

OVERBERG REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

BACKGROUND

The Overberg District municipality approached SALGA to assist with the development of a Regional Economic Development Strategy. The current strategy is outdated and not informed by current data and trends. SALGA partnered with the South Cape Economic Development Partnership and a number of key stakeholders held a series of workshops from 11-13 June 2018.

The key focus areas of the discussions was centred on tourism & services, industry and business, agriculture and agri-processing, integrated transport and environment and sustainability. Key organisations who presented included, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Department of Agriculture, Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut, City of Cape Town (Tourism), Cape Nature, Department of Transport and Public Works, Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, SANRAL.

The workshops started with the Executive Mayor of the Overberg District Municipality sharing why the municipality wants to focus on a regional economic development approach and highlighted the key competitive advantages of the region. This was followed by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Nezaam Joseph presenting an overview of the Overberg economy. Each municipality then provided a status quo update on their local economies,

On day 1 (11 June) the session focussed on agriculture and agri-processing facilitated by Ben Dell from the AHI. The presentation by Andrew Paltridge from the Department of Agriculture highlighted concern of population growth and the impact on accessibility and affordability of nutritional food.

Day 2, facilitated by Paul Hoffman was centred on the short, medium and long term growth prospects for the district, presented by Nezaam Joseph. This session was followed by the tourism and services focus group facilitated by Pauline van der Spuy. The presentation by Wilfred Williams from Cape Nature highlighted key projects already undertaken in the Overberg District. These include but not limited to the upgrade of the De Mond Nature Reserve, Upgrading of the Popular "Swellendam Trail", creation of "adventure hub" for tourism and initial discussion with regard to the Swellendam Cable Way. The second presentation was delivered by Cornelius van der Waal from WESGRO presenting on the tourism potential of the Overberg District. The afternoon session was focussed on integrated transport facilitated by Yongama Ndungane. The first presentation delivered by Juan De Lora and Carl October from the Department of Transport and Public Works. The presentation was centred on the transport status quo of the district with regard to road and rail freight as well as an update on the integrated transport plan of the district. Some of the issues highlighted regarding non-motorised transport include amongst others, a lack of funding for NMT

infrastructure and provision for safe crossing facilities. The region has great potential for development in a bid to reduce unemployment, due consideration need to be given to the implications on the environment. The last day therefore was focussed on environment and sustainability which was facilitated by Rachel Manxeba from SALGA. The presentation was delivered by Francini van Staden. Francini presented on the State of Environment Outlook (2018) for the Western Cape. Key highlights from her presentation was that socio-economic conditions are stable-to-improving whilst the natural environment are declining. The issue relevant highlighted was around land degradation. Land degradation (the reduction or loss of biological or economic productivity) is a challenging cycle of bringing human needs in balance with ecological limits. Land degradation weakens the human-nature system. In short, land degradation is about losing both a natural resource and economic potential. A number of other environmental considerations were raised which need to be factored in when developing the final strategy.

The last presentation was delivered by Joanna Dibden, Sustainability Manager at Theewaterskloof municipality sharing how the municipality have localised the Sustainable development Goals taking a bottom-up approach to community development. It was important to reflect back on the 2014 PACA process. It was indicated to stakeholders and municipalities that the relevance of those initiatives which was identified will still be assessed.

Expectations from participants:

- Involve industry specific role-players
- Financial commitment from district
- Monitoring and evaluation of strategy is important
- Frank and honest debate about the future and way forward
- Include the youth and support them – give guidance for them to become strong leaders
- Mr Xolisi Kosi from Overstrand to be part of the process
- Evaluate projects and provide feedback
- Find the golden thread that links all and make this the focus going forward
- Integrated process with all stakeholders: communities, business, government, sector bodies
- Boost the regional economy by focussing on the strengths and possible collaboration of B municipalities
- Clear communication
- Everybody knowing their roles and responsibilities and communicate them
- Access to information in financial and non-financial aspects
- Address agriculture and its trends – tourism, municipal sustainability, unlock development opportunities for development
- Shared economic growth, increase exports, diversify economy,
- Sharing resources across municipal boundaries
- Serious engagements on pertinent issues around economic development
- Buy-in and commitment from Overberg municipalities
- Broad based approach as all stakeholders are affected
- In-depth insight into the potential of the district
- Better understanding of economic blueprint of the Overberg economy
- Find direction for regional economic development
- Understand key economic drivers of the region and how they link
- A focussed strategy that encompasses the strengths and possible partnerships and collaboration of all 4 municipalities
- Include finance and development agencies

- DEDAT and all key stakeholders/departments in the western cape (WESGRO, transport associations, Casidra, Agriculture, including taxi associations,
- A strategy that would be well thought through and forward looking
- Include various sectors and key stakeholders in agriculture, oceans economy, tourism, health, business, manufacturing, industrial, transport etc
- A process to engage stakeholders and measure results
- Farmers, business small and subsistence farmers, investors, education sector, export and import agencies
- How do we select which actions/sectors that will deliver the best possible outcomes for the town? Which factors determine the likelihood for success?
- Involve SEDA – organisation being a key part of enterprise development in SA

Key outcomes and interventions can be clustered as follows:

Key challenge

- To celebrate the real movers and shakers who are creating the jobs
 - Lack of accommodation in Riviersonderend
 - Lack of champions from municipalities
 - Equipment required for recycling
 - Dealing with waste
 - Distorted marketing
 - Lack of fibre optics
 - Legislation applicable government
 - Unreliable transport
 - Inability of people to see bigger picture
 - Work together towards solutions that will benefit everybody
 - National legislation
 - Not to overregulate developing industry
 - Linking skills to jobs
 - Municipal training is too basic and generic
 - Red tape
 - Municipal structure slow not business oriented
 - Leave business to do business – eg private tourism associations driven by outcomes
 - Lack of knowledge at provincial government level
 - Government to provide infrastructure
 - Acknowledge that private bus drives any change and support them
 - Social unrest and crime are biggest drawback for industries/tourism
 - Interact with regional/national government to address latter
 - Service delivery at municipalities - transparency and accountability
 - Separate social unrest and vandalism from intended goals
 - Each business in it for themselves – they don't see the benefit of spending as a group
 - How does one meet the honey bush demand without increasing monoculture? We need to promote wild, green belts and permaculture and focus on skills and experience
 - Funding and capacity
 - Online presence
 - Political instability

- Multiple night stays – challenge for Swellendam
- Challenges for growth – silo approach between towns, municipalities – spill over from events into other towns or regions
- Unfriendly investor environment
- Tourism industry not well diversified
- Tourism offices not funded anymore
- Tourism sector not digitally savvy enough
- Lack itineraries which details products
- Assistance with event funding from economic development and tourism as well as WESGRO
- Lack of collaboration/partnering between tourism offices in region
- Tourism signage – a lengthy process
- Educating trade on what we have to offer
- No existing rail system in place
- Lack of experts

Big ideas

- Eco-tourism
- Adventure tourism
- Green energy – wind power generation
- Infrastructure – heavy transport
- Tie in with Cape Town tourism efforts - walking/hiking trail – Rivieronderend (perhaps with Cape Nature)
- Canola – develop manufacturing facilities
- Canola – Develop demand for canola
- Clean industries
- Develop e-trade
- IT as major change driver
- Promote filming opportunities
- Develop medical tourism
- International accredited multi-sport facility
- Regional airport
- 7 day per week market for local producers at Caledon
- Entrepreneurial business centre – youth (focus on arts – entertainment-tourism –skills development)
- Cultural routes
- 7 day long period hiking trail along Kleinrivier mountains and finishing at Hermanus
- Youth development desk – focus on matriculants, skills development, funding, NYDA
- Invest time and energy on streamlining internal processes – online approvals
- Safety/security
- Township & rural tourism
- Marine ranching/farming – abalone
- Fynbos products – food, cosmetics, clothes
- Skills development – making use of retirees to offer business skills – offer their time and skills to mentor/coach at school level or extra curriculum
- Longer stay travel – spiritual – hikes/walks – ocean air travel
- Link hikes and walks to cycle routes
- Create tourism platforms in communities – Caron Lee – Gansbaai -
- Invest in creative industries

- Creativity always precedes growth
- Provide studio space/labs/industrial buildings
- Where creatives start – (Woodstock)
- Use architecture and design as major drivers in social change (beautify living environment and housing to make people proud – vandalism will go down)
- Today we know the price of everything but the value of nothing - Create program for people to understand what value is
- Install glass fibre cables and/or heavy server
- Train on work ethics/morals
- Create new/different products/experiences
- Let tourists experience local culture
- Start training cultural ambassadors
- Hospitality training in every tourism destination
- Honey bush tea – Genadendal – already being harvested on a small scale
- Green destinations – green dream – sustainability- diversity-eco-tourism- green towns with community outreach –off the energy grid – green route – green network –green hero awards for alien clearing – clean energy, apprenticeships offered.
- BPO call centre - Overberg
- Train youth in specific call centre
- Train youth in different industries
- Electricity supplied to Overberg agri-processing plants
- Biomass generators – using alien/invasive trees eg bloekom, rooikrans as fuel feed
- Improving rail tourism
- Niche marketing
- Introduce transportation (public transport) such as bus, taxi, rail, ocean
- Encourage big business to support SMME's locally
- Implement ease of doing business to encourage investors and big business
- Rail revitalisation project to link towns in the district via rail luxury trains
- Centre for Khoi and San monument to showcase indigenous people's lifestyle
- Create small business hives/hubs within your smaller farm towns eg grabouw, villiersdorp, Vyeboom, Botrivier that is operated by locals not foreigners to enable the entrepreneurs of the area to create and sell their goods.
- Regions need to work closer to create routes/subroutes within the region – 7 day tour – sell this to tour operators "Best of Overberg"
- More events/festivals eg Canola Festival
- Family adventure events
- Olive Festival/wine
- Fishing competitions – Breede River
- Gastronomic and food tourism 5-7 day tour
- Township tourism not properly developed
- Empowerment of youth with business skills
- Make Overstrand more accessible – by air and sea
- Building sport stadium for big sporting events
- Long distance –e-busses to assist recreational commute to Overberg
- Genadendal – culture/heritage been put on the map? As oldest heritage site in Overberg situated in Genadendal and oldest missionary station
- Transformation of Overberg tourism
- Invest in small businesses

- Self-sustaining business incubator in each municipality – to provide business support
- Provide industry specific experts to assist with business mentoring
- Paint ball sport game in rural areas on weekends
- Multi-purpose centre - Grabouw

Key considerations

- Family oriented hotels
- Develop more resorts
- Aquaculture – tourist visits, abalone
- Improve local public transport
- Improve roads
- Improve harbour capacity
- Accessibility to nature reserves
- National government to create framework to implement all accommodation law etc
- Racism to be addressed
- Investor readiness
- Land audit
- Skills audit and training to complement
- Business gap analysis
- Municipal incentives through rates reduction/tax incentives for businesses that plug into the Green Dream
- Diversity projects in farming
- Offset monoculture
- Town and township regeneration programmes to enhance the look and feel of our small towns
- Partnership with Boland college to introduce industry specific courses to respond to industry capacity needs
- Local tourist facilities
- How to encourage spend of strong foreign currency in ODM? Eg boat building (happening in Stilbaai)
- Mining of building materials for local region or for 2-3 regions eg West coast or Eden as well.
- Waste beneficiation
- Community vegetable/herb gardens – over 2 million tons goes through Riviersonderend every year
- No funding to entrepreneurs
- Find reliable champions
- Training in agriculture
- Lack of support from local authorities
- Tourism workshops with communities
- Implement policies and strategies to enhance LED