



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PARTNERSHIP WITH STAKEHOLDERS YIELDS POSITIVE RESULTS

The busy festive season period has come and gone, and iSimangaliso Wetland Park management has received the festive season report. The Park management would like to thank all the visitors from across the globe who chose iSimangaliso as their destination of choice this past festive season. The role played by various stakeholders such as the South African Police Services (SAPS), Mtubatuba Traffic Department, South African Defense Force (SANDF), Security Companies, and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife is applauded. The rich heritage found in the Park is one of the reasons that attract thousands of visitors all across the globe.



As iSimangaliso Wetland Park, we strongly believe our guests enjoyed being in the Park experiencing different activities in our 10 jewels with amazing activities to participate on. iSimangaliso consider the safety of the visitors very seriously hence the deployment of security officers at beaches entrance and exit points during this period. Security officers conduct patrols in the beach areas to prevent visitors entering the Park with prohibited items like alcohol, firearms etc. This strategy yielded positive results hence no significant incidents were reported across the Park this past festive season. Four permanent roadblocks were conducted across the Park from St Lucia to Sodwana, and 2 semipermanent roadblocks were also conducted in St Lucia and Kosi Bay

It was a first time for the Park to fully operate since the Covid-19 pandemic that caused severe damage in tourism sector and all other sectors in 2020. The Park infrastructure was stretched to its limit as the total number of visitors inclusive of local visitors increased as compared to previous years. On three different dates iSimangaliso had to close the Bhangazi gate heading to Cape Vidal to manage numbers within the carrying capacity of the Park and implement “one out one in” system when the park reached the carrying capacity of the infrastructure. The most visited section of the Park is the Eastern Shores which received 57% of total visitors.

iSimangaliso Wetland Park stretches from the Southern section of the Park in Maphelane near St Lucia right up to Kosi Bay in the Northern section of the Park near Mozambique boarder. iSimangaliso is the second largest protected area in South Africa, in December 1999 it was listed as South Africa’s first World Heritage site in recognition of its unique global values, the beauty and biological wealth. This status was proclaimed by the United Nations Environment Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

This fragile combination of natural beauty and social diversity has elevated iSimangaliso Wetland Park to the status of being an icon in South Africa, as the late former President Nelson Mandela in his speech marking the historic 2002 reintroduction of Elephants in the Eastern Shores of the Lake St Lucia said, “The Wetland Park must be the only place on the globe where the World’s oldest land mammal (the Rhinoceros) and the World’s biggest terrestrial mammal (the Elephant)

share an ecosystem with the World's oldest Fish (the Coelacanth) and the World's biggest marine mammal (the Whale).”

Once again, iSimangaliso appreciates guests who visited the Park. We believe our visitors had a memorable experience and would also visit the Park again.

-End-

Statement issued by iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority

Media enquires

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