

Botswana: Africa's jewel for business

Beautiful Botswana is an incredibly tolerant, peaceful and economically stable investment destination in the heart of Southern Africa. The ambitious nation values the rule of law and good governance, key aspects investors welcome

Boasting an outstanding reputation for good governance and a proud world leader in cultural diplomacy, Botswana continues to punch above its weight in the international arena thanks to its excellent economic, political and social stability. Strategically located close to major economies, the business- and investor-friendly republic of 2.4 million people embraces a positive “land-linked” attitude rather than a “land-locked” mentality, a forward-thinking approach that underlines its appeal as the ideal springboard into the lucrative Southern African Development Community.

With consistently impressive single-digit gross domestic product (GDP) growth, low inflation and taxes, a strong commitment to transparency and favorable time zones with the vast Europe, the Middle East and Africa region, Botswana has attracted a steady flow of foreign direct investment (FDI) in recent years, particularly to the large diamond, mining and tourism industries. According to the Botswana Investment and Trade Centre, sectors ripe for investment include logistics, energy, manufacturing, agriculture, and banking and financial services. Initiatives aimed at nourishing and streamlining the business climate for this diverse range of industries are starting to pay off as word spreads of the relative ease of doing business and the decent returns available on FDI.

“Botswana looks at the world very positively and is a country in transition: one that is optimistic, agile, young and is transforming from a resource-based economy to a knowledge-based one,” says the President of Botswana, Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, President of Botswana

“Botswana is an optimistic, agile, young country transforming from a resource-based economy to a knowledge-based one. We seek partnerships with the world's leading lights on this journey.”

Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, President of Botswana

gweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi: “We are determined to face challenges head on, fully mindful of who, where and what we are. We seek partnerships with the world's leading lights on this journey. Our stability and good governance are second to none.”

The country's charismatic leader, who was re-elected as president in October 2019, is eager to highlight his government's firm commitment to trade and investment, as well as his pledge to build an environment where commercial



Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, President of Botswana

enterprises thrive and do not just survive. “Businesses exist to do business and they must be allowed to grow,” the popular statesman states, adding: “We are fully committed to multilateralism and want to be players in the international trade arena, hence why we signed the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement and joined the Southern African Customs Union.”





In a clear sign of its complete commitment to the development of a flourishing business climate, officials recently introduced nearly 30 pieces of pro-business legislation in line with the goals of its Doing Business Reforms Roadmap. “Part of the revitalisation of the economy is about government facilitating the private sector, working on a conducive doing business environment and ensuring we are responsive to private sector needs,” confirms Bogolo Kenewendo, former Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry.

Ministers' upbeat views on the strong foundations already established and the bright future that lies ahead, is echoed by Moatlhodi Lekaukau, acting managing director of Botswana Development Corporation (BDC)—the state's wholly owned agency for commercial and industrial development and principal instigator of economic growth. “BDC exists to support the government's development plans,” the senior executive explains. “We play in sync with, and support, plans like Vision 2036, and facilitate and provide the finance to aid the key deliverables.”

“Securing Botswana's Future”

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Botswana's breathtakingly beautiful landscapes are complemented by a stunning array of endangered wildlife such as elephants.

“There are many opportunities in Botswana for international investors. Nearly 40 percent of our land is dedicated to tourism and conservation, so these sectors have tremendous potential. Renewables are another massive opportunity. We have plenty of sun, but no solar-powered generation yet; we should be a regional leader in this field.”

Botswana offers one of the best wilderness experiences anywhere in Africa, with its incredible landscapes and deep cultural experiences creating memories for travelers that will last a lifetime. Wild animals like big game roam freely across its stunning natural habitats, including the huge Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve, while stunning views await visitors at the Okavango Delta, which is famous for being the world's largest intact delta. “Our UNESCO World Heritage sites, such as the Okavango Delta and the Tsodilo Hills, are absolutely wonderful places that really define our character, our tourism brand equity as Botswana,” notes Keletsositse Olebile, CEO of Botswana Investment and Trade Centre.

“All these areas offer very different tourism product offerings and diverse experiences in one country. You have desert as well as delta and that is what is exciting. You have the largest herd of elephants in the entire world, concentrated in Botswana—over 120,000 in Chobe National Park,” adds former Minister of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism, Onkokame Kitso Mokaila.

Spearheading the nationwide drive to protect its rich flora and fauna while growing tourism's contribution to GDP from 5 percent is award-winning Botswana Tourism Organisation (BTO). The ambitious parastatal is focused on the sustainable development of its precious natural and cultural resources, with a focus on ecotourism, differentiating Botswana's tourism offerings from counterparts across the continent.

“For positioning our country from a conservation-based or sustainability-based point of view, we continue to get a lot of recognition from renowned conservation institutions and players in the tourism industry,” Myra Sekgororoane, CEO of BTO, states proudly. “The Okavango Delta is our flagship, while we were also awarded Tomorrow Destination Stewardship by the World Travel and Tourism Council, and have also won awards from the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.”



Myra Sekgororoane
CEO, Botswana
Tourism Organisation

“Sustainability in tourism is a tough area. It's hands on if you really want the ultimate results that everyone is looking for because it's also necessary to balance coexistence. We need to ensure the protection of our important resources and coexist with our wildlife and our environment. If one destroys the other, the balance goes helter skelter. This is a very interesting, challenging and continuous management balancing act.”

“We have also agreed partnership management contracts with communities who may own the land but haven't got the expertise,” she says. “In addition, we are looking at cultivating interest around our dams, particularly water-based activities. There are opportunities and we have worked very hard to establish management plans for the dams ahead of trying to open them up for private sector involvement.”

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