

Shark cage diving companies receive the green light with FT TSA

DESPITE the controversy that occasionally surrounds the industry, shark cage diving is increasingly popular among international visitors. Identifying an ethical operator can be a minefield, but this situation has recently changed.

Two companies based in Gansbaai have qualified to become part of Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA), having each gone through a stringent assessment and certification process that examines the economic, environmental and social impacts of its operations.

Tourists looking to experience authentic great white shark conservation and adventure in

South Africa are encouraged to choose Marine Dynamics and White Shark Projects, both located in scenic Gansbaai, according to Jennifer Seif, executive director of FTTSA.

Marine Dynamics and White Shark Projects are the only shark cage diving operations that have achieved FTTSA certification, to date.

The FTTSA certification mark signals to customers that these two businesses are run in an environmentally and socially responsible manner and that staff and communities linked to the operation receive tangible and positive



benefits from tourism.

FTTSA certification is based on a thorough assessment process to ensure that FTTSA-certified establishments are truly committed to the principles of Fair Trade and responsible tourism.

According to Seif, "shark cage diving is becoming increasingly popular among visitors to South Africa and the sector is fairly competitive. FTTSA certification is a unique selling point that enables tourists to make an informed decision about where to invest their money."

The demand, especially from the

international market, for "responsible tourism" experiences has grown exponentially over the last few years, and therefore choosing a tourism company with an ethical business model really does benefit all parties concerned.

A full list of FTTSA-certified establishments situated in South Africa can be viewed at www.fairtourismza.org.za

Travellers looking for an ethical marine tourism experience should insist on using FTTSA-certified operators and refer to the FTTSA website or contact FTTSA directly to confirm an operator's FTTSA-certified status.

