

## MEDIA RELEASE - 27 August 2002

For Immediate Release

### **KRUGER NATIONAL PARK PREPARES FOR THE TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE**

The Kruger National Park (KNP) expects to host thousands of local and international visitors on December 4, 2002 who will converge on the park to witness a natural phenomenon – the total eclipse of the sun.

On this day, at about 08:20, the sun will be obliterated in a total solar eclipse for about one and a half minute (90 seconds) in an area stretching from northwest to south east in the northern part of Kruger National Park with Shingwedzi rest camp virtually on the centerline of the 100 percent dark zone. It will be the first time in recorded history that the park will experience a total eclipse of the sun.

Shingwedzi camp, in the northern part of the Kruger National Park, will enjoy the longest appearance of this specific solar eclipse compared to other areas where it will occur. The path of the eclipse is expected to cross Angola, Namibia, Botswana, and enter South Africa via Musina (previously known as Messina), through Kruger National Park and continue into Mozambique and into the Indian Ocean.

As a result of widespread local and international interest in this event, additional accommodation has been made available. The park has created four temporary rustic camping sites with a total of 350 sites for people who will not get accommodation facilities. However, these sites will only cater for clients who can provide their own camping equipment.

Details of these camping sites can be obtained from SANParks' call centre Tel. 012 428 9111, and the cost of each tent site, for a period of 5 nights for 6 people is R 2 605.00. Bookings are for the December 2-7 2002 period irrespective of whether a guest would stay for one night or the whole five days as indicated above.

Provision has also been made for visitors who may wish to visit the park on the day of the eclipse (December 4). The entrance fee, applicable only for December 4, will be R50 for adults and R35 for children. However, vehicle tariffs will remain the same.

Phalaborwa, Punda Maria and Pafuri gates will be open for day visitors wishing to visit the park for the eclipse and will open much earlier than the normal opening times. Phalaborwa will open at 02:30, Punda Maria at 04:00 and Pafuri at 03:00.

It is essential for day visitors to make advance bookings and to present their receipts at the gate for which they have paid. No access to the park will be permitted other than at the gate indicated in the receipt.

The public is also advised that only a limited number of people will be allowed entrance into the park as day visitors on December 4. Bookings can be made through the SANParks call center on the number above. No member of the public will be allowed entrance into the park without pre-booked access or a permit.

The number of people who will be allowed per gate are as follows:

- |                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| 1. Phalaborwa  | 2 000 |
| 2. Punda Maria | 1 500 |
| 3. Pafuri      | 1 000 |

Three viewing sites have been identified in the 100% dark zone inside the park where people can alight from their vehicles and watch the eclipse under the protection of armed rangers. Temporary toilet facilities and stalls where refreshments as well as eclipse memorabilia can be purchased, will be erected at these viewing sites.

Preparations for this event continue and we will continue to keep the public informed of all developments in this regard. The possibility of providing a bus service from the three identified gates is an option that is still

under investigation.

People who will be staying in the southern camps of the park will be afforded the opportunity to make use of a bus service during the night of December 3 in order to arrive at the viewing sites by 06:00 on December 4. SABC 2's breakfast show, Morning Live, will broadcast live from the Shingwedzi camp on the morning of the eclipse.

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

**For more information please contact:**

William Mabasa  
Manager: Public Relations and Communication  
Kruger National Park  
Tel (013) 735 4363  
Fax (013) 735 4053  
Cell 082 807 3919

**Or**

Lulama Luti  
SANParks Communications Office  
Tel (012) 426 5201  
Fax (012) 343 0153  
Cell 082 746 3529

[<back>](#)