

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“Don't find fault, find a remedy.”

~Henry Ford~

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of this chapter is to draw conclusions, make recommendations and state the contribution of the study. The primary objective of this thesis was to develop a tourism management framework for MNP. The aim of this chapter is to provide conclusions and to make management recommendations from findings encountered in this study. This chapter will therefore address the following main components: Firstly, the chapter will detail the main contributions of this study. Secondly, conclusions will be drawn from both the literature review and the empirical research. Finally, recommendations will be made to enhance the effectiveness of tourism management at MNP as well as for future research.

7.2 SYNTHESIS OF THE STUDY

In this study entitled ‘Development of a tourism management framework for Mapungubwe National Park’ an integrated analysis was conducted to assess the major issues affecting the management of sustainable tourism at MNP. This assessment included a comprehensive literature study and an empirical study involving visitors to MNP, local land owners and the park management.

During the literature study, it became apparent that MNP is a unique national park facing its own specific set of challenges and for which a generic tourism management plan may not be effective. The literature review revealed that management plans and management frameworks have been formulated within SANParks and at other organisations and

situations across the world. These management plans and management frameworks have proven effective in prescribed situations, but some may be considered superseded or they have not proven effective in a developmental world context. SANParks as an organisation prescribes to the management approach of strategic adaptive management, which has been implemented successfully in an ecological context. Research into the implementation of this approach in other contexts has been minimal. The literature review also showed that park management generally fulfils the three main roles of conservation management, tourism management and to consolidate the aforementioned two roles, general management. To the previously mentioned roles, SANParks, as an organisation, has also added constituency building, or community engagement, as a fourth role. The role of tourism management is multi-functional in nature and includes four main aspects, namely transport, accommodation, entertainment and attractions management. The achievement of sustainable tourism should be the imperative of all tourism management activities. The economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts of tourism should be managed in such a way so as to ensure the availability of these resources for future generations.

After a literature analysis, visits to the park and through informal discussions with various stakeholders it became apparent that there is a need for a tourism management framework for MNP. This was due to inefficiencies in the current management of tourism services at the park. These management gaps had the potential to affect the sustainability of the park as a whole. For this reason this study aimed to develop a sustainable tourism management framework for MNP that will encompass aspects of sustainable tourism management within a localised context, developed within the structure of strategic adaptive management. In order to develop this framework the study had to determine what management gaps exist in the sustainable management of tourism at MNP. This framework is envisioned to provide park management and SANParks with a foundation of research and management guidelines for the achievement of sustainable tourism. This management framework should additionally provide a basis for the further development of research into the management of World Heritage Sites within national parks and protected areas.

In order to achieve this primary objective, seven secondary objectives were met, namely:

Objective 1: *To contextualise background information on the research problem through a literature review relating to an overview of MNP.*

This objective was met in Chapter 2, where an overview of MNP was provided. This overview included aspects pertaining to a discussion of the park's location and size, the establishment of the park, the TFCA and the World Heritage Site status. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the major challenges facing the park.

Objective 2: *To contextualise a theoretical background for the management of national parks and protected areas in South Africa.*

This objective was met in Chapter 3, where an analysis of various management frameworks that govern SANParks as an organisation were provided. The chapter provided a detailed description of the policy and legislative environment of SANParks as well as an overview of the park's management plan. Finally, an analysis of other management frameworks for protected areas and World Heritage Sites was provided.

Objective 3: *To develop a theoretical background for park management.*

This objective was met in Chapter 4, where various aspects of park management were discussed by providing a description of the categories of parks in South Africa followed by a discussion of the management spheres as applicable to national park management and elements that influence the management of national parks.

Objective 4: *To analyse the theoretical background of sustainable tourism at World Heritage Sites and national parks.*

This objective was met in the final literature chapter, Chapter 5, where a discussion of sustainable tourism was provided. The chapter started with a description of the developmental overview of sustainable tourism, followed by a description of contemporary initiatives in sustainable tourism. Subsequently, guidelines for sustainable tourism were analysed. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the various aspects of sustainable tourism by analysing the impacts of tourism on the economic, socio-cultural and natural environments.

Objective 5: *To develop a profile of visitors at MNP by means of a survey.*

This objective was dealt with by the results obtained in Chapter 6. The results included descriptive data pertaining to the demographic profile of visitors, their spending patterns and an overview of visitor motivations for visiting MNP.

Objective 6: *To assess stakeholder perceptions of the major issues facing sustainable tourism management at MNP in order to identify gaps in management effectiveness by means of interviews.*

This objective was met through a description of the results obtained in Chapter 6. This chapter was divided into three main parts, respectively detailing the results pertaining to visitor, land owner and management perceptions of sustainable tourism management at MNP. Visitor perceptions were analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, including descriptive statistics, AVOVAs and factor analysis. Visitors indicated how important various management tasks were from a visitor's perspective as well as how they perceived the effective management implementation of these tasks. To achieve this objective, various t-tests were conducted on these two sets of data in order to determine areas of significant difference that represent gaps in management effectiveness.

Objective 7: *To draw conclusions and make recommendations concerning a tourism management framework for MNP.* The achievement of this objective is covered in Chapter 7 of this thesis.

7.3 MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The main contributions of this study:

- ❏ This study contributed a critical assessment of literature based on park and protected area management frameworks. These frameworks were presented in chronological order and provide a theoretical basis for the future development of management frameworks for parks and protected areas.
- ❏ MNP is a park with a unique set of management challenges. This study is the first to analyse the main challenges facing MNP, namely agriculture and private lands in a national park, management issues, mining and TFCA issues, from a multi-stakeholder perspective. As a result this study proved that tourism management frameworks should be park specific and not generic in nature as all national parks have their own unique set of environmental conditions.
- ❏ This study developed the first integrated framework for the management of MNP.
- ❏ This study has proved that SANParks has to manage all three spheres of management, namely conservation, ecotourism and constituency building, effectively in order to bring about the effective management of national parks in South Africa. In the case of MNP, management does not engage successfully with visitors (tourists) and the local community (local land owners), which has led to a mutual aversion and to misunderstandings between the parties. This highlights the

necessity of involving all stakeholders in park management in order to stimulate greater cooperation and mutual understanding between all parties.

- ✚ This study is the first to analyse the management effectiveness of tourism service provision at MNP and in the northern region of SANParks. This fulfils a gap, which may lead to future linear studies at other national parks in the region.
- ✚ The results of this research will provide much needed input towards the overall strategic management of tourism services at MNP and SANParks by identifying ten gaps in management effectiveness.
- ✚ This study is the first study to analyse the perceptions of the management of tourism in a World Heritage Site inside a national park in South Africa. The study proves that the relationship between World Heritage Site management and national park management is complex and as such parks incorporating World Heritage Sites require their own distinct management plans that integrate these two components.
- ✚ The findings of this study have been presented at various forums, including The Greater Mapungubwe Network (Musina, 26 July 2013) and the Southern Africa Institute for Management Scientists Conference (SAIMS) (Potchefstroom, 15-17 September 2013).
- ✚ Finally, this study contributed to the database of research concerning national parks, heritage management and protected area management in terms of tourism management.

7.4 CONCLUSIONS

The final secondary objective of this study was to make recommendations and inform a tourism management framework for MNP. These recommendations should fit into the broader strategic management framework as utilised in the strategic planning at SANParks. For this reason, an adaptation of the strategic adaptive management model, proposed by Roux and Foxcroft (2011:2), as described in Figure 3.5, is proposed. This adapted model details the vision, objectives and implementation of tourism management at MNP. The process involves a process of learning and adaptation; the conclusions for this study represent the evaluation of tourism management while the recommendations of the study represent the learning and adaptation process. The adapted framework is provided in Figure 7.1.

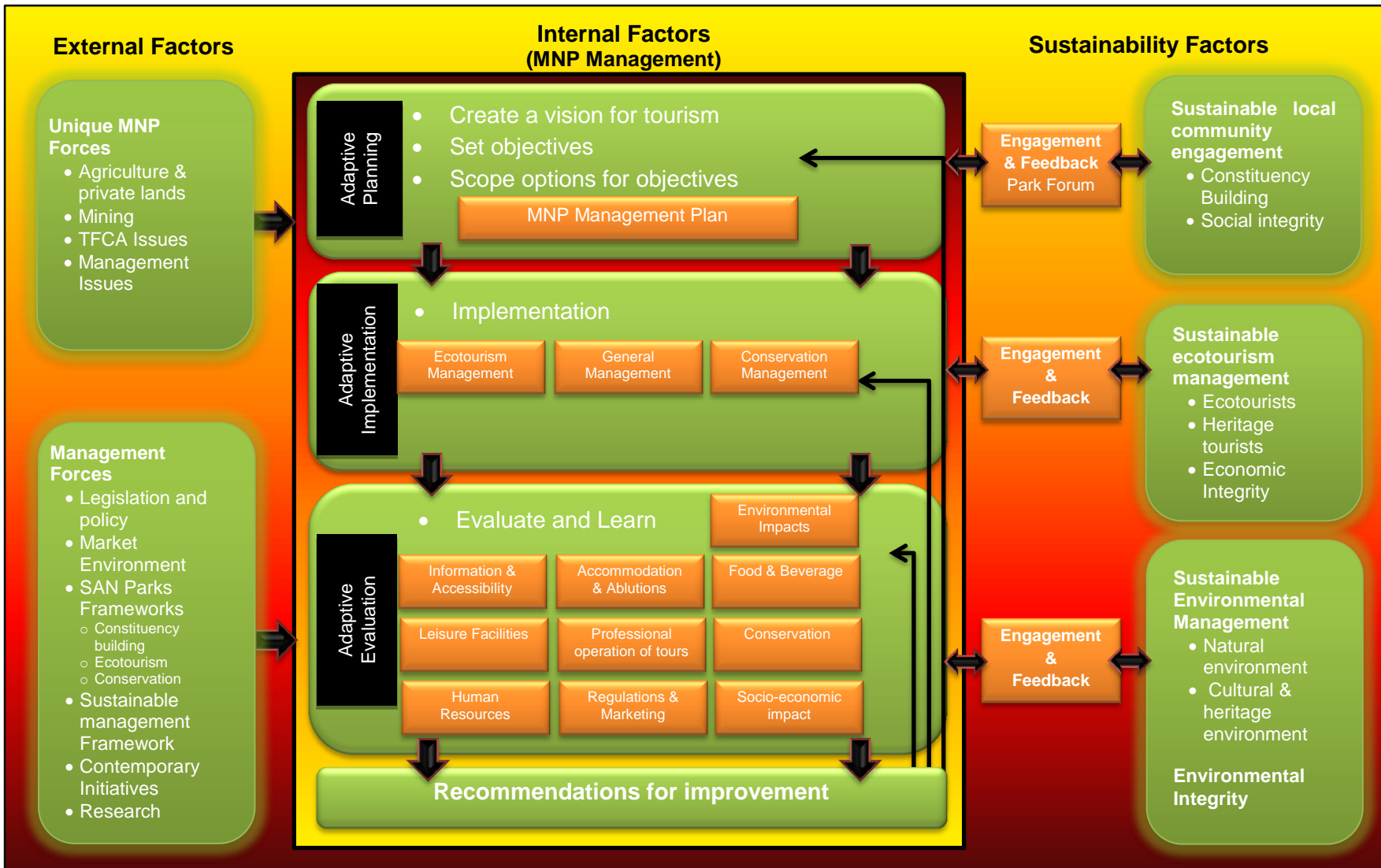


Figure 7.1: A tourism management framework for MNP

Figure 7.1 describes the proposed management framework for MNP. The proposed framework is subject to external factors which comprise elements which are unique to MNP such as agriculture, mining, TFCA issues and management issues as well as management forces such as legislation, the market environment and SANParks management frameworks. The proposed management framework starts with an adaptive planning process, the vision and objectives are derived from the park management plan which were described in section 3.3. Adaptive evaluation is a result of the implementation of objectives set in adaptive planning (cf. 3.4.1). This study has revealed gaps in management efficiency which requires improvement, namely; information and accessibility, leisure facilities, human resources, accommodation and ablutions, professional operation of tours, regulations and marketing, environmental impacts, food and beverage, conservation and socio-economic impacts. The framework incorporates continuous feedback which informs management improvements, thus adaptive management. This study proposes various improvements to enhance the effective management of tourism at MNP, which are discussed in the recommendations section of this chapter. Throughout this process it is imperative that both tourists and local community members are consulted. In addition it is imperative to promote environmental integrity through sustainable environmental management. This framework will be further described in the conclusions and recommendation sections of this chapter.

The conclusions of this study will be presented in two parts. Firstly, conclusions from the literature study will be presented and secondly, conclusions will be presented relating to the empirical results.

7.4.1 Conclusions from literature review

The conclusions of this study will be presented in two parts. Firstly, conclusions from the literature study will be presented, and, secondly, conclusions related to the empirical results will be presented.

7.4.1.1 Conclusions from literature related to an overview of MNP

From the literature study it can be concluded that:

- ✚ MNP is one of the smallest and youngest national parks in the SANParks portfolio. The park is situated in a remote area of the country and it preserves the rich natural and cultural heritage for the region (cf. 2.2).

- ❏ MNP is in the process of developing into a TFCA. A TFCA is an area where two or more protected areas in different countries are adjoined and jointly managed across the international borders. TFCAs are new and developing themes of environmental management. As a result, TFCAs are becoming an important factor in environmental protection, and have received significant support from a number of global organisations, including the World Bank and environmental NGOs (cf. 2.4).
- ❏ World Heritage Sites are places that have received international recognition as a result of their cultural and/or natural importance to the world. Destinations around the world utilise the World Heritage designation of their cultural and natural sites as a promotional tool in their marketing campaigns, especially for international visitors (cf. 2.5).
- ❏ The area constituting MNP has a long history of agricultural activities. The legacy of these agricultural activities and the continued practising of agriculture around the park are considered a management challenge for the park (cf. 2.6.1).
- ❏ MNP is challenged by issues related to human resource management and viability issues related to low visitor numbers and occupancy rates (cf. 2.6.2).
- ❏ The area around MNP has seen increased mining operations that might impact the park and threaten the park's World Heritage status (cf. 2.6.3).
- ❏ The park faces challenges related to the development of the TFCA as well as park consolidation (cf. 2.6.4).

To conclude, MNP is a young and unique national park of international importance. The park is faced by numerous challenges that threaten its sustainability and for which a distinct tourism management framework is needed.

7.4.1.2 Conclusions from literature related to management foundations for national parks and protected areas

The literature related to management foundations revealed that:

- ❏ The South African government has laid down major legislative and policy frameworks to manage national parks in South Africa (cf. 3.2), including:
 - The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996).
 - The National Parks Act, 1974 (Act No. 57 of 1974).
 - The Environmental Conservation Act, 1989 (Act No. 73 of 1989).

- The National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998).
 - The South African Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999).
 - The South African Tourism Act, 1993 (Act No. 71 of 1993).
- ❏ The target markets for SANParks in terms of tourism are concentrated on nature-based tourism and ecotourism (cf. 3.3).
 - ❏ The definitions of ecotourism are ambiguous, but most ecotourism definitions are based on four pillars (cf. 3.3), namely:
 - Ecotourism is dependent on the conservation and enhancement of natural and cultural attractions.
 - Ecotourism is differentiated from nature-based tourism by providing a critical learning aspect related to environmental education.
 - The management practices of ecotourism adhere to the principles of ecological, social-cultural and economic sustainability.
 - The achievement of a satisfactory tourism experience is imperative.
 - ❏ SANParks' management functions are based on three core pillars, namely conservation, tourism and constituency building (cf. 3.3).
 - ❏ Adaptive management evolved from the need for management frameworks for ecosystems to be adaptable to change (cf. 3.4.1).
 - ❏ Strategic adaptive management is used by SANParks as the basis of all management planning (cf. 3.4.2).
 - ❏ Carrying capacity, the oldest tourism management framework, describes the maximum number of people who are able to utilise an area without generating an unacceptable alteration in the physical environment and an unacceptable decline in the quality of the recreational experience (cf. 3.5.1).
 - ❏ LAC frameworks for visitor management entails assessing the probable impact of an activity, deciding in advance to what extent change will be tolerated, monitoring what is happening and determining what actions are appropriate if standards are surpassed (cf. 3.5.2). At SANParks, this is done through a process of zonation.
 - ❏ Visitor impact management frameworks aim to identify unacceptable changes that may occur as a result of tourism activities and to develop management strategies to keep visitor impacts within acceptable levels. Visitor impact management strives to identify the causes of these changes (cf. 3.5.3).
 - ❏ PAVIM as a form of visitor impact management identifies management opportunities and visitor impact problems, includes problem analysis (using an expert panel), monitoring and standards, and it results in the selection,

implementation and evaluation of visitor impact management actions. This framework incorporates a multitude of stakeholders (cf. 3.5.3).

- ✚ The VERP framework was created in an attempt to make the LAC useful and effective for an organisation with a single purpose and it includes a crucial component of public participation. It has, however, not been used extensively outside the USA (cf. 3.5.4).
- ✚ The VAMP framework's primary focus is on market research, as it connects a particular activity with the social and demographic characteristics of visitors coupled with the activity's setting requirements and with developments affecting the activity. It has not been used extensively outside Canada (cf. 3.5.5).
- ✚ The ROS framework is considered one of the first management frameworks for recreational activities in natural areas. The main purpose of this framework is to determine the carrying capacities of an area and to manage the impacts of recreational activities on the natural environment. This framework has not been used extensively outside the recreation sector. To apply this framework to other scenarios, the TOS and ECOS frameworks were developed, but these frameworks are poorly researched (cf. 3.5.6).
- ✚ The TOMM framework provides an integrated and place-specific approach to converting the monitoring results of tourism actions into effective management actions. This framework also takes into account multi-stakeholder input and has been used successfully internationally (cf. 3.5.7).
- ✚ CNRBM is a framework that is especially applicable to developing countries. It is seen as an incentive-based conservation viewpoint that links conservation of natural resources with rural development, and which strives to uplift the livelihoods of local communities. It has been used successfully in Botswana and Namibia (cf. 3.5.8).
- ✚ The 7 Es Model is a planning guide for nature-based tourism in order to support the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, while at the same time promoting economic development. It has been used successfully internationally (cf. 3.5.9).
- ✚ In South Africa contemporary approaches to tourism management frameworks have been proposed through a number of postgraduate research studies (cf. 3.6).

To conclude, national parks and protected areas in South Africa are managed within national and international policies and legislation. In addition, frameworks and management strategies have been proposed to manage these areas in various different scenarios.

7.4.1.3 Conclusions from literature related to park management

The literature related to park management revealed that:

- ✚ Protected areas in South Africa are possessed and administered on four levels, namely private, local, provincial and national protected areas (cf. 4.2).
- ✚ The park management process is divided into three broad categories, namely:
 - *Ecotourism management*, which consists of four pillars:
 - Conservation and promotion of the natural and cultural environment.
 - Sustainable management of the environment.
 - Participation by the local community.
 - Tourist satisfaction (cf. 4.4.1).
 - *Conservation management*, which concerns the conservation of various park resources, specifically natural and heritage resources (cf. 4.4.2).
 - *General management*, which concerns a number of management functions such as marketing, human resources and financial management (cf. 4.4.3).
- ✚ Tourism management in parks and protected areas involves the management of four core aspects, namely transport (cf. 4.4.1.1), accommodation (cf. 4.4.1.2), entertainment (cf. 4.4.1.3) and attractions (cf. 4.4.1.4).
- ✚ Park management is bound by the functions undertaken by general management. These functions could be, among others, financial, human resources, programme, marketing and facilities management (cf. 4.4.3).

To conclude, parks in South Africa are managed on four tier levels where MNP is a national protected area. Parks focus primarily on conservation and ecotourism management, and the latter includes a number of submanagement fields.

7.4.1.4 Conclusions from literature related to sustainable tourism

The literature review focusing on sustainable tourism revealed that:

- ✚ Sustainable tourism has its roots in the foundations of sustainable development (cf. 5.2).
- ✚ Sustainable tourism is considered a form of tourism that is strategic and that promotes the long-term integrity of natural and cultural resources, so that these resources are maintained as durable, permanent landscapes for future generations. Sustainable tourism strives to achieve economic viability without compromising the integrity of socio-cultural and natural environments (cf. 5.2).

- ❏ The term “responsible tourism” can be distinguished from sustainable tourism. Responsible tourism has a more tactical, short-term focus on environmental, economic and socio-cultural protection and upliftment, while sustainable tourism is strategic and long-term focused (cf. 5.2).
- ❏ In the past few years a number of organisations have contributed to the development of the concept of sustainable tourism, namely:
 - The United Nations through the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 (cf. 5.3.1).
 - The United Nations Environmental Programme through the development of Agenda 21 (cf. 5.3.2).
 - The Commission on Sustainable Development (cf. 5.3.3).
 - The World Tourism Organisation (cf.5.3.4).
 - The World Travel and Tourism Council (cf. 5.3.5).
 - The World Wide Fund for Nature (cf. 5.3.6).
 - The International Union for Conservation of Nature through COP conferences (cf. 5.3.7).
 - The International Council on Monuments and Sites (cf. 5.3.8).
 - The United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organisation (cf. 5.3.9).
- ❏ The main goal of the national government with the South African Tourism White Paper is to manage sustainable tourism in such a way that it improves the quality of life of all citizens (cf. 5.4.1).
- ❏ Tourism activities in an area may have various socio-cultural impacts. It is imperative for tourism managers to manage these impacts.
- ❏ Positive impacts of tourism on host communities could include the creation of cultural awareness, community development, poverty alleviation, sustaining local traditions and the preservation of historical sites (cf. 5.5.1).
- ❏ Potential negative impacts of tourism on host communities may involve the creation of unrealistic expectations, increased crime, health issues and cultural commodification (cf. 5.5.1).
- ❏ In order to curb the negative socio-cultural effects of tourism, certain steps could be taken, such as the employment of local people and the implementation of fair labour practices (cf. 5.5.1).
- ❏ Tourism activities in an area may in turn have an effect on the environment of that area. Positive impacts of tourism in the environment include tourism becoming a

custodian of conservation, the promotion of a good quality environment and the enhancement of a local destination's image (cf. 5.5.2).

- ❏ Negative impacts on the environment may be caused by tourism activities, which include climate change, increased visitor pressure on natural resources, pollution and waste, the redistribution of resources, physical pressure on the environment and wildlife disturbance (cf. 5.5.2).
- ❏ The natural environment has become a valuable and contested resource for many industries (cf. 5.5.2).
- ❏ There has been an increased trend in South Africa to incorporate natural area resources for the purposes of hunting and ecotourism (cf. 5.5.2).
- ❏ In order to manage the negative impacts of tourism on the environment, parks should be more active in the implementation of sustainable waste management practices and the utilisation of renewable energy sources (cf. 5.5.2).
- ❏ There should be a greater level of education and training of staff on tactical management levels in order to promote environmentally-friendly tourism practices (cf. 5.5.2).
- ❏ Tourism may result in positive economic impacts such as the diversification of an economy, contributions to an area's GDP, contributions to the balance of payment of a country, improvements in government revenue, the multiplier effect and the generation of foreign exchange (cf. 5.5.3).
- ❏ Negative economic impacts resulting from tourism may include the impacts of tourism on inflation, the effect of leakages, the uneven distribution of benefits, the effect of tourism seasonality and the potential overdependence of an area's economy on tourism (cf. 5.5.3).
- ❏ Tourism attractions that attract predominantly more domestic tourists than international tourists generate a reduced economic benefit in real terms (cf. 5.5.3).
- ❏ Tourism as an industry provides a multitude of different employment opportunities and opportunities for SMME development (cf. 5.5.3).

To conclude, sustainable tourism has its origin in the field of sustainable development. This approach to management includes the management of three main pillars, namely the management of the environmental, economic and socio-cultural integrity of an area. Tourism has the potential to place pressure on these three pillars by causing a number of potential negative impacts, but at the other end of the spectrum tourism also causes positive impacts on each pillar.

7.4.2 Conclusions from the empirical study

The conclusions from the empirical study will be presented in six parts. The conclusions will start with an indication of conclusions pertaining to the visitor profile at MNP. The visitor profile represents the market environment as depicted under management forces in the proposed framework (Figure 7.1). Secondly, conclusions related to visitor perceptions of tourism management at MNP will be provided. Thirdly, gaps in management effectiveness will be identified, and, fourthly, conclusions pertaining to visitor recommendations for management improvements will be provided. These gaps are represented by the adaptive evaluation process in Figure 7.1. Penultimately, conclusions will be drawn from the land owner survey and finally conclusions will be drawn from the management survey.

7.4.2.1 Conclusions regarding the visitor profile at MNP

The empirical results pertaining to the visitor profile at MNP revealed that:

- ❏ Visitors to MNP are predominantly in the age bracket of 51-60 years (average age, 51.7 years).
- ❏ Visitors to MNP originate primarily from Gauteng, followed by Limpopo and the Western Cape.
- ❏ International visitors make up a minor proportion of the total visitors to the park.
- ❏ Visitors to the park are primarily first-time visitors who are well educated, as they usually have postgraduate qualifications.
- ❏ The visitors to the park stay four nights on average, consist of couples or groups of two and they are loyal South African national park visitors as a large majority of visitors possess a Wild Card.
- ❏ Visitors to MNP spend an average of R6 997 per group during their trip, with the majority of spending being on accommodation expenses (cf. 6.2.1).
- ❏ Four main groups of visitor motivations have been identified, namely the natural attributes of the park, to escape and to relax, the heritage and educational attributes of the park, and, finally, the general park attributes.
- ❏ The five highest rated specific reasons for visitors visiting MNP are in chronological order, from highest to lowest, to explore a new destination, to do bird spotting, to photograph animals and plants, to relax and finally to appreciate endangered species (cf. 6.2.7).

7.4.2.2 Conclusions regarding visitor perceptions of effective tourism management at MNP

The following conclusions have been drawn about how visitors perceived the effective management of tourism at MNP. The survey aimed at determining which variables are considered by visitors as being important in terms of management and how effectively these variables are implemented by management. Visitors rated 40 constructs on a five-point Likert scale where 1 represented *extremely unimportant/not at all* and where 5 represented *very important/very well*. Conclusions in this section will be presented under the classifications of transportation and hospitality, entertainment and attractions, conservation management, and, lastly, general management.

Transportation and hospitality

The following conclusions can be drawn related to the importance of the management of transport and hospitality from a visitor perspective:

- ✚ The cleanliness of ablution facilities is considered very important to visitors at MNP.
- ✚ The cleanliness of accommodation facilities is considered very important to visitors at MNP.
- ✚ Currently the cleanliness of ablution facilities and accommodation facilities are acceptable to visitors (cf. 6.2.2).

Entertainment and attractions

The following conclusions can be drawn about the importance of the management of entertainment and attractions from a visitor perspective:

- ✚ The condition of facilities at bird hides in MNP is considered important to visitors at the park.
- ✚ Visitors indicated that management needs to improve the effectiveness of maintenance of bird hides and tree-top walk facilities.
- ✚ The professionalism of guides on tours, guided walks, hiking trails and game drives in MNP is considered important to visitors.
- ✚ Visitors feel that the tours and game drives at MNP are adequate but not excellent in terms of value for money (cf. 6.2.2).

Conservation management

The following conclusions can be drawn about the importance of conservation management at MNP from a visitor perspective:

- ❏ The reintroduction of indigenous game species to MNP is considered very important to visitors at MNP.
- ❏ The control of domestic animals in the park is considered very important to visitors.
- ❏ Eradication of alien fauna and flora is considered very important to visitors.
- ❏ The park needs to improve its effectiveness in the removal of unnatural structures such as fences, man-made dams and buildings in the park.
- ❏ Management needs to improve the reclamation and rehabilitation of former agricultural land in MNP (cf. 6.2.2).

General management

The following conclusions can be drawn about the importance of general management aspects from a visitor perspective:

- ❏ The professionalism of reception staff is considered very important to the visitor experience.
- ❏ The adherence to speed limits by park officials is considered very important to visitors.
- ❏ The atmosphere, cleanliness and welcome at the park reception are considered very important to visitors.
- ❏ The professional dealing with complaints and queries by staff at the park is considered very important.
- ❏ The performance of housekeeping staff is considered very important.
- ❏ There is a need for improvements in terms of the provision of information on road conditions at MNP.
- ❏ Management needs to improve the management of speed limits for visitors in the park.
- ❏ SANParks is not marketing MNP effectively to the international tourism market (cf. 6.2.2).

7.4.2.3 Conclusions regarding visitor perceptions of sustainable tourism management at MNP

The following conclusions have been drawn regarding how visitors perceived the management of sustainable tourism practices at MNP. The survey aimed at determining

which constructs were considered by visitors to be important in terms of sustainable tourism management and how effectively these constructs are implemented by management. Visitors rated 14 constructs on a five-point Likert scale where 1 represented *extremely unimportant/not at all* and where 5 represented *very important/very well*. Conclusions in this section will be presented under the headings of socio-economic conclusions and environmental conclusions.

Socio-economic conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn about the management of the socio-economic impacts of tourism from a visitor perspective:

- ❏ There is a deficiency in the way in which MNP engages with the local community, as visitors feel the park should do more to obtain input from the local community on how the park manages resources.
- ❏ The park does not source enough goods and services from the local community (cf. 6.2.5).

Environmental conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn about the management of the environmental impacts of tourism from a visitor perspective:

- ❏ The management of litter in the park is considered very important to visitors at MNP.
- ❏ The implementation of the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle is considered very important, but visitors felt that management did not implement these principles effectively.
- ❏ Means to conserve water are regarded as very important to visitors at MNP.
- ❏ Visitors felt that management managed the utilisation of environmentally conscious architecture effectively.
- ❏ Visitors felt that management at MNP made an adequate effort to manage the litter problem in the park.
- ❏ Visitors felt that the park was using environmentally friendly building materials at an acceptable level.
- ❏ MNP management needs to investigate the possibility of using increased renewable energy sources.
- ❏ The park needs to enhance the way in which it provides environmental education to visitors (cf. 6.2.5).

7.4.2.4 Conclusions regarding gaps in management effectiveness

In order to identify gaps in management efficiency, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the constructs related to the effective management of various management tasks and sustainable tourism practices. The factors that were identified were identical in both sets of data, visitor perceptions of importance and management effectiveness. During this factor analysis the following factors were extracted:

Management effectiveness

- ❑ Information and accessibility
- ❑ Accommodation and ablution facilities
- ❑ Food and beverage
- ❑ Leisure facilities
- ❑ Professionalism of tours
- ❑ Conservation

- ❑ Concessions
- ❑ Human resources
- ❑ Regulations and marketing

Sustainable tourism

- ❑ Socio-economic impacts
- ❑ Environmental impacts

In order to determine whether there were significant differences between the two sets of factors (visitor importance and management effectiveness) these factors were compared by means of a t-test. This t-test identified significant differences between ten of the eleven factors. All factors apart from concessions indicated significant differences. These significant differences represent areas of management inefficiencies, and thus gaps in effective management. Through the adaptive evaluation process, these gaps have been identified after an analysis of the adaptive implementation of the three core park management tasks, namely ecotourism management, general management and conservation management as depicted in the framework (Figure 7.1). The following conclusions were made regarding the ten identified gaps; the gaps are represented from largest to smallest in terms of effect size:

- ❑ **Gap 1: Environmental impacts:** There was a significant difference between what visitors felt was important and the effectiveness of management related to the environmental impacts of tourism. The t-test indicated that this factor had the largest effect size, and thus the largest gap in management efficiency. Management was least effective in the management of water conservation and electricity conservation at tourist facilities, the use of renewable energy sources

and the implementation of the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle in operations (cf. 6.2.5).

- ❖ **Gap 2: Socio-economic impacts:** There was a significant difference between what visitors felt was important and how effective management was in terms of managing the socio-economic impacts of tourism. The t-test indicated that this factor had the second-largest effect size and thus indicated the second-largest gap in management efficiency. The results showed that management was least effective in their efforts to reduce poverty in surrounding communities through tourism. There were also inefficiencies related to local community development through tourism, educational programmes about conservation for local communities and the inclusion of local communities in the development of tourism services. Management failed to effectively engage with local communities by attracting input from the local community on how the park should manage its resources and the procurement of local goods and services from the community (cf. 6.2.5).

- ❖ **Gap 3: Conservation:** Visitors to MNP felt that there was a gap in the effective management of conservation in the park. This gap included the eradication of alien fauna and flora, the control of domestic and problem animals in the park, the reintroduction of indigenous game species, and the provision of conservation-focused educational facilities. Visitors also perceived inefficiencies in the management of low visitor numbers at MNP, the reclamation and rehabilitation of agricultural lands and the removal of unnatural structures in the park (cf. 6.2.4).

- ❖ **Gap 4: Regulations and marketing:** Visitors to MNP perceived a large gap in the effective management of speed limits by park officials as well as the marketing of MNP to both the domestic and international market (cf. 6.2.4).

- ❖ **Gap 5: Information and accessibility:** Visitors to the park perceived a gap in the effective management of information and accessibility. The main constructs where gaps were encountered in this factor related to the provision of adequate tourism signage in MNP, the effective management of road conditions in the park and the provision of information on road conditions in the park (cf. 6.2.4).

- ❏ **Gap 6: Accommodation and ablution facilities:** A gap was encountered in the effective provision of accommodation and ablution facilities at MNP. Although the visitors were generally satisfied with the cleanliness of accommodation and ablution facilities, they believed that improvements could be made. There was also a concern about the value for money of the accommodation services (cf. 6.2.4).

- ❏ **Gap 7: Leisure facilities:** The condition of leisure facilities was of concern to visitors to MNP, as they experienced a medium to large gap in this regard. The condition of the tree-top walk, facilities at the confluence lookout and bird hides did not meet visitor expectations. Although some of these facilities were damaged during severe floods in early 2013, the majority of respondents visited the park in the period prior to the floods, thus these facilities had not been in a satisfactory condition prior to the floods (cf. 6.2.4).

- ❏ **Gap 8: Professionalism of tours:** Although visitors to MNP were generally satisfied with the professional management of leisure facilities in the form of tours, a medium to large gap exists in the effective management thereof. Visitors believed that management did not manage tours (guided safaris) effectively through the monitoring of the professionalism of guides on tours, game drives, guided walks and hikes. There should also be improvements in the professional operation of tours to Mapungubwe Hill (cf. 6.2.4).

- ❏ **Gap 9: Human resources:** Visitors to MNP encountered a gap in terms of the effective management of human resources at MNP. Management needs to improve on the effective management of the reception, cleanliness and welcome of park reception as well as the professionalism of reception staff. Visitors were also not satisfied with the number of staff on duty at reception. In addition, they believed that management should improve the professionalism of staff in dealing with complaints and that the park management should be more accessible. Although visitors indicated that they believed that the performance of housekeeping staff was managed very well (cf. 6.2.4).

- ❏ **Gap 10: Food and beverages:** There is a gap in the effective management of food and beverage operations at MNP. Although this gap was the smallest of the ten identified, it still represented a medium to large gap. Visitors believed that the

quality of food and beverages and the value for money of food and beverages offered at the interpretation centre requires improvement (cf. 6.2.4).

7.4.2.5 Conclusion regarding the major management challenges facing MNP.

Visitors were requested to indicate how they perceived the major management challenges facing MNP. These conclusions are as follows:

- ✚ Visitors strongly agreed that mining near MNP would have a negative effect on the world heritage status of the park (cf. 6.2.6).
- ✚ Visitors strongly agreed that the park should actively engage in the inclusion of neighbouring farmlands in the park for park consolidation and expansion (cf. 6.2.6).
- ✚ Visitors strongly agreed that the division of the park into two parts negatively influenced their experience as visitors (cf. 6.2.6).
- ✚ Visitors agreed that management should consider providing tours to other archaeological sites in the park (cf. 6.2.6).
- ✚ Visitors agreed that MNP should expand the activities on offer for tourists (cf. 6.2.6).

7.4.2.6 Conclusions regarding visitor recommendations for management improvements

The final set of conclusions drawn from the visitor survey pertains to the qualitative data analysis of visitor comments for management improvements. Three main themes for improvements were identified, namely improvements to tourism facilities, infrastructural improvements and management recommendations.

- ✚ **Improvements to tourism facilities:** Visitors raised concerns about improvements at accommodation facilities and retail opportunities. Other areas related to tourism facilities that require management attention are the provision of additional attractions and the maintenance of current facilities, and improvements at reception and at the interpretation centre (cf. 6.2.8.1).
- ✚ **Infrastructural improvements:** A large number of visitors raised concerns about the improvement of road signage, road conditions and the problems encountered with fencing (cf. 6.2.8.2).
- ✚ **Management recommendations:** In terms of general management issues visitors were worried about problem animals, the provision of tourism information and the management of disruptive visitors. Visitors were also concerned about the

management of human resources at the park and the consolidation of the eastern and western parts of the park (cf. 6.2.8.3).

Visitors indicated that they generally considered the management of various tourism services and sustainable tourism undertakings as important to extremely important from a visitor's point of view. Visitors also indicated that they believed that management at MNP did implement these services and undertakings on acceptable levels. However, ten significant gaps were encountered in the management of these elements, requiring improvements.

7.4.2.7 Conclusions from local land owner study

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with local land owners and property managers in the area surrounding MNP. This survey was qualitative in nature and through a process of data coding the following conclusions were drawn from the five main themes identified.

Local land owner issues

Interviews with local land owners revealed that:

- ❏ SANParks and MNP management did not go to enough trouble to engage with local land owners (cf. 6.3.1).
- ❏ Local land owners are passionate about the park and believe that they can make a significant contribution (cf. 6.3.1).
- ❏ Improved collaboration between MNP and local land owners could result in improved economic benefits for both parties (cf. 6.3.1).

Mining issues

Local land owners revealed the following concerning mining:

- ❏ Local residents are concerned about the potential of increased mining activities in the area and the associated negative effects such as pollution (cf. 6.3.2).
- ❏ Although mining companies have an impact, local residents believe that, due to pressure from the media and environmental groups, these mining operations have sufficient mitigation measures in place to curb possible negative effects (cf.6.3.2).

- ❏ Mining in the area could increase the number of visitors to the area due to tourists having commercial mining interests (cf. 6.3.2).

MNP management issues

Local land owners revealed the following in terms of MNP management issues:

- ❏ Local land owners believe that MNP has made a contribution to cultural awareness, especially by establishing the interpretation centre (cf. 6.3.3).
- ❏ The park has made a contribution to the increased awareness of the area (cf. 6.3.3).
- ❏ MNP has created job opportunities for local people (cf. 6.3.3).
- ❏ The park is challenged by a number of infrastructural burdens including insufficient leisure and recreational facilities for visitors, poor maintenance of existing facilities, poor road conditions and poor signage (cf. 6.3.3).
- ❏ SANParks head office does not have a full understanding of the ground-level (tactical) management at MNP and does not do enough to focus on smaller national parks (cf. 6.3.3).
- ❏ Staff at MNP are poorly motivated and lack skills to deal with people (cf. 6.3.3).
- ❏ MNP is attracting the wrong tourist market; tourists visiting the park do so for the nature or Big 5 experience and not for a cultural experience (cf. 6.3.3).
- ❏ There are concerns about the large number of domestic animals inside MNP as well as problem wild animals, such as elephants, outside the park (cf. 6.3.3).

TFCA issues

The following conclusions related to TFCA issues were revealed during the interviews with local land owners:

- ❏ Local land owners are concerned about losing valuable game resources with the creation of the TFCA. This could influence their support of the project (cf. 6.3.4).
- ❏ Local land owners are concerned about the potential problems caused by the professional hunting and poaching of game species in South Africa that cross the border from neighbouring countries (cf. 6.3.4).
- ❏ The slow progress of the development of the TFCA is causing frustration among local land owners (cf. 6.3.4).
- ❏ The fences between South Africa and its neighbours need to be removed or maintained (cf. 6.3.4).

- ✚ The TFCA will contribute to the marketing of the area, especially to the international market (cf. 6.3.4).

World heritage issues

Local land owners revealed the following relating to world heritage issues:

- ✚ Not many visitors to the area are aware of the world heritage status of MNP (cf. 6.3.5).
- ✚ The world heritage status of MNP makes the area unique and could be used for marketing purposes (cf. 6.3.5).

7.4.2.8 Conclusions from interviews from management

From interviews undertaken with the management (employees) of MNP, the following conclusions were drawn about the six main themes identified:

Local land owner issues

In terms of local land owner issues, the following conclusions can be drawn from the interviews with management:

- ✚ The management of MNP believes that it is important for local land owners to be involved in the management of the park (cf. 6.4.1).
- ✚ The park management believes that it is making sufficient efforts to engage with local land owners through a park forum (cf. 6.4.1).
- ✚ The management believes that it contributes to the local community by creating jobs for local people (cf. 6.4.1).
- ✚ A number of local land owners do not participate in management efforts to engage with local land owners (cf. 6.4.1).

Mining issues

- ✚ Management is aware that the mining in the area has been negatively portrayed in the media, but they believe that the mining companies are implementing sufficient mitigation measures to curb potential negative impacts (cf. 6.4.2).

MNP management issues

Regarding management issues, the following conclusions can be drawn from the interviews with management:

- ❖ The park managers felt that one of the major achievements of MNP was the enhanced cultural experience the park offers. The park is unique among the national parks due to this cultural experience (cf. 6.4.3).
- ❖ A major park achievement was the steady increase in the annual number of tourist arrivals coupled with improved financial results (cf. 6.4.3).
- ❖ A major achievement for the park was the park's transition towards a TFCA (cf. 6.4.3).
- ❖ The management at the park experienced problems with management (head office) due to budget constraints that affect the provision of human resources and maintenance (cf. 6.4.3).
- ❖ Some managers lack management focus in terms of managing both a national park and a heritage site (cf. 6.4.3).
- ❖ Staff employed at the park do not have the necessary experience and they are not motivated (cf. 6.4.3).
- ❖ More tourism facilities should be provided and some infrastructure requires attention (cf. 6.4.3).
- ❖ Managers do not have a consistent opinion about the presence of domestic animals in the park. Some managers see this as a problem and others consider it to be a significant feature in the area's history (cf. 6.4.3).
- ❖ Elephants and primates cause significant damage to vegetation and to tourist property (cf. 6.4.3).
- ❖ MNP is situated in a remote location, which causes difficulties in managing certain aspects, including logistics and maintenance (cf. 6.4.3).
- ❖ Due to the park's remoteness, management encounters problems with the recruitment of competent human resources (cf. 6.4.3).
- ❖ The fragmentation of the park into two parts is considered a management challenge as it could have a negative impact on visitors' experience (cf. 6.4.4).

TFCA issues

Concerning TFCA issues, the following conclusions can be drawn from the management interviews:

- ❖ The TFCA is envisioned as providing a platform to promote the area to tourists (cf. 6.4.4).

- ❏ Managers consider political problems the main reason for the slow progress of the TFCA (cf. 6.4.4).

Tourism issues

The following conclusions related to tourism can be drawn from interviews with the management:

- ❏ The remote location of the park is considered an impediment to the development of tourism in the area (cf. 6.4.5).
- ❏ MNP is considered the main tourist attraction in the area; all other tourism facilities are augmented products originating from MNP (cf. 6.4.5).

World heritage issues

The following conclusions about world heritage issues can be drawn from interviews with the management:

- ❏ The world heritage status has created increased awareness of the cultural significance of the area (cf. 6.4.6).
- ❏ Although MNP is a World Heritage Site, it is inside a national park and it is the national park that is the main attraction (cf. 6.4.6).

7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The final secondary objective of this study was to make recommendations and inform a tourism management framework for MNP. The recommendations of the study contribute to the learning and adaptation process of the strategic adaptive management of tourism at MNP. These recommendations will be presented in two parts, namely; recommendations for the effective management of tourism services at the park and recommendations for further research.

7.5.1 Recommendations for the effective management of tourism services at MNP.

The following recommendations are made for improving the management of tourism services at MNP:

Information and accessibility

- ❏ Improved environmental educational facilities should be provided in the park as visitors have indicated a need in this regard. MNP could achieve this by developing a guidebook for visitors and placing notice boards at strategic sites in the park.
- ❏ The problems associated with signage require critical management attention. Better signage is required for roads and at tourist facilities information signage is required.
- ❏ There is a need for improved efforts to inform visitors about road conditions at MNP. It is recommended that SANParks investigate the possibility of reviewing the maps of the park in order to provide a more detailed representation of the park. It is also recommended that management investigate the possibility of providing visitors with a visitor information booklet that contains important information on the park. In addition notice boards could be placed at strategic places such as camps and at the park entrance informing visitors of road conditions especially during and after rain.
- ❏ Some of the roads are inaccessible to sedan vehicles and as a result large portions of the park are not experienced by a large portion of visitors. It is recommended that more roads are upgraded to make them accessible to ordinary vehicles so that visitors could better explore the park. In addition those roads catering for 4x4 vehicles should be clearly demarcated on the ground and on park maps. SANParks could also draw visitors' attention to the roads by including a notice about the roads in their reservation form.
- ❏ Visitors are concerned about the effects of mining in the vicinity of the park. Land owners and managers believe that the mining operations are adequately managed and do not pose a significant threat to the park. It is therefore recommended that management provide information on the impacts of mining and the management thereof to visitors in order to relieve their concerns. This could be achieved through information placed in visitor guides and through media channels.
- ❏ SANParks and MNP management should engage with relevant public stakeholders to improve access to the park through the upgrading of public roads and road signage to MNP, for example on the R572 and the Den Staat road.

Accommodation and ablution facilities

- ❏ There is a need for improvements in the provision of accommodation and ablution facilities at MNP. The maintenance of the tents at the Limpopo Forest Camp

should receive urgent attention and the park should investigate the possibility of expanding ablution facilities at Mazhou Camp, by building a second ablution facility.

- ❏ SANParks should be cautious about steep increases in accommodation rates as there is a need for accommodation that provides more value for money. Accommodation fees constitute the largest part of visitor expenditure and a steep increase in the cost of accommodation could make the park a less attractive destination. In addition the park is situated in a remote area far from its main source market, namely Gauteng, increased rates may make the park less attractive to visitors.

Food and beverages

- ❏ The food and beverage operations at MNP are outsourced to an outside provider. However, the management of MNP should monitor the operations of this service provider. Monitoring is required with regard to the quality of as well as the value for money of food and beverages.

Leisure facilities

- ❏ Although the tree-top walk and Maloutswa bird hide were severely damaged during the 2013 floods, management should ensure that these facilities are well maintained in future, as they currently inconvenience visitors and even lead to physical injuries.
- ❏ Litter is a problem at leisure facilities; management should make bins more visible and accessible. Visitors should also be educated in this regard.

Professional operation of tours

- ❏ Management should ensure the professional operation of tours, both game drives and tours to Mapungubwe Hill, in MNP. Management should provide training and skills development opportunities in areas where there are problems. Management should ensure that guides do not arrive late for tours, that these guides communicate effectively and show a passion and interest in the tours that they are conducting.
- ❏ The viability of tours to other historical sites in MNP should be investigated. These could include tours to K2 and to bushman paintings.

- ❏ Management should investigate the potential of expanding the number of leisure or adventure activities on offer to tourists. These leisure activities could incorporate guided mountain biking tours, guided walks and improved picnic areas.

Conservation

- ❏ There is no uniform agreement among managers that the presence of domestic animals is a problem in the park. However, the majority of managers as well as a large number of visitors and local land owners feel that domestic animals inside the boundaries of a national park are not acceptable. Management should investigate a unanimous management strategy for removing such animals from MNP. Should management decide to keep the animals in the park for their heritage value, they should be managed in an appropriate way in order to portray their cultural significance and visitors should be educated about their role in the park.
- ❏ Management should implement strategies to manage problem animals in the park. These problems refer to the damage caused by elephants and primates. Solutions may include better maintained elephant fences to protect sensitive vegetation systems, information to tourists on how to protect themselves from primates and possible use of camp assistants tasked with chasing away problem primates.
- ❏ Manmade structures situated in MNP, such as the remains of buildings, dams, fences and agricultural structures, should be removed.
- ❏ The border fence between South Africa and its neighbouring countries should be properly managed. The fence should either be removed or maintained. Since there is a viewpoint that this fence has historical significance, it is recommended that a portion of this fence be retained for its historical value. This historical value should be effectively communicated to tourists.

Human resources

- ❏ Management should control the effective and professional service delivery of staff at park reception. Reception staff should ensure that they act professionally and that the reception area is clean and welcoming to guests.
- ❏ Park management should be more visible and accessible to visitors. It is recommended that managers be more engaging with visitors by being visible and approachable in tourists areas such as camps, reception and in the park.

Management should also be present during periods of high seasonality such as public holidays, school holidays and long weekends.

- ✚ MNP management should engage with staff in order to improve their motivation and people skills. There may be a need for training and development related to customer service skills. Management and staff should be sourced that are willing to work in a remote location such as MNP.
- ✚ Management should, where possible, provide employment opportunities for local people. This has the benefit of reducing high staff turnover at the park as local people reside in the area and may have a decreased propensity to move.

Regulations and marketing

- ✚ SANParks should make a concerted effort to attract more international tourists to MNP. This could be done through the enhanced promotion of the parks World Heritage Status which appeals to international travellers.
- ✚ SANParks should consider offering discretionary pricing, through discounts and special offers, in order to encourage new tourists to visit the park. MNP's current market includes a high number of first-time visitors. Measures should be implemented to encourage these visitors to return.
- ✚ MNP's marketing efforts should focus more on the difference between MNP and other national parks. MNP is a unique park, and potential visitors should be informed beforehand that the park is not a Big 5 reserve. The cultural and heritage significance of the park should be its main promotional resource.
- ✚ The marketing strategy for MNP should place more emphasis on the area's world heritage status as a cultural landscape and the attractions in this regard should be exploited.
- ✚ The need for relaxation and escape is one of the main motivators for visiting MNP, therefor SANParks must strive to provide tourists with opportunities to relax.
- ✚ Management needs to place more emphasis on the area's ornithological (birding) resources for tourism in its marketing initiatives.
- ✚ The speeding of staff driving on roads in the park has to be monitored and managed by the MNP management. It should be possible for visitors to report speeding to management so that remedial action may be taken against guilty parties.
- ✚ Management needs to manage the actions of disruptive visitors at the park; noise restrictions should be implemented at camps, day visitors should not be permitted to take alcoholic beverages into the park (it is SANParks policy to restrict alcohol

by day visitors) and measures should be implemented to curb littering by visitors, especially school groups. Overnight visitors to camps in MNP such as Limpopo Forest Camp, Mazhou Camp and Leokwe Camp should be informed of the contact details of managers on duty so that these managers could be contacted should disruptive behaviour occur within camps at night. All day-visitor vehicles should be searched for restricted items such as alcohol, should such items be found, they should be confiscated by management and returned when the visitors leave the park. The park should clearly inform day visitors that alcohol is not permitted in the park. Fines and cautions should be actively issued to those visitors (both day visitors and overnight visitors) that break park rules such as littering, collecting firewood and speeding.

Socio-economic impacts

- ✚ There is a need for initiatives to reduce poverty in the surrounding communities through tourism. Management should investigate strategies to meet this need. These could include community natural resource management initiatives or community development initiatives.
- ✚ Management should step up its efforts to educate local residents in the vicinity of the park about the benefits of conservation.
- ✚ Improved engagement with local communities and park management is needed. Local land owners would like to contribute to the park but feel that management is counteracting this process. The park management forum should play a proactive role in not only engaging with local land owners, but also attracting those who do not attend the meetings. Currently, the park management forum does not fulfil its mandate of consulting with all relevant stakeholders. Currently, the local community has developed their own forum called the *Greater Mapungubwe Network*, park management is however largely absent from engaging with this forum. It is recommended that the park forum be reconstituted and effectively promoted to all stakeholders including local land owners. The park forum should meet regularly and deliberations and decisions made in the park forum should also be actively disseminated to stakeholders. MNP management should embrace the willingness of the local community to support the park and not take an autocratic stance in this situation. Failure to engage with the local community and a failure to attract the local community to the forum could result in the misinterpretation of management initiatives and possible antipathy towards the MNP management.

Environmental impacts

- ❏ Management needs to investigate the implementation of water conservation initiatives at MNP, such as water harvesting and the use of grey water.
- ❏ More initiatives related to electricity conservation are needed. Such initiatives could include switching off equipment and lights when they are not being used, the use of solar energy, time switches, power-saving light bulbs and the education of visitors about the importance of saving electricity.
- ❏ Greater recycling efforts are needed at MNP. Management should make more recycling bins available and these need to be visible and marked. Recycled products could be used in the park to illustrate the use of recycling and to encourage people to recycle.
- ❏ Management should continue to develop structures that enhance the aesthetic value of the environment and construction material should be environmentally friendly and sustainable.

General

- ❏ SANParks should actively engage with all relevant stakeholders in order to consolidate the two portions of MNP, as visitors find the fact that the park consists of two unconnected portions very inconvenient. Where land cannot be obtained through a process of purchase, negotiations should be conducted with the land owner(s) concerned to incorporate the land into the park through other means such as concessions.
- ❏ Management should engage with mining companies in the area about possible cooperation through an offset programme whereby rehabilitated and unused land is given to MNP for expansion purposes.
- ❏ SANParks should engage with the relevant stakeholders and government to facilitate the development of the TFCA.

7.5.2 *Recommendations for further research*

Further research is recommended in the following areas:

- ❏ The concepts of adaptive management and strategic adaptive management should be investigated. More research is needed on the application of these theories to non-conservation and non-ecological scenarios (as research into these management approaches are primarily focussed on conservation and ecological

environments) in order to determine the effectiveness of this management approach.

- ✚ An investigation is needed to determine whether world heritage resources inside national parks require separate management plans or whether these plans are effective when integrated within the overall national park management plan.
- ✚ An investigation is needed to determine the perceptions of visitors from Botswana and Zimbabwe about the development of the GMTFCA.
- ✚ It is recommended that a qualitative study be undertaken that analyses the attachment that visitors have to cultural heritage sites in national parks in South Africa. Current studies have focussed on visitor motivations, economic impacts and the importance of fauna and flora to tourism but an in-depth study into heritage attachment is lacking.
- ✚ MNP is utilising events to promote the park such as the Tour de Thuli. A study into the effectiveness of utilising events to promote a national park is recommended.
- ✚ Ornithological tourism is considered important to an area such as MNP due to its bird life. It is recommended that further studies be undertaken to analyse the importance and impact of birding at other national parks and protected areas.

7.5.3 Limitations of the study

This study experienced some limitations, the major limitation related to local land owners. There are numerous portions of land surrounding MNP, however it was not possible to contact all relevant land owners. This is because a comprehensive data base of land owners does not exist and the fact that many land owners do not reside on their land, but in other locations including other countries. The area is remote and difficulties were experienced in accessing land owners due to poor road conditions and poor telecommunication infrastructure in the area.