

---

Tourism KwaZulu-Natal



*Zulu Kingdom. **Exceptional***

---

### **Media Release**

To : All media  
Attention : News Editors and Journalists  
Date : February 08, 2019

#### **KZN's sporting attractions yield millions into economy**

Durban, Kwazulu-Natal, February 8, 2019: KwaZulu-Natal is a hot spot for athletes and swimmers this February as we welcome thousands of visitors from around the country to participate in the 46th aQuelle Midmar Mile this weekend followed by the FNB Dusi Canoe Marathon next week.

More than R150 million in economic impact is expected to be generated this year for the aQuelle Midmar Mile event, compared to R142 million in 2018. With Valentine's Day between the two high profile sporting events, the hospitality and tourism industry is anticipating a bumper two weeks.

The province's next big crowd-pulling sporting event is the Dusi Canoe Marathon from February 14-16.

With focus on the Midlands for the aQuelle Midmar Mile, tourism attractions, Bed and Breakfast establishments and tourism products are gearing up for a busy weekend ahead.

According to an economic impact assessment study carried out the Tourism KwaZulu-Natal (TKZN), the proportion of visitors to the aQuelle Midmar Mile significantly increased in 2018.

MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Sihle Zikalala welcomed visitors to KZN.

“This is one of many signature sporting events that are staged in KwaZulu-Natal that once again puts the spotlight of our facilities and what we can offer as a tourist destination.

“The anticipated spend and economic impact to be yielded is promising. This will help to create and sustain jobs in the important hospitality sector,” he said.

Phindile Makwakwa, Acting Chief Executive Officer of Tourism KwaZulu-Natal (TKZN) said: “Forty-five percent of the visitors stayed overnight, opting to stay nearby in Howick, Pietermaritzburg, or in the Midlands. This further creates a sustainable tourism sector for the region and the more job opportunities for the people in the area.

“This event is good for the region because of the spend in the area by the visitors. From the 2018 survey results we found 55 percent came from KZN, followed by 33 percent from Gauteng. Gauteng remains the most important source of visitors after KZN.”

This world’s largest open water swim event attracts swimmers, family members and support staff to Midmar Dam who will start checking in at surrounding hotels and bed and breakfasts from today, 08 February 2019.

Research has found that majority of the visitors spent two nights in the area. While some used this time to visit friends and family, but more than 80% booked into bed & breakfast businesses and self-catering establishments.

“Events such as these help the province to remain the leading sporting destination in the country,” Makwakwa said.

She is hoping that the visitors take time out to visit some of the local beauty spots and tourism attractions, one of them being the popular Mandela Capture Site near Howick.

When quizzed by TKZN researchers in previous years, 95% of the visitors said that they would attend the event again.

“This confirms that a well-organised event improves the competitiveness of a destination,” Makwakwa said.

And more than 90% of the visitors had also told the TKZN survey that they would recommend KZN as a tourism destination, the main reasons being the region’s beaches, warm climate, the “wonderful” scenery and the friendly people.

**ENDS**

### **Notes to editors**

Tourism KwaZulu-Natal is responsible for the development, promotion and marketing of tourism into and within the province, both domestically and internationally. The organisation is an entity that reports to the provincial Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs.

**For more information go to:**

Website: Tourism KZN: [www.zulu.org.za](http://www.zulu.org.za)

Facebook: Page: Tourism Kwazulu-Natal

Twitter: @TourismKZN

### **Hashtags**

#DoKZN #DoTourism #MidmarMile

For media interviews, please contact

Nhlanhla Ngwenya - Communications Coordinator

Tourism KZN – 063 698 7455