

SanParks appoints first female CEO

South African National Parks (SanParks) has appointed Hapiloe Sello as its chief executive officer (CEO), making her the first female CEO since its establishment in 1926.



According to Pam Yako, chairperson of the SanParks board this announcement comes after a cabinet meeting on 29 March 2023. Yako says the board is delighted to appoint a leader of Sello's calibre to the role with a deep-rooted knowledge of the interconnectedness of conservation, tourism and people. "I have no doubt that SanParks is in good hands for the next phase of its growth."

Sello joined SanParks in 2015 as its managing executive for tourism development and marketing and amongst others, has acted as SanParks CEO from June to November 2022. As ME Tourism she spearheaded the implementation of the organisation's commercialisation strategy and implemented several tourism products, events and strategic partnerships which have helped bring in the necessary resources for the SanParks.

Yako says this is a significant step forward for transformation and women empowerment in the sector. "This is a huge leap forward for African conservation and tourism as a catalyst for progress and sustainable change."

"On behalf of the board, we extend our gratitude to Minister Barbara Creecy for her unwavering support in this appointment. Lastly, the board would like to wish Hapiloe well and all the best in her new role. We further encourage both internal and external stakeholders to support her in this role," says Yako.

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