



## WE ARE VICTORIA FALLS PRESS RELEASE

### “Confidence in booking Victoria Falls restored to almost pre-pandemic levels”

#### Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe Victoria Falls, 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2022

Confidence in booking Destination Victoria Falls has risen to 74% in 2021, according to the annual Future Traveller Sentiment Survey conducted by We Are Victoria Falls for 2021. This figure compares to 85% during the pre-pandemic year of 2019, and the Covid-19 slump of just 50% in 2020.

73% of respondents to the survey believe it is now safe to travel to Victoria Falls and that clear robust rules on entry, pricing awareness, flexibility of terms and conditions, and ease of access (including direct flights) are key priority areas to accelerate recovery of tourism to the destination.

The report provides an annual snapshot of data to support the sector in planning for the future. According to international agents who responded to the survey, the future traveller to Victoria Falls will be motivated by nature and travel in smaller groups. Travelers will be mainly older couples, multi-gen families and families with older children. Compared to the previous survey agents predict growing preference for boutique hotels over safari-camps, and a move away from branded properties. The most marked developments from the previous year are an expected uptick in demand for wellness and gastronomy experiences.

In September 2021, the Pristine Victoria Falls Society (PVFS) was formed in an effort to transform Victoria Falls into the cleanest city in Africa and a green destination. Their latest initiative of consistent collaborative clean-ups with stakeholders designated particular areas within the City, demonstrates the commitment to this vision. This effort is just one example to manage core aspects of the destination and speaks directly to market demand. 100% of surveyed agents report that connecting with nature will be most in demand; 80% predict a wilderness setting will be in demand, and 60% predict urban areas will be too (up from 45% in 2020).

Surveyed agents reported access and lack of direct flights as a major obstacle. To help alleviate this, the newly formed **Air Access Development Committee** have facilitated 4 new routes or frequencies to Victoria Falls in the last few months, including Lufthansa's Eurowings Discover with its inaugural flight from Frankfurt touching down on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022.



The We Are Victoria Falls outreach and crisis communications initiative has been working with both public and private sector stakeholders since May 2020 following the onset of the pandemic. 86% of survey respondents indicated that the “We Are Victoria Falls” initiative had been impactful in maintaining or improving their confidence in booking the destination, compared with 62% in 2020.

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