

MICE participants encouraged to save like a local

To conserve water and drive education around water scarcity, the 2018 World Travel Market Africa (WTM Africa) exhibition, which takes place from 18-20 April, will work with the City of Cape Town to ensure that its attendees understand how water can be saved within the tourism sector, and how exhibitions can use less water.



As awareness grows around WTM Africa 2018, so too the concern surrounding the current water shortage in Cape Town, and the implications this may have for visitors.

Working with the City of Cape Town and the Cape Town International Conference Centre (CTICC), Reed Exhibitions, the organisers for Africa Travel Week and all of its affiliated trade shows in Cape Town, inclusive of WTM Africa, ILTM Africa and IBTM Africa, will continue in its evergreen ethos of being 'green' at shows, with a 2018 focus on water saving within its direct environment and also encourage attendees to ensure they are responsible with their water use.

"The CTICC has excellent water policies in place and there will be sufficient water available for all events over the period. We are, however, encouraging all of our delegates to 'Save Like a Local' and ensure they use only their daily quota when visiting the Mother City," urges Chardonnay Marchesi, portfolio director for Reed Exhibitions' Africa Travel Week.

The City of Cape Town has said that business will continue as usual despite the water shortage it is currently experiencing. Visitors to the city are critical to the economy and businesses need to ensure that they are operating as per normal.

In 2017 alone, WTM Africa recorded \$365m worth of business written, with close on a billion US dollars recorded over the past five years. "It is vital to the tourism sector, and various economies across Africa, that WTM Africa proceeds as planned; writing business for destinations, accommodation providers and tour operators a few years into the future," explains Marchesi.

Keeping water consumption at a low

"The City of Cape Town is working hard to ensure that all major events hosted in the city keep their water consumption as low as possible. Tourism has always been a mainstay of Cape Town's economy, creating as many as 300,000 jobs in peak season. We want to protect these jobs, and also ensure that our visitors are able to enjoy their time in the Western Cape while being mindful of the constraints on water use. We are therefore working with the stakeholders of the tourism sector to make sure that they, and their guests, are conscious of our water restrictions, and remain within the 50-litre daily limit," says Alderman Ian Neilson, deputy mayor of Cape Town.

The CTICC has also confirmed that they are prepared for upcoming events, and have made provision in order to guarantee each event has sufficient water. "The Cape Town International Conference Centre has been reducing its water consumption through its environmental sustainability practices for several years. Over the last six years, we have reduced our consumption by an average of eight million litres per year.

"In addition, our latest water account shows the CTICC has already recorded a 42% saving in water consumption for the first quarter of its current financial year compared to the same period last year. Indeed, our rainwater and greywater reuse system has been very effective in reducing our use of municipal water," explains Julie- May Ellingson, chief executive officer at CTICC.

WTM Africa, together with its partners, will be doing on-site drives, educating attendees about water usage and how to be water-wise during this period. "We know this is an important cause for WTM Africa 2018, and as such are dedicating whatever resources we can to teach people about water scarcity and how to use less in their daily lives, while still enjoying a productive and meaningful exhibition," adds Marchesi.

Initiatives for water conservation:

- Bottled water will be brought in from sources outside of the Western Cape for drinking
- Publicising the work of Water 4 Cape Town and encouraging attendees to donate
- Water will be sent down on Reed Exhibitions trucks destined for the build-up of the exhibition
- A speaker session on water conservation for the travel industry will be added to the programme
- Education around water will be included on a variety of channels, including social media, email newsletters, the WTM Africa website, all responsible tourism communicate, and inside the buyer information packs distributed at WTM Africa

Some helpful water saving tips for when visiting Cape Town can be found on the City of Cape Town's [website](#), as well as [water policies](#) of the CTICC. Attendees of the show that would like to donate water canisters and water-saving implements to communities in Cape Town can do so through the [Water 4 Cape Town](#).

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