



MEDIA STATEMENT

All Media Houses

Wednesday, 15 April 2026

MEC SIDELL CONGRATULATES GRASKOP GORGE CO ON WINNING SILVER IN THE NATURE POSITIVE RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARD AT THE WTM AFRICA 2026

Mbombela – The MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, Ms. Jesta Sidell proudly congratulates Graskop Gorge Lift Company (GGLC) on being awarded Silver in the Nature Positive Responsible Tourism Award category at the prestigious World Travel Market (WTM) Africa Responsible Tourism Awards 2026.

The award was announced on 14 April 2026 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre during the WTM Africa, recognising organisations across the continent that demonstrate outstanding commitment to responsible and sustainable tourism practices.

“As the MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, it is my singular honour to extend my profound congratulations to the entire team at Graskop Gorge Lift Co, including co-founders and directors, for this well-deserved achievement. Your dedication to sustainable tourism not only elevates Mpumalanga’s profile on the global stage, but also inspires other operators to adopt responsible practices that benefit both the environment and local communities”, said an elated Sidell.

Graskop Gorge Lift Co, is a flagship attraction along Mpumalanga’s iconic Panorama Route, has set a remarkable example through its innovative, low-impact operations. The company’s zero-impact access system protects critically endangered species such as the Graskop cliff aloe, while prioritising local procurement and meaningful community involvement. This recognition further highlights how tourism can drive economic growth while preserving our province’s unique natural heritage.

“This award is a testament to what can be achieved when innovation, environmental stewardship, and community empowerment come together. Graskop Gorge Lift exemplifies the kind of tourism we want to see grow in Mpumalanga – one that creates jobs, protects our biodiversity, and delivers unforgettable experiences for visitors. We remain committed to partnering with forward-thinking businesses like GGLC to position our province as a leading sustainable tourism destination in Africa”, added MEC Sidell.

The Department will continue to support initiatives that promote responsible tourism, economic inclusion, and the sustainable development of key attractions along the Panorama Route and across Mpumalanga.

“We wish Graskop Gorge Lift Co continued success as they build on this momentum and invite all stakeholders in the tourism sector to draw inspiration from their model of excellence”, concluded Ms. Sidell.

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Issued jointly by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism

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