fund targeted and relevant programs and activities under this program. Find below a comprehensive implementation plan, time frames, budgetary needs and an indication of the responsible OMA's.

Table 1: Implementation Plan of the Tourism Recovery Plan

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR TOURISM RECOVERY PLAN 2022 - 2024							
Strategy	Programme Activities	Years			Success indicator	Budget allocation N\$	Responsible
Strategic Intervention 1: Policy Matters and Covid-19 Tourism Regulations and Measures	<i>Program 1: Restore International Traveller Confidence (awareness)</i>	<i>1-12</i>	<i>12-24</i>	<i>24-36</i>	<i>Public awareness of the impact of the disease and reduction of the spread of Covid-19.</i>	<i>500 000</i>	<i>MEFT, MoHSS & Private Sector</i>
	Namibia to maintain the entry requirements of 7 days valid SARS PCR negative test for purposes of tourism recovery.						
	Support public campaigns for eligible industry employees to be vaccinated against Covid-19.						
	Advocate for automation, online, digital, etc. processes in the industry as opposed to human contact.						
	Up-to-Date Travel Advisories that allows airlines, travel companies provide information on Covid-19 status.						
	Reconsider the check-out time in the accommodation establishments from 10H00 to 11H00.						
	<i>Program 2: Extend Financial Support to the Businesses in the Sector</i>				<i>Sustainable Covid-19 Relief Funding</i>	<i>60 000 000</i>	<i>MEFT, Financial Institutions, Agencies & Development Partners</i>
	Create a Tourism Project Fund						
	Extended livelihood benefits to workers.						
Engage NAMRA on possible provision of Tax breaks or							

	other forms of tax incentives for tourism businesses						
	Coordinate between government and banks to provide further financial support in the form of concessionary.						
	Engage with financial institutions (DBN, Social Security Commission, EIF, Commercial Banks etc.)						
	Develop the financial products for encouraging previously disadvantaged Namibians to enter into the tourism sector.						
	Engage NTA on their training levy to cater for tour guides.						
Strategic Intervention 2: Aggressive Online Marketing and Promotion Campaigns	<i>Program 3: Build A Strong Namibian Brand Using Multiple Advertising Platforms.</i>				<i>Successful launching of new National Brand and tagline catchy for tourism</i>	<i>10 000 000</i>	<i>MEFT & NIPDB supported by Private Sector and Development Partners</i>
	A combination of traditional (magazines, television) and modern (Facebook, Instagram, Influencers)						
	Secure the services of a top advertising company.						
	Secure global and continental media services.						
	MEFT in collaboration with National Investment Promotion Board to coordinate stakeholder inputs into the rebranding of Namibia.						
	Develop and position “Destination Swakopmund” as a hub for tourism with sub-hubs as destinations for different tourism related activities.						
	Facilitate familiarization trips with the private sector and NTB.						
	Increase Namibia’s visibility on search engine marketing and optimization platforms.						
	Support NTB marketing through KAZA transboundary initiatives.						

Develop and promote a brochure with best tourist attractions.							
Increase Namibia's visibility at popular international sports events.							
Increase Namibia's visibility on search engine marketing and optimization platforms.							
<i>Program 4: Create Synergy with Key Stakeholders</i>					15 000 000	MEFT & Road Authority supported by Private Sector and Development Partners	
Revive a more dynamic Tourism Competitive Advisory Council.							
Accelerate the establishment of Regional Tourism Forums in all the 14 political regions of the country.							
Implement targeted collaboration with private sector initiatives.							
Develop a strong synergy and collaboration.							
Develop tourism program knowledge on NBC							
Engage Road Authority to enhance road signage.							
<i>Program 5: Promote & Digitalize Tourism Investment Opportunities</i>					20 000 000	MEFT, NIPDB & MoF supported by Private Sector	
Create a comprehensive digitalized profile of Tourism Investments.							
Position Namibia as a destination for tourism business investments and conduct feasibility studies for major tourism projects.							
Promote tourism opportunities in protected areas.							
Develop promotion materials of tourism investment opportunities.							
Expedite the awarding and implementation of concessions.							
Identify public private partnership (PPP) opportunities.							

	<i>Program 6: Develop Domestic and African Travel Market</i>					10 000 000	MEFT, NTB supported by Private Sector & Development Partners
	The industry to offer special packages, rates/discounts to Namibians, South Africans, SADC and African travelers.						
	Sign collaboration agreements with media and communication channels to produce new contents and publications						
	Development of Domestic and Regional Tourism Strategies						
	<i>Program 7: Adopt Aggressive Marketing Campaigns in International Markets</i>					100 000 000	NTB, MEFT supported by Private Sector.
	Marketing agreements with Airlines to offer discounted educational product brands to reach millions of consumers in the special interest segment.						
	Allow and facilitate ease of entrance for tourists, trade visitors, visiting journalists, incentive groups and conference delegates.						
	Develop an annual tourism and cultural events calendar.						
	Collaborate with new and emerging tourism platforms and initiatives.						
Strategic Intervention 3: Attract New Geo- and Special Segments of the Global Travel Markets	<i>Program 8: Create New Tourism Routes and Expand Tourism Product Offering</i>				<i>Arid Eden, Omulunga Palm and Four Rivers tourism route are developed.</i>	50 000 000	MEFT, NTB supported by Private Sector
	Develop packages and promote Namibian gastronomy.						
	Develop digital content and profiles for the promotion of adventure tourism products such as cycling, hiking, astronomy and agritourism.						
	Allow and promote ease of fly-in Safaris to major tourist destinations in Namibia to attract high value and low						

	volume tourists and new market segments.						
	Train local people to be tour guides in their regions.						
	Promote ecotourism products such as arts and crafts, and encourage the travellers to buy them.						
	Train local people to be tour guides in their regions.						
Strategic Intervention 4: Increased Tourism Market Intelligence through Statistics, Data Collection and Analysis	<i>Program 9. Develop a National Spatial Tourism Master Plan</i>					10 000 000	MEFT supported by UNWTO and Private Sector.
	The Ministry to engage Development Partners for technical and Financial support to develop the Tourism Spatial Master Plan						
	The Ministry to convene a consultative workshop with stakeholders in all regions.						
	The Ministry to appoint a local consultant to facilitate, coordinate and support the development of a Tourism Master Plan.						
	<i>Program 10. Collection of Domestic Traveller Statistics</i>					10 000 000	MEFT, NSA supported by private sector and Stakeholders.
	Identify tourism businesses in collaboration with NTB and other relevant authorities that register tourism businesses.						
	Collect domestic tourist data from the identified tourism establishments.						
	Acquire necessary equipment and software						
	Analyze data and compile reports.						
	<i>Program 11. Digitalize International Arrival and Exit Processes</i>					100 000 000	MHAISS, MEFT supported by Development Partners and Private Sector.
	Full integration of electronic Border Management System (eBMS) at all points of entry.						
	Link the Directorate's Research Office to the MHAISS eBMS for statistical purposes.						

	Produce timely quarterly and annual tourism statistics.						
	<i>Program 12: Application of Big Data in Tourism</i>					50 000 000	MEFT, NSA, NTB supported by stakeholders
	Create online platforms for sharing of good practices on tourism planning, development and management						
	Create a one-stop shop on major tourism trends and forecasts (updated and relevant)						
	Ensure access to and affordability of digital services.						
	Improving processes in strategic destination planning.						
	<i>Program 13: Easing of Visa Requirements for Tourism and Business Travelers</i>					5 000 000	MHAISS, MEFT supported by stakeholders
	MEFT to work in close relationship with Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security, Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, Embassies, etc. to have a flexible VISA regime for leisure and business travellers.						
	VISA requirement exemption for leisure travellers to targeted source markets.						
	Namibia to finalise and sign the KAZA Univisa regime with Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and Angola.						
	Introduce online VISA Application System.						
	<i>Program 14: Improve Air Access to Tourism Flagships of Namibia</i>					80 000 000	MEFT, NAC, MWTC, NCAA supported by Private Sector
	Promote network resilience among airlines.						
	Sign an agreement with reputable air service or chartered airlines to provide affordable, regular and easy access to the tourism flagships.						
	Promote flying safaris for tourists to Sesriem airstrip						
Strategic Intervention 5: Improve Accessibility and Connectivity							

	for ease access to Namib Sand Sea UNESCO World heritage site.						
	Promote flying safaris for tourists to Etosha for ease access to Etosha National Park, surroundings and to other major tourism flagships/destinations in the country.						
	Develop, upgrade and promote Mpacha Airport in Katima Mulilo as an International hub for tourism in KAZA area for international link to Victoria Falls, Okavango Delta, KAZA countries.						

CONCLUSION

The Tourism Recovery Plan provides for five (5) strategic interventions and 14 programs at strategic and national level. These programs and activities are multisectoral and multifaceted. It will thus require greater cooperation and funding from various sources and institutions for its successful implementation. We implore all tourism sector stakeholders, OMAs and Development Partners to join and assist in its implementation in one way or the other.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Directorate of Tourism and Gaming under The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism would like to acknowledge staff of the directorate and Managers of the Ministry who contributed immensely and participated in the countrywide consultation process in the development of this national Tourism Recovery Plan for 2022 to 2024.

We sincerely thank all tourism stakeholders and institutions who equally contributed to the development of this revival and recovery plan to revive this economic sector.