

Cape Town is taking care of business

Voted best destination in Africa

CAPE Town has been voted the best African business tourism event destination for the fourth consecutive year.

The Western Cape's official tourism trade and investment promotion agency (Wesgro) said the vote by the International Congress and Convention Association meant the city was now among the top 40 global destinations for business tourism. Cape Town climbed 15 places in the global rankings, from 54th place in 2015 to 39th last year.

Sixty-two meetings took place in Cape Town in 2016, representing mainly medical sciences, education and the technology sector, Wesgro said. Another 12 took place in Stellenbosch.

The Mother City beat several contenders, including Johannesburg, Marrakech, Nairobi and Durban, which just last week hosted the World Economic Forum's Africa meeting.

The Cape Town and Western Cape Convention Bureau, a strategic division of Wesgro that promotes the region as a premier events destination, has been voted best convention bureau by the Southern African Association for the Conference Industry the past two years. Last year, the bureau secured 33 new bids with an estimated delegate attendance of 28 000 and an economic impact of R424 million.

Business tourism was a key economic

To comment on this story email arglet@inl.co.za or send a SMS to **32 027** (SMS costs R1) Provide your physical address and phone number (not for publication).

contributor and job creator for the Cape, Wesgro said. Over the past six years, the estimated economic impact of the conference bids secured exceeded R1.5 billion.

Wesgro chief executive Tim Harris said retaining the No 1 spot was a concerted effort between stakeholders and partners.

"We're incredibly proud of our ranking and will work hard to maximise this momentum," he said.

Western Cape economic opportunities MEC Alan Winde added: "Being ranked as Africa's top business tourism destination is excellent news for our region. We know conferences have a significant economic impact, driving growth and creating jobs for residents."

Julie-May Ellingson, chief executive of the Cape Town International Convention Centre, was proud of the role the centre had played, along with its partners, in Cape Town's rise up the rankings.

"Cape Town has risen above competitive cities such as Sydney, Dubai, Nairobi, Johannesburg and Durban in these rankings, and its continued popularity demonstrates that we can deliver top-class conferences on a global scale," she said.

- ANA