

**MEDIA RELEASE - 26 June 2003**

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**SANParks CHIEF EXECUTIVE TO LEAVE**

The Board of South African National Parks at its meeting yesterday considered and accepted the decision of its Chief Executive, Mavuso Msimang to leave SANParks later in the year, to pursue other interests.

The Board is initiating a process to find a suitable replacement as soon as possible. Msimang will be leaving SANParks after the V<sup>th</sup> World Parks Congress, which takes place in Durban in September 2003. He has been central in the preparations for the congress.

The Chairperson of the Board of SANParks, Murphy Morobe, acknowledged that SANParks will be losing a great leader in Msimang but the organisation accepts the need to let him move on.

SANParks has gone through a number of changes during Msimang's tenure of office. Some of the more significant include the successful commercialisation programme which has seen private sector involvement in the running of restaurants, concession agreements with lodge operators and the strengthening of relationships with some of the communities living adjacent to National Parks. Under his leadership SANParks has also undergone extensive transformation both in its management structure and in the execution of its mandate. He will leave behind an organisation better prepared than ever to meet the challenges of conservation in today's era of globalisation and competing demands on scarce financial resources.

"It is hoped that Msimang will continue to employ his relaxed, yet focused approach to business which has seen SANParks prevailing over its problems in such a short space of time," said Morobe.

**\*\*\*Ends\*\*\***

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