

**An analysis of stakeholder relations of three
traditional authorities within the
uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the
iSimangaliso Wetland Park**

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DECLARATION

I, **RIAN AUCAMP**, hereby declare that this study “An analysis of stakeholder relations of three traditional authorities within the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park” is my own original work and that all the sources used or quoted have been accurately reported and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this mini-dissertation has not previously been submitted, in its entirety or in part, by me or any other person for degree purposes to this or any other university.

R AUCAMP

DATE:

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ABSTRACT

In pursuing good governance, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) needs to function more effectively, efficiently and economically, in order to be responsive to the socioeconomic conditions of people living both in and outside the park, and to be sustainable for future growth. The main intention of the study was to investigate a new stakeholder relations strategy for the three traditional councils located within the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the IWP. It was found that the existing stakeholder strategy was inadequate to ensure more effective and efficient stakeholder relations among the three traditional authorities. The deficiencies in good governance related to stakeholder relations may consequently impede the success of this important conservation area and World Heritage Site. In view of the various challenges facing the IWP, a number of changes to its stakeholder strategy need to be made to enable more responsive stakeholder relations.

The study employed a predominantly qualitative approach in pursuit of the research objectives. Two primary data collection methods were used, namely a review of the relevant literature on stakeholder relations in the public sector as part of good governance principles globally followed by an analysis of the statutory requirements of public entities in South Africa; and the conducting of semi-structured interviews.

In essence, the aim of the research was to help safeguard the IWP from future stakeholder engagement failures. Interests within and between stakeholder groups need to be balanced in order to ensure the viability of the IWP and to enable it to fulfil its mandate.

The study concludes by advocating that the achievement of more responsive stakeholder relations at the IWP can only be achieved by developing a revised and comprehensive stakeholder strategy. Other recommendations include the adoption of people and parks structures with clear terms of reference through which formal stakeholder engagement can take place, while ensuring that the development of the north of the park is prioritised and outstanding land claims are dealt with. This can be achieved by the optimal utilisation of the available physical, human, information and financial resources in the IWP which will ensure that it reaches its objectives and maximises benefits for all its stakeholders.

Keywords: stakeholder relations, governance, state-owned entity (SOE), public entity, governance frameworks, good governance, corporate governance, iSimangaliso Wetland Park, traditional authorities

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DEA	Department of Environmental Affairs
GEF	Global Environment Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IMP	iSimangaliso Wetland Park Integrated Management Plan
IWP	iSimangaliso Wetland Park
LSDI	Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PoWPA	Programme of Work on Protected Areas
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
PRC	Presidential Review Committee
SOE	State-owned Entity
UN	United Nations
PE	Public Entity

CHAPTER ONE:

ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 Orientation

On 24 November 2000, the South African minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism proclaimed the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) – the former Greater St Lucia Wetland Park, which is a World Heritage Site (RSA, 2000b) – as a park.

The IWP, which extends across approximately 359 000 hectares, is one of eight World Heritage Sites in South Africa, and was established as an anchor project for the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative (LSDI). The LSDI, a regional cross-border initiative with Swaziland and Mozambique, formed part of a complement of spatial development initiatives that the South African Cabinet considered in an attempt to unlock the inherent yet under-utilised economic potential of the country's natural assests, as well as improve the performance of government in areas that hold the greatest opportunity for growth (Moosa, 2002:1). The LSDI set out to address critical blockages to economic development, which entailed, among others, constructing new roads, reducing malaria, improving border post infrastructure and developing tourism infrastructure (Moosa, 2002:1).

As declared in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Integrated Management Plan (IMP), the park, which falls mostly within the uMkhanyakude District Municipality, is ranked as the second poorest and most deprived municipality in the country (IMP, 2017:17) According to the national census (StatsSA, 2011), the surrounding districts had a population of approximately 676 810 inhabitants in 2011. Over 80% of the households lived below the poverty line, and an estimated 13% of the economically active population was formally active. Of those aged 20 years and more, 25,4% had completed matric, while 4,9% possessed qualifications from tertiary institutions. The unemployment rate was 42,8%, and HIV prevalence was estimated at 13–15%. Much of the district remains characterised by densely inhabited and poorly serviced communities. Aspects which require urgent attention include: poverty alleviation, job creation and local economic development, and the upgrading of water and sanitation, electricity, health services, roads and public transport, infrastructure and social services (IMP, 2017:17).

The prevailing dire circumstances are exacerbated by the area's long history of dispossession. The entire IWP has been the subject of land claims by neighbouring communities. Nine of these claims were settled in conformance to the land claims framework in protected areas, and were adopted by the South African Cabinet in 2002 (RSA, 2005a). This framework provides for:

- ownership by successful claimants without physical occupation, through the transfer of title with registered notarial deeds restrictions;

- continued use of the land for the purposes of conservation and associated community activities in perpetuity;
- compensation through remuneration and provision of a package of benefits, including revenue-sharing, mandatory partner status in tourism development, access to natural resources, cultural heritage access, education and capacity-building, as well as land restoration and infrastructure programmes; and
- sustainable partnership (co-management) between claimants and the protected area manager in a manner that facilitates biodiversity conservation while ensuring economic viability.

The five remaining land claim settlements are currently being processed. In general, the settled land claims have led to the establishment of a claimant community trust, which allows certain benefit-sharing opportunities for the claimant communities (IMP, 2017:25).

The predominant utilisation of land in the region includes agriculture, timber plantations, eco-tourism and subsistence activities (harvesting of natural resources). Tourism and agriculture are predictably the two primary economic activities in the district. In 2011, the contribution of tourism to the gross domestic product (GDP) in the uMkhanyakude municipal area was estimated at 41%. The latter was an approximate increase of 4% in the number of the beds booked in the municipal region (Turpie, *et al.*, 2014). At that stage, the number of tourism businesses around the park had increased by approximately 89%, and tourism accounted for over 8 000 permanent jobs (Turpie *et al.*, 2014).

Economic growth in the surrounding areas of the park has not kept pace with population growth. This has resulted in rising unemployment and a decline in real wages over the last 20 years. The findings of a study undertaken by iSimangaliso as part of a Global Environment Fund (GEF) grant in communities bordering the southern sections of the park revealed that households are generally dependent on a combination of government welfare grants and income from family members who reside and work elsewhere (IMP, 2017:22). These socioeconomic conditions place additional pressure on the IWP, because it is perceived as a beacon of hope for the surrounding communities in creating jobs and generating economic opportunities in the area.

1.2 Background

The mandate of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) is derived from the World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999 (RSA, 1999c), which clearly requires the park to focus on conserving the world heritage values, empowering local communities, and optimising the tourism potential of the park (IMP, 2017:1).

The implementation, which involves establishing a balance of these three focus areas, is executed under the guidance of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Board, which includes community, land

claimant, aMmakhosi, conservation, and tourism representation (IMP, 2017:6). It can be inferred that this mandate requires good governance for effective and efficient management of the park.

International guidelines on good governance are clear. The United Nations department of economic and social affairs (UN, 2007) perceived good governance as a critical element of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) because this provides a framework to fight poverty and inequality. The MDGs were replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. Good governance, according to the UN, is participatory, transparent and accountable, encompassing state institutions and their operations, including private sector and civil society organisations. States should, therefore, be assessed on both the quality and the quantity of public goods provided to citizens (Rotberg, 2004). Furthermore, good governance promotes gender equality, sustains the environment, enables citizens to exercise personal freedoms, and provides tools to reduce poverty, deprivation, fear and violence (Cheema, 2005).

Of particular significance to the IWP, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 2008 published five principles of good governance for protected areas: legitimacy and voice, direction, performance, accountability, fairness and rights. Legitimacy and voice speaks primarily to acceptance and appreciation, and fosters active engagement of stakeholders. Direction deals with the strategic matters of a conservation authority, such as governance, and management plans and policies. Performance has to do with achieving conservation and other objectives, ensuring financial sustainability, social sustainability and risk management. Accountability entails upholding the integrity and commitment of all responsible for specific duties in respect of the protected areas, as well as communication and performance management. Finally, fairness and rights entails striving towards an equitable sharing of the costs and benefits of the protected area, dealing with the livelihoods of people affected by the protected area, as well as issues pertaining to right holders (Abrams *et al.*, 2003; Borrini-Feyerabend *et al.*, 2006; Dudley, 2008; Eagles, 2009; Graham *et al.*, 2003; Institute on Governance, 2002).

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 1999), which corresponds closely with IUCN criteria, explored eight major characteristics of good governance, highlighting governance that is “participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law”.

1.3 Problem statement

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) acknowledges in its IMP that large differences exist in access to services between urban and rural areas. However, the less developed rural areas experience much higher backlogs in the provision of infrastructure and services. It is also acknowledged that while there have been interventions to address infrastructure and service backlogs throughout the area of influence of iSimangaliso, it is likely that there have been more

interventions surrounding the southern sections of the park compared to the more rural northern sections (IMP, 2017:17).

The northern sections of the IWP refer to the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area. According to its Annual Report (2015), the uMhlabuyalingana Municipality is one of the five local municipalities that comprise the uMkhanyakude District. The municipality is generally rural. The population is spread among the 17 municipal wards and four traditional council areas, which are the Tembe, Mashabane, Mabaso and Zikhali traditional councils (Annual Report, 2015:10).

Three of the traditional councils, Tembe, Mabaso and Zikhali, and the uMhlabuyalingana Municipality around the northern sections of the IWP have raised concerns pertaining to the breakdown in stakeholder relations and trust between the IWP and themselves. The matter was raised with the president, the minister of Environmental Affairs, and the member of the Executive Council responsible for Environment in KwaZulu-Natal, including the director general of Environmental Affairs. The director general of the Department of Environmental Affairs has held two stakeholder engagements with the affected traditional councils, the municipality and community leaders to listen to their grievances and build new stakeholder relations with them (personal communication, 18 May 2017).

This breakdown in stakeholder relations was raised also in a recent news report in *The Mercury* (Hans & Pillay, 2017:2). The then president, Jacob Zuma, announced at the national Freedom Day celebrations in Manguzi, uMhlabuyalingana, KwaZulu-Natal, that government would investigate the local community's grievances concerning their exclusion from participating in business activities in the IWP. Local traditional leader, Mabhudu Tembe, urged government to fast-track transformation at the IWP, because his people were prohibited from benefitting in the local economy and were also concerned about the slow pace of land restitution. Mr Tembe further stated that if the IWP had been governed for the benefit of his people, "we would not be facing the challenges we have now". Sihle Zikalala, a member of the Executive Committee (MEC) for Economic Development in KwaZulu-Natal, said that the park had not afforded the local inhabitants adequate opportunities to participate in tourism and transformation in terms of both ownership and participation (Hans & Pillay, 2017: 2).

Since the inception of the park, significant resources and effort have been focused on the delivery of social and economic benefits to impoverished neighbouring communities through various programmes. However, unrealistic expectations of delivery and the potential for delivery of benefits pose a key risk for iSimangaliso, including the difficulty to balance interests within and between stakeholder groups (IMP, 2017:44).

However, it seems that the focus as acknowledged by the IWP in its IMP on the south of the park has led to a collapse in stakeholder relations and trust between the IWP and the three traditional

councils in the north of the park, including Tembe, Zikhali and Mabaso. In this regard, the UN (UNDESA, 2007) reminds us that governance is sound when it allocates and manages resources to respond to collective problems. In other words, the IWP should deliver public goods of acceptable quality to all areas of the park, effectively and efficiently.

A regional balance was not implemented in the IWP, which has led to mistrust and a collapse of stakeholder relations in the north of the park. The study thus draws on sources which outline the principles of international best practice in stakeholder relations, including the relevant legislative requirements applicable to public entities in South Africa, to analyse stakeholder relations in three traditional councils located in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the IWP.

1.4 Research objectives

The following research objectives were pursued.

- Analyse the current stakeholder relations at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) in relation to relevant stakeholder theories and principles.
- Analyse the statutory and regulatory requirements relating to the effective operation of public entities in South Africa.
- Assess the shortcomings and challenges pertaining to stakeholder relations of three traditional councils in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the IWP.
- Recommend corrective measures on how to improve stakeholder relations and engagement at the IWP.

1.5 Research questions

To achieve the aforementioned objectives, the following research questions were posed:

- What do stakeholder relations entail according to relevant literature?
- What are the statutory and regulatory requirements for effective functioning of public entities in South Africa?
- What are the challenges and shortcomings experienced in terms of stakeholder relations that are impeding stakeholder relations in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)?
- What interventions can be proposed to assist the IWP in developing stakeholder relations for the benefit of all traditional authorities in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area?

1.6 Central theoretical statements

Good governance refers to the way in which a government undertakes its task within a democracy and lives up to participatory and consultative requirements (Mhone & Edigheji, 2004:3-4). Being under state control, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) is required to meet these needs and to be accountable for achieving their goals and strategic objectives (Ababio, 2007:5; Fourie, 2007:741-742; Kakumba & Fourie, 2007:654; Kuye & Mafunisa, 2003:426).

In pursuing good governance, the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) charged with the management and government of the IWP must ensure proper consultation, along with optimal utilisation of the available physical, human, information and financial resources not only to achieve the objectives but to maximise benefits for all stakeholders (Fourie, 2007:734; Pauw *et al.*, 2002:66-67;).

Various authors highlight the importance of ensuring a sound connection between an organisation and its stakeholders and propose the following important elements: the organisation should maintain relationships with stakeholders in which a mutual understanding of the objectives is apparent; it should focus on relationships with stakeholders to achieve shared results; it should place the emphasis on charting the organisational landscape and assist in balancing different stakeholder needs; and it should deal with management decision making (Freeman *et al.*, 2010:28; Luoma-aho & Vos, 2010:315; Mainardes *et al.*, 2011:229; Pesqueux & Damak-Ayadi, 2005:8).

The IUCN (2008a) noted that protected areas seem to function properly only if they are embedded within a supportive environment that includes both the ecology of the area and the people living in and around such protected areas. These significant indicators are a key component of the success of protected areas.

Parks should adhere to guiding principles which relate to good governance to function efficiently and effectively, and to being truly responsive to the socioeconomic conditions of people living both in and outside the park (IUCN, 2008).

1.7 Research methodology

According to Haralambos (2002:89), any academic study requires an appropriate methodology to attain its objectives and arrive at valuable conclusions. The research methodology for this study is described in the following sections in terms of the research approach and design, study population and sampling, data collection instruments and data analysis.

1.7.1 Research approach and design

To enable an in-depth analysis of governance practices at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP), the study adopts a predominantly qualitative approach in pursuit of the research objectives. A qualitative approach revealed the extent to which good governance principles in relation to stakeholder relations are adhered to at the IWP. Moreover, as good governance ultimately relies on the skill and competencies of those charged with governing, the qualitative method in this study has provided a clearer understanding of study participants' knowledge of governance and its requirements (Henning, 2004:5).

Two primary data collection methods were used, namely a review of the relevant literature on stakeholder relations in the public sector as part of good governance principles globally, followed

by an analysis of the statutory requirements of public entities in South Africa; and the conducting of semi-structured interviews.

An evaluation research design was followed. Evaluation research focuses on the best allocation of scarce resources, accountability, and improving a current programme or service (Fouché, 2011:452). Evaluation research can, for example, assess the aims, design, funding possibilities, implementation and applicability of social interventions to determine whether an intervention has produced the intended results. This can be conducted by adopting a qualitative, quantitative or mixed-methods approach (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:98; Royse *et al.*, 2010:12).

1.7.2 Literature review

Relevant literature relating to good governance, stakeholder relations, institutional development and service delivery was reviewed. These included, *inter alia*, gazetted legislation (e.g. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996; Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999; World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999; National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998), policy documents and guidelines (e.g. *Governance oversight role over state owned entities* issued by Treasury), strategic plans and documents (auditor-general's reports, internal audit reports and annual reports of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)) and governance protocols (e.g. *Protocol on corporate governance in the public sector* issued by the Department of Public Enterprises). Furthermore, IWP-specific documents and reports covering the past five financial years were consulted to enable a comprehensive overview of governance practices at the park, as were authoritative institutional and academic sources for the purpose of achieving the research objectives of this study.

Data were collected primarily through desktop research to crystallise and define the global principles of good governance, including the country-specific statutory and legislative requirements for public entities, to which the IWP is required to adhere.

The aim of the literature study was to identify theories and constructs, and their application in relation to stakeholder relations governance, as part of good governance. The following databases were consulted to establish whether sufficient literature was available to conduct the study:

- Catalogue of books: Ferdinand Postma Library (North-West University);
- NRF: Nexus;
- EbscoHost: Communication & Mass Media, Environment Complete, Environmental Communication;
- JSTOR;
- Emerald;
- Science Direct; and
- Google Scholar.

The literature survey revealed that there was adequate literature available to conduct the study. However, a similar study could not be located in the South African context that focused on stakeholder relations as part of good governance at the IWP.

1.7.3 Semi-structured interviews

Following the comprehensive literature review described above, data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews comprising questions based on theoretical principles established from the literature.

According to Du Plooy (2009:198), semi-structured interviews comprise questions based on a specific topic. However, the interviewer may deviate and pose follow-up questions based on the respondent's replies. A semi-structured interview may include both a questionnaire and an in-depth interview (mixed method). This study used semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews enabled the interviewer to follow-up and probe responses, motives and feelings. The potential added value of this method was that the recording of non-verbal communication, facial expressions and gestures could enrich the qualitative aspects of the data. The more guided or focused the interview, the less problematic the analysis (Davies, 2006:157-158).

Cohen *et al.*, (2007:349) define an interview as an exchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. Interviews enable participants to discuss their interpretations of the research and express how they perceive situations to form their opinion. The order of the interview may be controlled, while providing space for spontaneity. The interviewer can also press the participant for complete answers and responses about complex issues. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:146), interviews can produce significant and extensive information, since the researcher can pose questions on a wide variety of aspects. These include facts, people's beliefs and perspectives relating to such facts, their feelings and motives, their present and past behaviour, their conscious reasons for actions and their experiences. Interviews are also likely to yield information that the researcher did not plan for (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:146).

The primary shortcoming of interviews is that they are time-consuming, both in the collection and interpretation of data. The researcher was mindful of this fact and allocated adequate time to do justice to the interviewees and the data they provided.

The semi-structured interview questions were compiled following a detailed literature review and analysis of all legislative and regulatory documents.

1.7.4 Population and sampling

It was believed that a non-random, non-probability sample would be most suitable to provide information required to respond to the research objectives, namely (i) evaluate good governance practices related to stakeholder relations in accordance with stipulated good governance

principles, and (ii) establish whether any stakeholder governance deficiencies may be identified, and, if so, how these may be remedied. Welman and Kruger (2001:62) reveal that non-probability samples are less complicated and more economical than probability samples.

The total study population and targeted sample comprised:

- Director general of the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA);
- Deputy director general for Biodiversity and Conservation at the DEA;
- Chairperson of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Board;
- Director: Park Operations at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP);
- iNkosi Tembe of the Tembe Traditional Council;
- iNkosi Zikhali of the Mbila Traditional Council, who was assisted by the representative of the iSimangaliso Land Claim Trusts on the National People and Parks Steering Committee;
- iNkosi Nxumalo of the Mabasa Traditional Council; and
- The municipal manager of the uMkhanyakude District Municipality and former uMhlabuyalingana municipal manager.

1.7.5 Data collection instruments and analysis

Two primary data collection instruments were used, that is a literature review and semi-structured interviews.

1.7.6 Data analysis strategy

Once collected, the data were coordinated logically (Welman & Kruger, 2001:200). The general approach to data analysis in evaluation research, according to Johnson (1992:90), is to examine the data for meaningful themes, issues or variables to reveal any patterns, and then to attempt to explain them. Thus, the primary aim of the data analysis for this study was to reveal the underlying factors that influence the implementation of good governance principles at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP). The data analysis was descriptive and presented in tables and graphs.

1.8 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are paramount, because compromising ethics jeopardises the credibility of the study. Certain ethical considerations need to be kept in mind when conducting social research. Babbie (2004:28-29) highlights two basic ethical concerns: voluntary participation and no harm to subjects.

Voluntary participation comprises free choice to participate in the research. Social research often requires people to reveal personal information or thoughts and feelings about a subject. This implies requesting respondents to participate when they themselves had no intention to participate, and hence soliciting their time and energy (Babbie, 2004:63).

In adhering to the aforementioned principles, it is essential that respondents participate voluntarily and without coercion. In this study, the managers, coordinators, students and volunteers were invited to participate willingly in the study, with the knowledge that they could withdraw at any given time.

Du Plooy (2009:96) perceived the principle of 'do no harm' as avoiding the following: causing embarrassment, physical discomfort, emotional stress or humiliation to participants for the duration of the study (i.e. during and after the research). Mindful of these principles, the necessary approval from the director-general of the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) and the chief executive officer of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) to conduct the research in the respective institutions was sought. In addition, the respondents were briefed regarding the research objectives and assured that the information would remain anonymous and used only for the purposes of this study. As a DEA employee, the researcher was guided and assisted by his supervisor to maintain objectivity in order to ensure that unbiased results and consistent, valid findings were obtained.

1.9 Significant contribution of the study

The collapse in stakeholder relations, coupled with the synoptic overview of the socioeconomic conditions in the areas surrounding the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP), has placed enormous pressure on good governance at the IWP. These good governance deficiencies related to stakeholder relations have the potential to impede the success of this important conservation area and World Heritage Site. In essence, the intention of this research was to help safeguard the IWP from future stakeholder engagement failures. Balancing interests within and between stakeholder groups needs to be achieved if the IWP is to fulfil its mandate.

By analysing good governance practices related to stakeholder relations at the IWP against international principles of good governance as well as against the statutory requirements applicable to public entities in South Africa, the study set out to acquire a proper understanding of operations related to stakeholder engagement at the IWP. The results of this analysis can provide the leadership of IWP with a reliable explanation of the non-negotiable elements of good governance practices when relating to stakeholders. This in itself could significantly improve the prospects of the IWP and all its stakeholders. In addition, should clear governance deficiencies transpire in the course of intensive engagement and interaction with the IWP and DEA leadership, the study can offer recommendations to position the IWP on an effective and efficient governance trajectory, to promote and encourage full compliance with principles of good governance.

1.10 Limitations of the study

Although the non-probable sample of respondents used in the study posed certain benefits, it can also be regarded as a limitation of the study. Being limited to leadership and governance role players in a managerial capacity who are responsible for governance at the IWP and three

traditional authorities, the study excludes the views of other stakeholders that may be affected by (non-)adherence to principles of good governance related to stakeholder engagement in and around the park.

Another potential limitation may be the element of bias, because the researcher is a Department of Environmental Affairs staff member. Every effort was, however, taken to ensure that the participants' views were reflected accurately, without prejudice.

1.11 Chapter layout

Chapter 1: Orientation and problem statement. This chapter provides extensive background information and an introduction to the research problem. It also outlines the research objectives and questions, and explains the adopted research methodology.

Chapter 2: Literature review on stakeholder relations. This chapter provides an overview of stakeholder relations theory and principles. The literature review also takes into account relevant models and international best practice for protected areas.

Chapter 3: Legislative and regulatory requirements for effective functioning of public entities in South Africa. In this chapter the relevant legislation and regulations which dictate what is expected from a public entity in South Africa are discussed.

Chapter 4: Analysing stakeholder relations at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park: empirical findings. This chapter firstly describes the research methodology and design adopted for the study in detail. Secondly, a detailed discussion of the fieldwork involving the use of semi-structured interviews is provided. The discussion is structured according to the broad principles established from the theoretical orientation, reflecting the extent to which theory is applied in practice at the IWP. Thirdly, factors are analysed that seem to influence non-adherence to principles pertaining to stakeholder relations in the park. Fourthly, in the course of the analysis, the identified factors which influence the collapse in stakeholder relations are assessed, and, finally, remedies are proposed on how stakeholder relations could be improved.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations: ensuring adherence in relation to stakeholder relations at the IWP. The final chapter presents relevant conclusions and recommendations based on the theoretical analysis and the empirical findings. In particular, the identified factors to strengthen stakeholder relations in order to restore trust among stakeholders are accentuated.

1.12 Chapter conclusion

Chapter 1 introduces the purpose of the study by providing the background, problem statement, research question and the objectives of the study. The central theoretical statements and methodology are discussed. Emphasis is placed on the complexity of stakeholder relations in the

iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) that calls for an analysis of stakeholder relations in three traditional councils located within the IWP uMhlabuyalingana municipal areas.

The next chapter addresses the first research objective, namely to conduct a literature review on stakeholder relations. The review provides an overview of stakeholder relations theory and principles. The review also takes into account relevant models and international best practice for protected areas.

CHAPTER TWO:

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS THEORY AND PRINCIPLES

2.1 Introduction

In outlining the purpose of this study, chapter 1, *inter alia*, emphasised the need for the analysis of the complex stakeholder relations in three traditional councils located in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area. To achieve this objective, this chapter focuses on the relevant stakeholder theories and principles by taking into account relevant models and international best practice for protected areas.

To achieve the aforementioned objective, the chapter is structured according to the following primary themes:

- providing an overview of systems theory as the stakeholder concept to conceptualise stakeholder relations theory;
- providing an overview of the stakeholder concept itself, followed by three theoretical paradigms thereof;
- reflecting on the classification of stakeholders;
- once classified, identifying the categories of relationships and how best these can be measured; and
- providing, in conclusion, an overview of the importance of stakeholder relations theory in protected areas.

Investigation of these primary themes resulted in a clearer understanding of the theory of stakeholder management and an analysis thereof in the IWP.

2.2 Systems theory as a meta-theory

Friedman and Allen (cited in Brandell, 2011:03) assert that systems theory explains the constituent parts and dynamics of a system in order to clarify the challenges and facilitate the development of balanced intervention strategies. Systems theory, therefore, provides an important conceptual framework or meta-theory to consider and assist in comprehending stakeholder challenges in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP). Conrad and Poole (2002:24) describe a system as a network of interdependent components. Littlejohn (1992:41) and Angelopulo (cited in Lubbe & Puth, 1994:41) posit that systems theory was best explained by Ludwig von Bertalanffy. Friedman and Allen (cited in Brandell, 2011:03) postulate that Ludwig von Bertalanffy, an Austrian-born biologist (1901–1972), “is credited with being the originator of the form of systems theory used in social work”. Von Bertalanffy was frustrated with the manner in which cause-and-effect theories described growth and change in living organisms as change which might follow because of interaction between parts of an organism. Based hereon, Von Bertalanffy transformed the framework of systems theory by

taking a system into consideration as a whole in terms of its relationships and interactions with other systems as a mechanism of growth and change. Other philosophers, such as Max Wertheimer, assert that in systems theory, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, but yet interdependent (Skyttner, 2005:50). Generally, a system is defined as a collection of components that by virtue of its organisation and function becomes meaningful in its own right. Halsall (2008:23-24) identifies the following characteristics of systems theory:

- A certain type of meaningful order in which the subsystems are arranged is required.
- The component parts of the system need to perform certain functions, which contribute towards the systemic operations of the whole system.

Therefore, organisations comprise subsystems that are interrelated. Systems theory can also be applied in an organisational setting such as iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP).

2.2.1 Organisations as systems

Conrad and Poole (2002:24) define an organisation as a system of individuals pursuing several goals by “creating and interpreting messages within complex networks of interpersonal and task relationships”. A system is also described as existing in a particular environment. Consequently, certain factors in that specific environment will have an impact on the system and its subsequent operations and outputs.

Miller (cited in Dainton & Zelle, 2011:99) defines an organisation as “an entity characterised by a group of people who coordinate activities to achieve individual and collective goals”. For the purposes of this study, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) is considered as a system while its stakeholders are subsystems. It is imperative to understand how a particular system functions because it contributes towards evaluating the achievements and challenges that need to be addressed in an organisation to enable it to function properly.

2.2.2 Systems theory and the stakeholder concept

The stakeholder concept primarily draws from four different spheres of organisational management (Fassin, 2009:113; Freeman *et al.*, 2010:40; Freeman, 2010:33-41; Mainardes, Alves & Raposo, 2011:237), namely strategic organisational planning, systems theory, corporate social responsibility and organisational theory. The stakeholder concept draws from systems theory in those organisations. In this instance, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) is considered as an open system that constantly interacts with several stakeholders – which requires the development of cooperative strategies.

To understand the concept of stakeholder relations theory, it is important to reflect on systems theory. According to Greeff (2011:2), systems theory posits that an organisation is a system and its stakeholders are subsystems. Furthermore, the actions of the organisation and its stakeholders are interconnected and affect each other. The theory accentuates dependence, connectedness and

interrelatedness between organisations and their stakeholders – a notion which is relevant to the IWP.

Systems are influenced and function within the context of their immediate environment although not all are equally sensitive to environmental influences. Systems can be categorised according to their relative openness to the environment as follows (Witmer, 2006:362-363):

- Closed systems are usually unresponsive to external environmental influences and have internal control mechanisms to adapt to those influences that need to be taken into account.
- Open systems continually strive to adapt and survive by responding to environmental forces that influence them, and therefore aim to sustain a sound balance between input and output.
- Cybernetic systems are sensitive to the complex environment within which they operate and have internal mechanisms that enable them to adapt to environmental changes or challenges.

Littlejohn and Foss (2005:40) expound on systems theory as a multidisciplinary approach to knowledge. In this regard, organisations are most likely to endure open systems that are open to mutual change between themselves and their environment. The managers who operate in such an open system act as change leaders who help the organisation to manage its relationships with various stakeholders in the environment (Holtzhausen, 2005:408).

Tensions or pressures within the IWP, as outlined in chapter 1, could develop into conflict scenarios among various social groups that form the environment (Grof, 2001:193). Social groups, according to Grof (2001:193), are generally referred to as stakeholders or stakeholder groups. Owing to the expectations of these stakeholders or stakeholder groups, the tension and interaction that they experience with the organisation result in having to develop and nurture relationships.

Therefore, it is necessary to manage relationships with these stakeholders. Systems theory stresses interaction and feedback in relationships within a society (Blumberg, 2008:21).

This theory provides a beneficial theoretical underpinning for the role of stakeholder relations in the IWP, since it reveals how an organisation's survival and prosperity depend on relationships within itself and its environment (Barker *et al.*, 2001:20; Cutlip *et al.*, 2002:21-23). In the following section, the conceptualisation of stakeholder management theory is discussed.

2.3 Conceptualising stakeholder management theory

Jahansoozi (2007a:398) posits that stakeholder relations theory focuses on the need for the organisation to build resilient and strong relationships with key stakeholders to maximise the organisation's potential to reach its goals. According to Freeman (2005:122), stakeholder

management involves the organisation's management of its relationships with stakeholders in an action-oriented way. Consequently, stakeholder relations theory is not merely about identifying stakeholders, but about creating meaningful relationships with them. Stakeholder theory also perceives organisations as systems that depend on their internal and external backers for survival (Freeman *et al.*, 2010:86).

According to Ledingham (2003:190), the theory of stakeholder relationship management could be defined as “effectively managing organisational-public relationships around common interests and shared goals, over time, resulting in mutual understanding and benefit for interacting organisations and publics”. The emphasis is, therefore, not only on the one side reaching the organisation's goals, but also on creating mutually beneficial relationships and having shared goals between the organisation and its stakeholders.

Robbins *et al.*, (2012:95) also underscore the significance of managing stakeholder relationships by indicating the following: “... it can lead to other organisational outcomes, such as improved predictability of environmental changes, more successful innovations, greater degree of trust among stakeholders, and greater organisational flexibility to reduce the impact of change”. They also highlight that “an organisation depends on these external groups as sources of inputs (resources) and as outlets for outputs (goods and services), and managers should consider their interests as they make decisions and take actions”. Moreover, Freeman (2005:122) asserts that stakeholder management entails the organisation's management of relationships and interactions with stakeholder groups through clear action.

This theory underlines the significance of relationships that are built on mutual understanding and shared goals, which benefit both parties. The following discussion focuses on the stakeholder concept, which is considered the core of this chapter.

2.3.1 The stakeholder concept

This section provides an overview of the stakeholder concept followed by a discussion of three theoretical paradigms pertaining to the concept. This is important in the context of this study because the theoretical paradigms may influence how stakeholder relationships are managed in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP).

‘Stakeholder’ is a concept that is accepted by organisations generally, and thus also by the IWP. The term ‘stakeholder’ was presented by the Stanford Research Institute in 1963 and was originally defined by Freeman (cited in Zsolnai, 2006:38) as “those groups without whose support the organisation would cease to exist”.

According to Rawlins (2006:2), there are various definitions of the concept ‘stakeholder’. These include an individual or a group that is affected or can affect the reaching of an organisation's

objectives and an individual or group that the organisation depends on to survive and succeed. Many scholars disagree with these definitions because only the needs of stakeholders are accentuated, without comprehending who they are or how to categorise them.

'Publics' is a term used for stakeholders in public relations (PR) literature. Hung (2007:444) views the beginning of a relationship between an organisation and its 'strategic publics' as being when both parties act interdependently and when their mutual impact needs to be managed by the organisation.

Freeman (1984) was the first researcher to introduce the significance of other stakeholder groups, apart from customers and employees (Mainardes *et al.*, 2011:231). Freeman (cited in Friedman & Miles, 2006:1) later refined the definition of a stakeholder as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives". Further, according to this author, the purpose of an organisation should be to manage the interests, needs and perceptions of its stakeholders. A common notion of all the definitions of stakeholders is that the concept focuses on the interrelationship between organisations and stakeholders.

In order to have a clearer understanding of the stakeholder concept, three theoretical paradigms thereof are discussed in the section that follows. The theoretical paradigms of the stakeholder concept and stakeholder theory are highlighted by Spitzbeck and Hansen (2010:380), and include the instrumental, descriptive and normative paradigm of stakeholder theory as conceptualised by Donaldson and Preston (1995:66). For the purposes of this study, these paradigms are explained and examples of the significance and influence of stakeholders are provided and discussed in the next section.

2.3.2 Donaldson and Preston's three stakeholder paradigms

Three stakeholder paradigms are commonly reflected in the literature (Agle *et al.*, 2008:153-190; Amaeshi & Adi, 2007:14-16; Freeman *et al.*, 2010; Mainardes *et al.*, 2011:232). Donaldson and Preston (1995) aimed to analyse various issues and consequences linked with the stakeholder concept in terms of descriptive correctness, instrumental power and normative soundness in management literature (Donaldson & Preston, 1995:65, 66). These paradigms were constructed from the view that the stakeholder concept is diverse and should not be regarded as a one-dimensional approach (Mainardes *et al.*, 2011:232). Amaeshi (2010:17) writes that although the instrumental, descriptive and normative paradigms are mostly supportive, the essential foundation of the stakeholder concept is fundamentally normative. The primary objectives of these paradigms are discussed with a specific focus on the normative paradigm because it identifies that the stakeholder concept "should focus on the creation of value, decision-making processes and relationships with real individuals" (Mainardes *et al.*, 2011:234). This conforms to the objectives of this study. The three paradigms are illustrated in Figure 1.

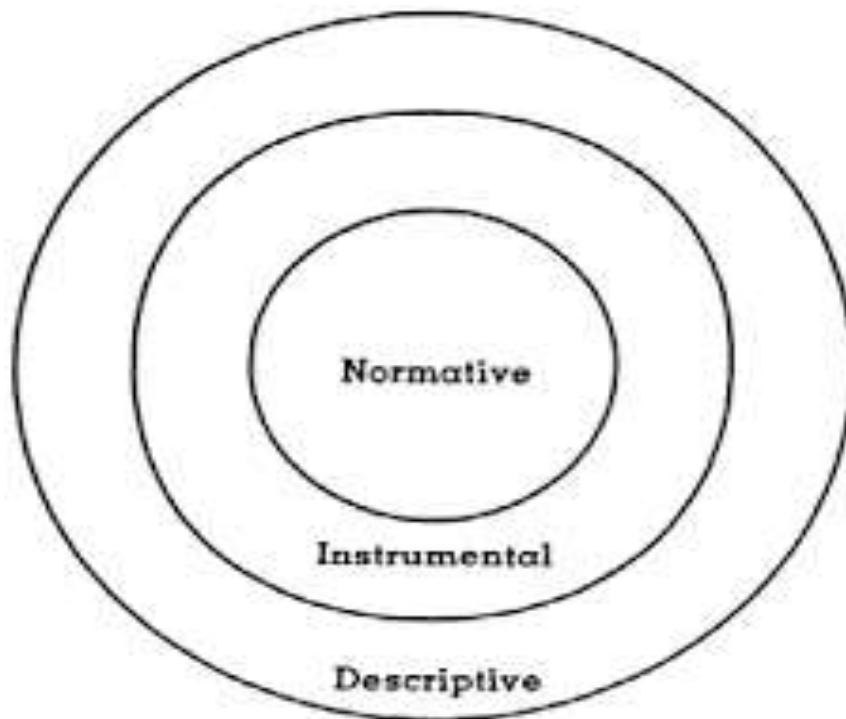


Figure 1-1: Classification of stakeholder theory into descriptive, instrumental and normative

Source: Donaldson and Preston, 1995.

2.3.2.1 Instrumental stakeholder paradigm

The instrumental stakeholder paradigm suggests that an organisation should only pay attention to those stakeholders who can affect or influence the value of the organisation. This implies that only those stakeholders with influence will be engaged to ensure their contribution to the success of the organisation (Spitzeck & Hansen, 2010:380).

This is a very narrow focus which, according to Crane and Livesey (2003:43), is characterised by one direction communication and persuasion, which means there is no balance of power. Amaeshi (2010:16) agrees with this approach and asserts that it does not “give voice to stakeholders”.

Donaldson and Preston (1995:78) also posit that the instrumental paradigm is unbalanced in that the organisation only addresses stakeholder needs to achieve organisational self-interest.

2.3.2.2 Descriptive stakeholder paradigm

The descriptive stakeholder paradigm defines organisational characteristics in relation to stakeholders and focuses on the sequential development of the stakeholder concept (Donaldson & Preston 1995:70; Mainardes *et al.*, 2011:235). According to De Bussy and Kelly (2010:291), this paradigm seeks to explain the organisation’s behaviour towards stakeholders by identifying key strategic stakeholders. However, it is still considered a narrow analytical approach to attaining the

organisation's performance objectives (Mainardes *et al.*, 2011:231) and does not offer conclusive validation for the stakeholder concept (Donaldson & Preston, 1995:76).

Therefore, the descriptive theory recognises and categorises the different stakeholders without reflecting their legitimacy or power (Spitzeck & Hansen, 2010:380).

2.3.2.3 *Normative stakeholder paradigm*

The normative paradigm focuses on the moral value and rights of stakeholders that are affected by the organisation and underscores the rights and duties of those actors involved who are relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP), given its complex nature.

The normative paradigm asserts that an organisation's responsibilities not only go beyond compliance with business and legal expectations, but also include society's expectations that organisations are good corporate citizens who can be held accountable for greater support and corporate social responsiveness (Overton-de Klerk & Oelofse, 2010:390).

This stakeholder concept is, therefore, essentially normative, from which both the instrumental and descriptive paradigms flow (Donaldson & Preston, 1995:74). The normative paradigm implies that organisations with high moral standards will naturally place value on true stakeholder engagement characterised by qualities such as trust, fairness and dialogue (Amaeshi, 2010:16). According to Mainardes *et al.* (2011:233) and Agle *et al.* (2008:163), the normative paradigm forms the foundation of the stakeholder concept and is oriented towards establishing a relationship between the organisation and stakeholders in an ethical and morally acceptable framework, thereby moving away from narrow or one-sided economic interests.

Donaldson and Preston (1995:67) substantiate the normative classification of stakeholders through a definition: "Stakeholders are persons or groups with legitimate interest in procedural and/or substantive aspects of corporate activity. Stakeholders are identified by their interests in the corporation, whether the corporation has any corresponding functional interest in them."

Normative stakeholder scholars posit that managers ought to consider stakeholders as ends, and not means to an end (Boatright, 1994; Clarkson, 1995; Goodpaster, 1991; Goodpaster & Holloran, 1994; Mellahi & Wood 2003; Quinn & Jones, 1995; Wood, 2010). This highlights the significance to managers of sustainable stakeholder relations.

2.4 Classification of stakeholders

Manowong and Ogunlana (cited in Chinyio & Olomolaiye, 2010:121-129) accentuate the significance of identifying suitable stakeholders with whom to work; understanding their needs and displaying a willingness to understand how to manage relationships among stakeholders.

In addition to the three theoretical paradigms of the stakeholder concept, it is important to focus on the classification of stakeholders. Opinions on the classification of stakeholders has been varied (Frooman, 1999; Pesqueux & Damak-Ayadi, 2005; Phillips, R.A. 2003; Winn, 2001). The classification of stakeholders includes primary and secondary, direct and indirect, generic and specific. Other classifications include legitimate versus derivative, strategic and ethical, and descriptive, normative and instrumental, to mention a few. The salient question that should be answered in respect of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is how one identifies, classifies or prioritises competing stakeholders' needs. Mitchell *et al.* (1997) aimed to address this through the stakeholder salience model.

2.4.1 Identification and prioritisation of stakeholders

According to Mitchell *et al.* (1997), the stakeholder salience model reveals that organisations identify and prioritise stakeholder interests subjectively based on the perceptions of managers about specific elements or characteristics their stakeholders possess. These perceptions include how urgent, powerful and legitimate they believe the stakeholders to be. The primary view of the stakeholder salience theory by Mitchell *et al.* (1997:584) is defined as "the degree to which managers give priority to different competing stakeholder claims". Driscoll and Starik (2004) contributed a fourth attribute to the stakeholder salience theory that managers should consider when prioritising stakeholders, namely proximity.

Three stakeholder attributes (power, legitimacy and urgency) are identified by Mitchell *et al.* (1997).

2.4.1.1 Power

The stakeholder characteristic 'power' is defined as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship would be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance" (Weber, 1947:152). Another definition of power is the "potential of stakeholders to impose their will" (Parent & Deephouse, 2007:2).

Mitchell *et al.* (1997:865) posit that power is the ability of stakeholders to achieve their desired outcomes, and that this stems from three dimensions of power:

- normative power relates to using symbolic resources such as media attention or reputation;
- coercive power relates to the application of physical resources such as restraint, force or violence; and
- utilitarian power is the use of material means as a control measure and is exercised through control of resources, particularly financial rewards or punishment, i.e. investment or divestment.

2.4.1.2 Legitimacy

Legitimacy is defined as a "generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs

and definitions” (Suchman, 1995:574). In their paper, Mitchell *et al.* (1997) adopted and explained Suchman’s (1975) organisational view of legitimacy. Mitchell *et al.* (1997) specified that legitimacy is “a desirable social good ... it is something greater and more mutual than a mere self-perception ... it may be defined and negotiated differently at various levels of social organisation”. Santana (2012) extended the work on legitimacy by Mitchell *et al.* (1997) and contributed towards the literature on stakeholder legitimacy by categorising it into three areas: legitimacy of stakeholder, legitimacy of behaviour and legitimacy of claim. It has been argued that stakeholder legitimacy can be either normative: fulfilment of legal or moral obligations (Gomes & Gomes, 2007) or derivative: resulting from organisational acceptance of stakeholder claims due to their potential impact (Phillips, R. 2003).

2.4.1.3 Urgency

Mitchell *et al.* (1997) argue that focusing solely on power and legitimacy as stakeholder attributes only shows a static model of stakeholder salience and identification. They indicate that the consideration of urgency of claim introduces dynamism to the model (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997). Mitchell *et al.* (1997:864) define urgency as “the degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention”. Furthermore, the authors added the concept of urgency of claim from the management crisis and issue field. Moreover, the authors contend that urgency involves two components, which are time sensitivity and criticality of claim. The area of time sensitivity is defined as “the degree to which managerial delay in attending to the claim or relationship is unacceptable to the stakeholder”, and categorised criticality as “the importance of the claim or the relationship to the stakeholder” (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997:867).

2.4.2 Stakeholder classes

The following seven classes are then allocated to the three stakeholder attributes. The seven classes are: latent, discretionary, demanding, dominant, dangerous, dependent and definitive (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997). These classes are then “examined with three possessing only one attribute, three possessing two attributes, and one possessing all three attributes”. Therefore, the more attributes (i.e. power, legitimacy and urgency) stakeholders have, the more significant managers consider them to be. When a stakeholder has all three power attributes, it is numbered 7 and definitive. This is when organisations give attention to this stakeholder, as illustrated in Figure 2.

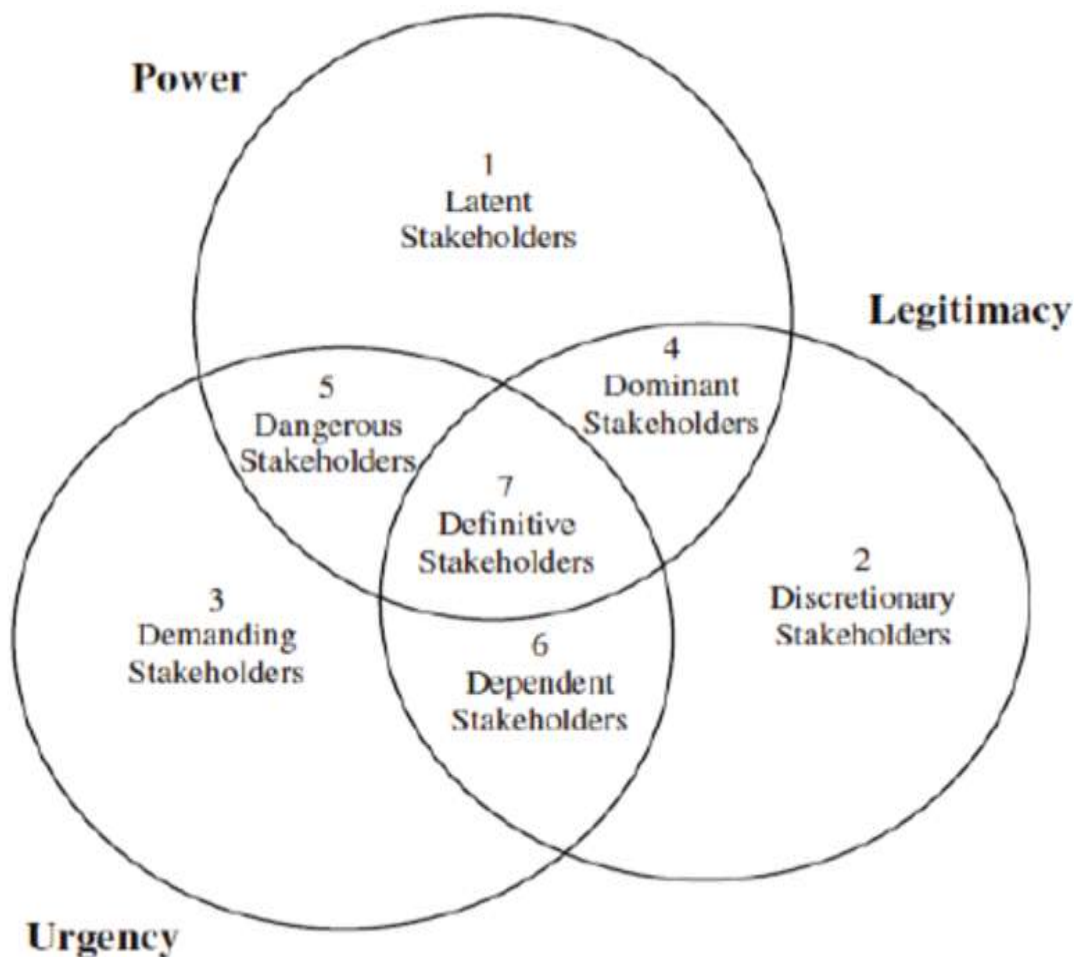


Figure 1-2: The three stakeholder attributes: power, legitimacy and urgency

Source: Mitchell, R.K., Agle, B.R. & Wood, D.J. 1997.

2.4.2.1 Latent stakeholders

Given extreme time pressure and limited resources, organisations may tend not to prioritise or give any attention to stakeholders that they believe to possess only one of the identifying attributes. These classes are, therefore, perceived as of low significance and are referred to as latent stakeholders (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997).

i Dormant stakeholders

Dormant stakeholders only possess power as an attribute. They have power to impose their will on an organisation. However, in an illegitimate relationship with an organisation, their power is not used. Organisations should, however, not lose sight of dominant stakeholders, as they could attain a second attribute of either legitimacy or urgency in future (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997).

ii Discretionary stakeholders

Discretionary stakeholders have legitimacy as an attribute. They do not have power nor an urgent claim against the organisation. There is no need or urgent pressure on an organisation to enter into

an active relationship with discretionary stakeholders. However, organisations may choose to do so (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997).

iii Demanding stakeholders

When urgency is the only attribute, the stakeholder is classified as 'demanding'. These stakeholders have an urgent or immediate claim, but they do not possess power or legitimacy. They could be an annoyance to an organisation, but not dangerous. This inconvenience does not warrant more than an organisation's temporary attention (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997).

2.4.2.2 *Expectant stakeholders*

Expectant stakeholders possess two of the three attributes. An organisation's attitude towards these stakeholders differs remarkably from that of latent stakeholders. Expectant stakeholders are perceived as expecting something and this results in a more active organisational approach. The level of interaction between the organisation and these expectant stakeholders is generally advanced (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997).

i Dominant stakeholders

Stakeholders with powerful and legitimate attributes certainly have influence in an organisation. A relationship of this nature is referred to as a dominant coalition. Dominant stakeholders have real and legitimate claims against an organisation and power to act on them. Such claims and relationships will ensure the organisation's attention. It is expected that there would be some kind of formal structure to recognise the significance of the relationship because it is in the interest of an organisation to keep powerful and legitimate stakeholders informed (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997).

ii Dependent stakeholders

Dependent stakeholders have urgent and legitimate claims against an organisation but do not possess the power to enforce them. There is, therefore, dependency on others for the necessary power (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997).

iii Dangerous stakeholders

When stakeholders have the urgency and power attributes, but not legitimacy, they could opt to be coercive and violent to draw the organisation's attention. In such cases, they are classified as dangerous. Dangerous stakeholders may also be illegitimate and resort to employee-sabotage, terrorism and wildcat strikes. It is, however, important for organisations to recognise and familiarise themselves with this class of stakeholder in order to adapt or mitigate the dangers they pose. However, this should be done without acknowledging them (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997).

2.4.2.3 Definitive stakeholders

An organisation will ensure that ultimate priority is given to stakeholders who possess all three attributes. A stakeholder who possesses power and legitimacy will be recognised as a dominant coalition partner. Therefore, when such a stakeholder acquires the third attribute of urgency, an organisation will recognise this and ensure that priority is given to its claims (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997).

2.4.3 Categories of relationships

The next step after the identification and prioritisation of stakeholders is to reflect on the forms of relationships with stakeholders for the purpose of managing these relationships.

Hung (2007:456) and Grunig *et al.* (2002:552) refer to psychologists Clark and Mills, who identified two forms of relationship management. These include exchange and communal relationships discussed below:

- Exchange relationship: this relationship takes place where one party gives benefits to the other because benefits were received in the past, or because of the expectation that the relationship would result in benefits received in the future. Therefore, in an exchange relationship, one party is prepared to give benefits to the other party because it expects to receive similar assistance in return.
- Communal relationship: parties are willing to give benefits to another party because they care for the well-being of the other – without an expectation of receiving anything in return.

It is, therefore, important for the iSimangaliso Wetland Park to understand its stakeholders, to appreciate and value the roles in the relationship, and to work towards adding value to the relationship and strengthening the management process. This leads the researcher to investigating the significance of the indicators in measuring stakeholder relationships.

2.4.4 Measuring stakeholder relationships

Hon and Grunig (1999:18-20) explored the significance of measuring and evaluating the outcome of relationships with key stakeholders and focused on the following indicators:

- Control mutuality: this measures the rightful power to influence the other. It is natural for power imbalances to occur in a stakeholder relationship. Attempts by one party to take control can result in dissatisfaction with the aggressor, which in turn may increase the level of activism. To create stable relationships, a certain degree of mutual control is necessary.
- Trust: this is fundamental and results in openness, integrity and confidence in stakeholder relationships, which in turn enables the organisation to execute its objectives and mandate.
- Satisfaction: this measures the positivity parties feel towards each other, and such positive expectations reinforce the relationship.
- Commitment: this is the degree to which parties believe the relationship is worth investing in.

Jahansoozi (2007b:943) reinforces the importance of trust, commitment, satisfaction, control mutuality and dialogue as essential characteristics in measuring stakeholder relationships. This underscores the need to build enduring relationships between the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) and stakeholders – which requires continuous commitment, engagement and dialogue between the parties. The next section aims to accentuate the significance of sound stakeholder relations within protected areas such as the IWP.

2.5 Stakeholder relations in protected areas

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN, 2013:v), the world has seen a significant increase in protected areas, which has led to a change in thinking about how protected areas should be managed. Protected areas are no longer solely government-run. There are various forms of management, one of which is co-management with local communities – which accentuates the significance of stakeholder management. This is of relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP), given its complex location and relationship with communities which live in and outside the park.

In this regard, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) aims to stress the significance of stakeholder management in its definition of governance of protected areas, which it defines as follows: “The interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are taken and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say” (Graham *et al.*, 2003). Consequently, a clear command of stakeholder relations theory is a priority for protected areas such as the IWP if it is to achieve its goals.

The IUCN definition of a protected area is “a clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values” (Dudley, 2008:8).

The IUCN, in its *Best practice protected areas guidelines* (IUCN, 2013:15), developed an analysis of key actors which they highlight as rights holders and stakeholders within the governance of protected areas. While governance systems for protected areas globally are relatively diverse, the IUCN and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (Dudley, 2008) hold that they can be grouped into four general governance systems which include:

- governance by government;
- shared governance (governance by various rights holders and/or stakeholders together);
- governance by private individuals and organisations; and
- governance by indigenous peoples and/or local communities.

The CBD’s Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA) (CBD, 2004) focused on the subject of governance for protected areas and called for all relevant sectors of society to participate.

PoWPA has focused on a number of key areas relating to protected areas of governance which deal with stakeholders, including:

- Participation: ensure the facilitation of comprehensive and active participation of relevant rights holders and stakeholders.
- Innovation: open the way for new types of governance for protected areas so that they can be recognised legally and managed effectively through best governance mechanisms.
- Respect: ensure responsiveness and respect for the rights, livelihood and conservation needs, including possible contributions, of people living in and around protected areas, especially the indigenous and local communities.
- Benefit-sharing: ensure that mechanisms are implemented to share protected area benefits equitably with the indigenous and local communities.
- Free, prior and informed consent: ensure timeous and properly consulted consent before moving indigenous communities or changing access to the protected area.
- Governance principles: ensure that good governance principles are adhered to.

In analysing the stakeholder relations in the IWP, the identified key areas will play an important role because this guides best practice in protected areas globally.

2.5.1 *Parties involved in governing protected areas*

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) posits that the parties involved in protected area governance comprise a broad variety, with most of them possessing significant interests which are included under the broad concept of 'stakeholders'. The IUCN further asserts that to conform to the rights-based approach embraced by the union, it prefers to refer to these parties as either 'rights holders' or 'stakeholders'. The distinction depends on the context and the applicable international and national legislation and customary practice (IUCN, 2008a; Campese *et al.* 2007)

Moreover, the IUCN refer to 'rights holders' as parties that have legal or customary rights to the land, water or other natural resources. 'Stakeholders' are parties that have direct or indirect interests in the protected area, but not necessarily legal or social rights.

According to Borrini-Feyerabend and Paterson (cited in IUCN, 2013:15), these different rights holders and stakeholders do or should participate in the governance of protected areas for a variety of reasons. Justification for participation would be:

- legal ownership or access;
- customary rights of ownership and access;
- historic, cultural and spiritual, or recreational relationship with the land;
- direct reliance;
- losses incurred due to the establishment of a protected area;

- merit or compensation entitlements due to specific commitments;
- mandate assigned by legislation;
- knowledge and skills needed for informed decision making;
- specific national or international mandates; and
- representation of non-core interests of relevance to protected areas, e.g. with respect to biodiversity conservation and ecosystem benefits such as water, climate, and disaster prevention.

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park has both rights holders and stakeholders who participate in the governance of the park. However, it is an extremely complex park to manage. This section on the significance of stakeholder relations in protected areas aims to provide insight into specific characteristics that protected areas add to the stakeholder relations theory.

From the foregoing discussion, it should be clear that an organisation's interface with stakeholders is multifaceted. This, however, depends on the type of relationships and the goals of the organisation. Hung (2007:454) suggests that an organisation's aims and motivations related to its operational environment would affect the type of relationships it strives for with its stakeholders. It is clear that both the organisation and its stakeholders have the responsibility to reach out to each other in order to advance the goals of the organisation and work towards a common goal and shared vision.

2.6 Chapter conclusion

This chapter discussed stakeholder theories and principles relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) and linked these theories and principles to relations in protected areas. The stakeholder concept and its three paradigms were also expounded upon. Moreover, the theory focused on the tools to identify, classify, categorise and measure these relationships to realise healthy stakeholder relations.

In chapter 3 the focus is on the legislative and regulatory requirements for effective functioning of public entities in South Africa. The aim is to provide information and comprehend relevant legislation and regulations which dictate what is expected from a public entity, and more specifically the IWP.

CHAPTER THREE:

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF PUBLIC ENTITIES

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 of this study focused on reviewing and analysing the relevant literature pertaining to stakeholder theories and principles relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) by linking these theories and principles to the significance placed on stakeholder relations in, for example, protected wetland areas. The stakeholder concept and its three paradigms were discussed and the tools to identify, classify, categorise and measure relationships to achieve healthy stakeholder relations were also outlined.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the legislative and regulatory requirements for effective functioning of public entities in South Africa. Relevant legislation and regulations which dictate what is expected of a public entity, and more specifically the IWP, are expounded upon.

In order to achieve the aforementioned, the chapter is structured according to the following main themes:

- The concept and establishment of a public entity;
- The governance of public entities; and
- The legislative and regulatory environment that has an impact on the work of the IWP, with reference to the international and domestic regulatory framework that the park has to adhere to and operate within.

3.2 Conceptualising the term public entity in the South African government context

The Presidential Review Committee (PRC) on State-owned Entities (SOEs) was appointed in 2010 to review all SOEs and provide recommendations on aligning these in all spheres of government in order to achieve the development objectives and aspirations of the South African government. The review released by the PRC in 2013 revealed that legislation is the foundation of the relationship between the state and its SOEs and clearly outlined the rights and the responsibilities towards each other (PRC, 2013:69).

The concepts of public entity (PE) and state-owned entity (SOE) are used interchangeably. The PRC review (PRC, 2013:12) clarifies that an SOE is defined as a PE in the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) 1 of 1999 (RSA, 1999). For the purposes of this study, the term PE will be used in place of SOE.

The formal definition of a national public entity, as set out in chapter 1 of the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 (RSA, 1999), stipulates that:

- a. a national government business enterprise; or
- b. a board, commission, company, corporation, fund or other entity (other than a national business enterprise) which is-
 - (i) established in terms of national legislation;
 - (ii) fully or substantially funded from either the National Revenue Fund or by way of tax, levy or other money imposed in terms of national legislation; and
 - (iii) accountable to Parliament.

The PRC report also states that national and provincial government has the power to create statutes to establish SOEs to drive certain programmes. These statutes are referred to as the 'founding acts' of these SOEs. The PRC review, however, states that South Africa does not have a single overarching SOE law (PRC, 2013:71).

There are various documents that relate to the legislative and regulatory requirements for SOEs. These include, apart from the enabling acts of the various entities, the Public Finance Management Act, regulations, codes, policy documents and guidelines.

The next section elucidates the significance and procedures that must be adhered to in the establishment of public entities.

3.3 Establishment of public entities

After receiving Cabinet approval on 4 April 2001, National Treasury published broad processes to establish national public entities (PEs) in March 2002, entitled *Interim guide for creating public entities at the national sphere of government* (National Treasury, 2002), which is still in place today. This guide, abbreviated as IGCPE, focuses on the rationale to establish an entity, the mandate, listing and classification, the process to establish a PE and the transference of public servants to a PE (IGCPE, 2002:1).

The guide also provides the specific roles and mandates of different ministers in order to create, list and classify a national PE (IGCPE, 2002:2). The minister of a department who intends establishing an entity must consult and obtain consent from the ministers responsible for the Department of Public Service and Administration, including the minister of Finance to establish a PE after preparing and submitting a business case.

The minister for Public Service and Administration, as per the Public Service Act of 1994 (RSA, 1994b), is responsible to ensure that any function and staff in the public service are placed appropriately in the correct sphere of government to eliminate the duplication of functions (IGCPE, 2002:3). The minister of Finance is responsible for the reporting and listing of all PEs, nationally and in the provinces, and for ensuring that these entities are accountable to government. The minister must also ensure that government allocates funds to the PEs (IGCPE, 2002:3). Once the

processes are concluded, the minister of Finance lists the public entity. At the national sphere of government, PEs are classified and listed as follows: major public entities, national public entities and national government business enterprises (IGCPE, 2002:3).

The minister responsible for the department which intends to establish a PE will, after submitting the necessary motivation and consent of the minister for Public Service and Administration and the minister of Finance, request Cabinet approval to introduce a bill in Parliament to establish the PE. Thereafter the bill is tabled in Parliament (IGCPE, 2002:7). Once the PE is established, the governance of the PE commences. This process was followed to establish the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

3.4 Governance of State-owned entities

In 2002, the Department of Public Enterprises issued the Protocol on Corporate Governance (PCG) in the public sector, which articulates the respective roles and responsibilities of government as shareholder, the board, chairperson and chief executive for state-owned entities (SOEs). The protocol seeks to strengthen SOEs, and the principles set out by the King Committee on Corporate Governance in its *Code of corporate practices and conduct* of 2002, which distilled the recommendations of a number of task teams codifying a range of corporate governance matters under the auspices of the Institute of Directors in Southern Africa (IoDSA) (PCG, 2002:2). In 2005, Treasury also published a document entitled *Governance oversight role over state owned entities* (GOR) that provided an integrated overview of government's oversight role (GOR, 2005:1).

In its *Micro-governance review of the environmental sector state owned entities* (MGR, 2015:29), the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) stipulates that the legal basis for corporate governance is found predominantly in company legislation.

The Companies Act, however, contains no independent definition of an SOE. The act defines a state-owned company as:

An enterprise that is registered in terms of [the Companies Act] ... as a company, and either – (a) is listed as a public entity in Schedule 2 or 3 of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No. 1 of 1999); or (b) is owned by a municipality, as contemplated in the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000), and is otherwise similar to an enterprise referred to in paragraph (a).

In the case of 3A entities, the Companies Act does not apply, but outlines good governance requirements that should be considered when assessing the governance of the environmental sector public entities (MGR, 2015:29).

The King IV Report of 2016 provided a specific supplement for SOEs dealing with 16 governance outcomes and principles applicable thereto, as well as assisting the enterprises to improve

performance. King IV is not mandatory but supports legislative requirements to guide and direct public entities and other types of organisations to improve governance (King IV, 2016:111).

In the following section, the legislative and regulatory environment within which the iSimangaliso Wetland Park operates is discussed.

3.5 Isimangaliso Wetland Park Legislative and regulatory environment

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996) section 24 prescribes the mandate and rights that deal with environmental matters in South Africa and therefore forms the legal basis of the very existence of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP).

Section 24 of the Constitution of 1996 stipulates the following:

Everyone has the right (a) to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and (b) to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that (i) prevent pollution and ecological degradation; (ii) promote conservation; and (iii) secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.

According to the Micro Governance Review of all environmental sector public entities, a clearly defined legislative framework for SOEs is essential to communicate key expectations to SOE shareholders, boards, management and all other stakeholders, including the public (MGR, 2015:29).

The IWP is a listed Department of Environmental Affairs public entity. The IWP Integrated Management Plan 2017–2021 (IMP, 2017:2) prescribes a legal framework for its establishment, protection and management. This includes the international and domestic legal frameworks applicable to the IWP.

3.5.1 International framework

There are a number of significant iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) international agreements that need to be adhered to, primarily because the park is a World Heritage Site, comprises internationally significant wetlands, and is home to various protected and endangered species (IMP, 2017:2). These international agreements are indicated in Table 3.1.

Table 3-1: International agreements that the IWP needs to adhere too

Convention	Applicability to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)
Convention on Wetlands of International Significance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat (1971) (RAMSAR Convention)	There are four RAMSAR sites located within the IWP (IMP, 2017:134), and this convention seeks to ensure the conservation and wise utilisation of all wetlands through local, regional and national action and international cooperation as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world.
Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) (World Heritage Convention)	The IWP is a listed World Heritage Site through this convention (IMP, 2017:134). This convention seeks to establish an effective system of collective identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage resources considered globally to be of outstanding universal value to humanity.
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973) (CITES)	There are numerous endangered plant and animal species in the IWP and this convention seeks to ensure, through international cooperation, that international trade in species of wild fauna and flora does not threaten their survival and to protect endangered species from over-exploitation through a system of import-export permits (IMP, 2017:134).
United Nations Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979) (Bonn Convention)	There are several migratory species of wild animals in the IWP and this convention seeks to conserve those that migrate across or outside national boundaries by developing and implementing cooperative agreements, prohibiting the removal of endangered species, conserving habitat and controlling other adverse factors (IMP, 2017:134).
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) (UNCLOS)	The entire eastern boundary of the IWP is the sea and this Convention establishes a comprehensive legal order to promote peaceful utilisation of the oceans and seas, equitable and efficient utilisation of its resources, and the study and protection and preservation of the marine environment (IMP, 2017:135).
Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal (1989) (Basel Convention)	The Basel Convention is applicable in relation to waste management in and around the IWP (IMP, 2017:135). The convention aims to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous and other wastes; reduce the transboundary movement of hazardous waste to a minimum, consistent with their environmentally sound management guidelines; dispose of the waste as close as possible to where it is generated; and minimise both the quantity and its hazardousness (IMP, 2017:135).
Convention on Biological Diversity (1992)	This convention is applicable to the IWP because it deals with the conservation of biological diversity; sustainable utilisation of its components; fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources; through appropriate access to genetic resources; and appropriate transfer of relevant technologies (taking into account all rights over those resources and technologies), as well as appropriate funding (IMP, 2017:135).

3.5.2 Domestic framework

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP), owing to its history, location, habitat, endemic species and world heritage status, is a unique park. Furthermore, it has to adhere to and administer a vast number of key pieces of domestic legislation on a daily basis (IMP, 2017:6), as listed in Table 3.2.

Table 3-2: Domestic legislative framework that the IWP needs to adhere too

Act	Applicability to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)
KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Act 3 of 1994 as amended (RSA, 1994a)	Approximately 18% of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park falls under the Ingonyama Trust. Therefore, this act has an impact on leases within the IWP (IMP, 2017:147).
Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994, as amended (RSA, 1994d)	This act addresses rights to land in respect of those persons dispossessed through discriminatory laws. The entire IWP has been the subject of land claims by neighbouring communities. Nine claims were settled in conformance to the land claims framework in protected areas. The five remaining land claim settlements are currently being processed. In general, the settled land claims have led to the establishment of a claimant community trust, which allows certain benefit-sharing opportunities for the claimant communities (IMP, 2017:147).
Maritime Zones Act 15 of 1994 (RSA, 1994b)	This act defines territorial waters and South African jurisdiction over these waters as per UNCLOS. Nine per cent of the IWP includes the coast (IMP, 2017:144).
National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 (RSA, 1998c)	This act serves as a framework legislation for environmental protection in South Africa in general, to which the IWP is required to adhere (IMP, 2017:137). Notices and regulations relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park include: • The Control of Vehicles in the Coastal Zone Regulations (GN No. 1399 of 21 December 2001) • Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (GN R982 in GG 38282 of 4 December 2014) • Listing Notice 1 (GN R983 in GG 38282 of 4 December 2014) • Listing Notice 2 (GN R984 in GG 38282 of 4 December 2014) • Listing Notice 3 (GN R985 in GG 38282 of 4 December 2014) • National Exemption Regulations, 2014 (GN 994 in GG 38303 of 8 December 2014) • Regulations relating to the procedure to be followed when oral requests are made in terms of section 30A (GN R310 in GG 38684 of 10 April 2015)
National Forests Act 84 of 1998 (RSA, 1998d)	This act aims to promote the sustainable management and development of forests for the benefit of all. It provides special measures for the protection of certain forests and trees (IMP, 2017:141). This act is applicable to the IWP because the park comprises state forests and protected species.

Act	Applicability to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)
National Water Act 36 of 1998 (RSA, 1998e)	The purpose of this act is to safeguard the sustainability of the nation's water resources. Consequently, the IWP's water resources are protected, used, developed, conserved, managed and controlled (IMP, 2017:142). Notices and regulations relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park include: • Revision of general authorisation in terms of section 39 of the National Water Act 36 of 1998, Water Uses section 21 (a) and (b) (GN in GG 26187 of 26 March 2004) • General authorisation in terms of section 39 of the National Water Act of 1998 in terms of section 21 (c) and (i) for the purpose of Rehabilitating a Wetland for Conservation Purposes – Water Uses 21 (c) and (i) (GN 1198 in GG 32805 of 18 December 2009) • Replacement of general authorisation in terms of Section 39 of the National Water Act of 1998 – Water Uses section 21 (c) and (i) (GN 1199 in GG 32805 of 18 December 2009) • Revision of general authorisations in terms of section 39 of the National Water Act of 1998 – Water Uses section 21 (e), (f) and (h), (g) and (j) (GN 665 in GG 36820 of 6 September 2013)
Marine Living Resources Act 18 of 1998 (RSA, 1998b)	This act provides for the conservation of the marine ecosystem and long-term sustainable utilisation of marine living resources within the IWP (IMP, 2017:143). Notices and regulations relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park include: • Declaration of Areas as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) (GN No. R 1429 of 29 December 2000), viz. the St Lucia and Maputaland MPAs • Coelacanth Government Gazette No. 21948 (29 December 2000, No. R 1428)
Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 (RSA, 1998a)	This act divides South Africa into various local government structures (metropolitan, district and local municipalities), which are assigned powers and functions. The primary offices of the IWP fall within the Mtubatuba Local Municipality which is under the jurisdiction of the Umkhanyakude District Municipality (IMP, 2017:147).
World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999 (RSA, 1999c)	This act provides for the domestication of the World Heritage Convention into South African Law. The IWP is proclaimed under this act (IMP, 2017:137). Notices and regulations relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park are: • Regulations in Connection with the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park (GN. R 1193 in GG 21779 of 24 November 2000) • Establishment of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park and Authority (GN No. 4477 of 24 November 2000)
National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 (RSA, 1999a)	This act aims principally to introduce an integrated and interactive system for the management of national heritage resources and to establish the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) to coordinate and promote the management of heritage resources at national level (IMP, 2017:140). SAHRA is the responsible authority for heritage resources situated in those portions of the IWP that are below the high-water mark of the sea (IMP, 2017:140).

Act	Applicability to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)
Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 (RSA, 1999b)	The PFMA is the principal act promulgated by the government to stipulate, in detail, the rules and regulations related to financial management and reporting to be adhered to and observed by SOE governing bodies and management. The IWP was listed as a schedule 3 A Public Entity on 19 July 2002 (IMP, 2017:147).
Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 (RSA, 2000a)	This act requires the preparation of a long-term integrated development plan (IDP) with a three- to five-year budgeted implementation plan, which is reviewed annually for all services and functions within the area of each local government structure. The IWP is an active participant in the IDP because this plan has an impact on the park (IMP, 2017:147).
Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 54 of 2003 (RSA, 2003a)	This act provides the procedures and guidance for sound municipal financial management. The IWP deals with municipalities on a daily basis. Therefore, this act is applicable to procurement matters (IMP, 2017:147).
National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003 (RSA, 2003b)	This act provides for the protection and conservation of ecologically viable areas in the IWP that are representative of South Africa's biological diversity and its natural landscapes and seascapes (IMP, 2017:138). Notices and regulations relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park include: • Regulations for the Proper Administration of Special Nature Reserves, National Parks and World Heritage Sites (GN R1061 in GG 28181 of 28 October 2005 and amended by GN 622 in GG 37904 of 15 August 2014). • Regulations on the Proper Administration of Nature Reserves, 2012 (GN R99 in GG 35021 of 8 February 2012)
National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004 (RSA, 2004)	This act provides for classifications and processes for the sustainable management of biodiversity in the IWP and the management and conservation of South Africa's biodiversity within the framework of the National Environmental Management Act of 1998 (IMP, 2017:139). Notices and regulations relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park include: • Publication of Lists of Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable and Protected Species (GN R151 in GG 29657 of 23 February 2007 and amended by GN R1187 in GG 30568 of 14 December 2007) • Threatened or Protected Species Regulations (GN No. R152 in GG 29657 of 23 February 2007 and amended by GN R69 in GG 30703 of 28 January 2008; GN R209 & 210 in GG 31962 of 27 February 2009; GN 210 in GG 31962 of 27 February 2009 ; GN R576 in GG 34453 of 11 July 2011; GN R614 in GG 35565 of 2 August 2012; and GN R324 in GG 37596 of 29 April 2014) • Norms and Standards for Biodiversity Management Plans for Species (GN in GG 31968 of 2 March 2009) • Alien and Invasive Species Regulations, 2014 (GN R598 in GG 37885 of 1 August 2014) • Alien and Invasive Species List, 2014 (GN 599 in GG 37886 of 1 August 2014) • National List of Ecosystems that are Threatened and in Need of Protection (GN 1002 in GG 34809 of 9 December 2012) • Norms and Standards for Biodiversity Management Plans for Ecosystems (GN 83 in GG 37302 of 7 February 2014)

Act	Applicability to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)
	National Norms and Standards for the Management of Elephants in South Africa (GN 251 in GG 30833 of 29 February 2008)
Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act 13 of 2005 (RSA, 2005b)	This act outlines mechanisms to facilitate cooperative governance with National, Provincial and Local Government, to which the IWP is required to adhere (IMP, 2017:147).
KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act 4 of 2008 (RSA, 2008b)	The aims of this provincial act are the conservation, protection and administration of both the physical and the living or intangible heritage resources of the province of KwaZulu-Natal and to establish a statutory council to administer heritage conservation in the province (IMP, 2017:141). This act is relevant to the IWP and has an impact on the following: - Maintenance, repair and management of historically, culturally and architecturally important sites and structures, and development requirements. - Permission for research into, and extraction or destruction of cultural resources. - Provision for the establishment of educational, training, interpretive and tourism-related projects.
National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act 24 of 2008 (RSA, 2008c)	This act determines the coastal zone of South Africa and provides for the coordinated and integrated management thereof by all spheres of government in accordance with the principles of cooperative governance (IMP, 2017:144). Notices and regulations relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park include: - National Estuarine Management Protocol (GN 341 in GG 36432 of 10 May 2013) - Control of Use of Vehicles in the Coastal Area (GN R496 in GG 37761 of 27 June 2014) - Public Launch Site Regulations (GN R497 in GG 37761 of 27 June of 2014)
National Environmental Management: Waste Act 59 of 2008 (RSA, 2008d)	This act aims to reform the law regulating waste management to protect health and the environment; to provide reasonable measures for the prevention of pollution and ecological degradation; and to secure ecologically sustainable development (IMP, 2017:145). The act is important to the IWP owing to listed waste activities in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park that require authorisation and the management of waste generated by the IWP. Notices and regulations relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park include: - National Domestic Waste Collection Standards (GN 21 in GG 33935 of 21 January of 2011) - National Waste Information Regulations, 2012 (GN R625 in GG 35583 of 13 August 2012) - Waste Classification and Management Regulations, 2013 (GN R634 in GG 36784 of 23 August 2013) - National Norms and Standards for the Assessment of Waste for Landfill Disposal (GN R635 in GG 36784 of 23 August 2013) - National Norms and Standards for Disposal of Waste to Landfill (GN R636 in GG 36784 of 23 August 2013) - List of Waste Management Activities That Have, or Are Likely to Have a Detrimental Effect on the Environment (GN 921 in GG 37083 of 29 November 2013 amended by GN 332 in GG 37604 of 2 May 2014 and GN R633 in GG 39020 of 24 July 2015)

Act	Applicability to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)
	National Norms and Standards for the Storage of Waste, 2013 (GN 926 in GG 37088 of 29 November 2013)

3.6 Relevant legislative and regulatory framework for the Isimangaliso Wetland Park: Discussion

Taking Tables 3.1 and 3.2 above into consideration, this section provides a brief discussion of the international and domestic legislative and regulatory frameworks. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 in relation to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) underscore the myriad complex legislative requirements that this public entity has to adhere to and implement on a daily basis.

The IWP occupies an area of approximately 358 534 hectares. The area comprises 15 ecosystems and a number of notable and diverse landscapes (IMP, 2017:1). Furthermore, the IWP is subject to, and required to adhere to, seven international conventions and at least 17 pieces of domestic legislation. Within the 17 pieces of domestic legislation, the IWP has to adhere to subordinate legislation in the form of regulations, norms and standards (IMP, 2017:134). According to the IMP, there are at least 26 regulations and seven norms and standards applicable to the IWP. There are six significant legislative areas relevant to the IWP.

3.6.1 *World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999*

In 2000, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) was proclaimed a World Heritage Site in terms of the World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999. This act incorporated the World Heritage Convention into South African legislation. The World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999 provides a fundamental commitment to protect, conserve, preserve and present world heritage values with a strong emphasis on local economic development. This ensures that national government has the legal means to discharge its responsibilities under the World Heritage Convention, and that these sites, along with tourism potential, are developed in ways that meet the social and development needs of local residents. This act provides the framework for the regulations, and proclaims the IWP, and establishes the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority to manage the site through a board and executive staff component (IMP, 2017:137).

3.6.2 *National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003*

As a World Heritage Site and protected area, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is also governed by the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003, which affords additional protection and makes provision for management and plans for parks in support of the World Heritage Convention Act (IMP, 2017:138). The objective hereof is to protect and conserve ecologically viable areas representative of South Africa's biological diversity and its natural landscapes and seascapes. The act provides for a national register of all national, provincial and local protected areas in order for them to be managed in accordance with national norms and

standards. The act accentuates the importance of intergovernmental cooperation and public consultation in matters related to marine protected areas and more specifically how to authorise the declaration of such areas and provide for the management thereof.

3.6.3 Marine Living Resources Act 18 of 1998

The entire coastline of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) is a proclaimed World Heritage Site under the World Heritage Convention Act. Approximately three-quarters of this coastline (from Kosi Bay to 1 km south of Cape Vidal) is also proclaimed as two marine protected areas (MPAs) (St Lucia and Maputaland) through government notice under the Marine Living Resources Act 18 of 1998 (RSA, 1998b), which provides specific protection to the marine environment (IMP, 2017:143).

The objectives of the act are to provide for the conservation of the marine ecosystem; long-term sustainable utilisation of marine living resources; and orderly access to exploitation, utilisation and protection of certain marine living resources; and to ensure the exercise of control over marine living resources in a fair and equitable manner so that South Africans are the beneficiaries. This act is relevant to the IWP because the park needs to ensure the conservation of the marine ecosystem and sustainable use of resources; and to protect every species of sea animal (excluding seals and birds) through the prohibition of catching, disturbing and possessing. The act also makes specific mention of the protection of the coelacanth, which is found in the waters of the IWP, in line with its CITES I listing.

Lastly, the act requires fair and equitable resource allocation and the granting of commercial, recreational and subsistence fishing rights.

3.6.4 Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999

The objective of the Public Finance Management Act (RSA, 1999b) is to introduce proper financial management systems, and appropriate control and accountability arrangements to manage finances; to ensure transparency at all spheres of government and within public entities; to secure accountability and sound management of revenue, expenditure, assets and liabilities of institutions to which the act applies; and to achieve uniformity in how government departments and public entities manage their finances.

As an organ of state, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority is subject to the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 and regulations issued in terms of the act, including regulations that deal with certain commercial activities (e.g. public–private partnerships) (IMP, 2017:147).

3.6.5 World Heritage Convention

The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) (World Heritage Convention) places the responsibility on signatories to the convention to establish – globally – an effective system of collective identification, protection and preservation of cultural

and natural heritage resources. The resources so to be conserved are those which are considered to be of outstanding universal value to humanity. Signatories also have the responsibility to provide both emergency and long-term protection for monuments, groups of buildings and sites with historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological and anthropological value, as well as for outstanding physical, biological and geological formations, habitats of threatened species of animals and plants, and areas with scientific, conservation and aesthetic value.

As a signatory to the World Heritage Convention, South Africa has through the establishment of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park ensured that it has contributed to the preservation of the cultural and natural heritage of South Africa – through identification, protection, conservation and transmission to future generations. The World Heritage Convention Act was enacted for this purpose (IMP, 2017:134).

3.6.6 Ramsar Convention

The second convention of significant importance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) is the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, (1971) (RAMSAR). There are four proclaimed RAMSAR sites located within the IWP (IMP, 2017:134). This convention sought to ensure the conservation and wise utilisation of all wetlands through local, regional and national action and international cooperation as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development globally (IMP, 2017:134).

In conclusion, given the complex and myriad legislative requirements to which the IWP is obliged to adhere, the Presidential Review Committee (PRC) revealed that there are currently approximately 715 state-owned enterprises (SOEs) across the three spheres of government in South Africa. Therefore, based on this number of SOEs, there are multiple acts which govern SOEs with no single overarching legislative framework to ensure that a similar standard is achieved (PRC, 2013:67).

The PRC recommends (PRC, 2013:14) the enactment of a single overarching law, which could be referred to as a state-owned entities act to govern SOEs. This overarching act could then supersede all other or current legislation governing the enterprises and reduce the current burden of compliance with a myriad of laws and regulations.

3.7 Chapter conclusion

This chapter discussed the legislative and regulatory requirements for the effective functioning of public entities in South Africa. The following aspects were focused upon: the definition of relevant concepts including the establishment of a public entity; an overview of governance of public entities; and how both legislation and regulations impact on the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

Chapter 4 focuses on a detailed overview of the research methodology and design adopted for the purposes of this study, including a discussion of the adopted research instruments as well as the analysis and interpretation of results. The discussion is aligned to the literature review presented in chapters 2 and 3, in order to illustrate the link between theory and practice in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

CHAPTER FOUR:

ANALYSING STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS WITH THREE TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES AT THE ISIMANGALISO WETLAND PARK: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 of this study focused on the legislative and regulatory requirements for the effective functioning of public entities in South Africa. The following aspects were examined: the establishment of a public entity, an overview of the governance of public entities and how legislation and regulations affect the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a detailed overview of the research methodology. The design adopted for the purposes of this study includes a discussion of the adopted research instruments as well as the analysis and interpretation of results.

In order to achieve these purposes, the chapter is structured according to the following main themes:

- a detailed description of the research design, approach and method adopted for the study; and
- an overview, analysis and interpretation of the semi-structured interviews.

4.2 Research design

A research design can be described as those appropriate research methods that are used to attain the goals and objectives set out in chapter 1. The research design therefore focuses on the final outcome and all the stages necessary to realise that outcome. A research design can therefore be viewed as the purposeful plan through which research methods and techniques are connected to attain reliable and valid data for empirical analyses in order to reach conclusions. The research design therefore provides a clear research framework, guides the methods and results, and forms the basis for interpretation. Bless *et al.* (2006:71) define research design as “operations to be performed, in order to test a specific hypothesis under a given condition”. Babbie and Mouton (2008:74) describe research design as a blueprint for guiding the research. The research design moreover entails a detailed plan, according to which research is undertaken. The research problem determines the methods, the sampling, the data collection and the data analysis to be employed for the proposed research (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:66). For the purpose of this research, the researcher used an empirical study, involving semi-structured interviews and phenomenology to gain insight into the distinctive experiences of the participants in relation to stakeholder relations of three traditional authorities in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) in order to arrive at sound conclusions. Leedy and Ormrod (2010:141) describe a

phenomenological study as one that attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and views of a particular situation. By considering multiple perspectives on the same situation, the researcher could provide an insider's perspective. The phenomenological approach aims to make sense of and interpret the meaning that participants give to their everyday experience of stakeholder relations at the IWP. In the current study, the research was conducted by means of a literature study and empirical research. The nature and complexity of the research problem, research questions and related research aims called for a purposeful research design to meet the requirements of these research intentions. For this reason, a qualitative research design was chosen to conduct this research. A qualitative research design was adopted to enhance the scope and range of the research, in order to address the research problem and the related research questions.

The research design of this study comprises a literature study. This underpins the theoretical basis of the study. The semi-structured interviews were used to obtain the perspectives of respondents regarding the phenomenon under discussion.

Table 4.1 indicates the research design instruments used to gather data in order to answer each of the research questions.

Table 4-1: Research design instruments used per research question

Specific research question	Research design instrument used
According to relevant literature, what do stakeholder relations entail?	Literature study
What are the statutory and regulatory requirements for the effective functioning of public entities in South Africa?	Literature Study
What are the challenges and shortcomings experienced in terms of stakeholder relations that are impeding stakeholder relations in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)?	Semi-structured interviews
What interventions can be proposed to assist the IWP in developing stakeholder relations for the benefit of all traditional authorities in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area?	Semi-structured interviews and literature study

The research design instruments are discussed below.

4.2.1 Literature review

A literature review is an examination of scholarly information and research-based material on a specific topic (Dawidowicz, 2010:2). A literature review assists the researcher to, inter alia, avoid unintentional and unnecessary replication of work and also identifies possible contradictions and inconsistencies (Collins *et al.* 2010:171). The literature review in this study was guided by specific research questions set out in chapter 1 and was theoretically explored in the first three chapters of

this study. The aim was to obtain relevant information regarding stakeholder relation theory and the statutory and regulatory requirements for the effective functioning of public entities in South Africa.

4.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

According to Robson (2002:270), semi-structured interviews entail predetermined questions where the order may be changed based on the interviewer's discretion. The wording of the questions may be altered, background explanations may be given, and additional questions may be added, if needed. In the present study, semi-structured interviews were used to explore and gain insights into the views and experiences of the leadership at the Department of Environmental Affairs and the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, the three traditional authorities relevant to the study in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP), and the former municipal manager of the uMhlabuyalingana Municipality. The questions concerned stakeholder relations of three traditional authorities in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the IWP. The researcher used semi-structured interviews in order to gain specific and detailed information from the interviewees and to understand the participants' perceptions and feelings about stakeholder relations. The interviewees were thus selected because of their knowledge and leadership positions in the various organisations and structures they represented.

4.2.2.1 Interview procedure

The researcher personally conducted all the semi-structured interviews. The interviewees were contacted both by email and telephonically to explain the purpose of the study. All the interviewees were approached and asked to name a suitable date and time for the interview. Four interviews were conducted telephonically and the other four interviews took place at the offices of the interviewees. The interviews were conducted between 27 August 2018 and 26 September 2018.

At the start of each interview, the interviewer informed the participants of the background of the study and the purpose of the interview, and thanked them for participating. Ritchie and Lewis (2003:66) mentioned that "sample members' informed consent to participate must be obtained". Therefore, before the interviews were conducted, consent was sought from interviewees for the sessions to be voice-recorded. The participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality regarding their responses, and thereafter the recording of the interview was discussed. All interviewees agreed to the recording of the interviews.

4.2.2.2 Interview schedule

Babbie (2004:300) indicates that the schedule for semi-structured interviews encompasses uniform questions and/or a list of themes from which the interviewer may deviate. Further probing and supplementary questions based on the information received via the participants' replies may be undertaken.

Four sets of interview schedules were compiled: one for the leadership at the Department of Environmental Affairs; one for the leadership at the IWP; one for the former municipal manager of the uMhlabuyalingana Municipality; and, lastly, one for the three traditional leaders. These interviews followed the thematic areas identified through the literature review (see Annexures A, B, C and D of the study).

The schedules started off with requests for biographical information, followed by more specific questions related to thematic areas identified in the literature study. The interview schedules focused on areas such as: the interviewees' involvement and experience in stakeholder relations; which stakeholder strategies were in place; how stakeholders were identified; whether certain stakeholders were prioritised; the channels of communication with stakeholders; and, lastly, what they had learnt from stakeholder relations.

4.3 Population and sampling

The population and sampling method is discussed below.

4.3.1 Sampling

A purposeful sampling method was used to select participants in management positions for the semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted with the following people:

- Director general of the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA);
- Deputy director general for Biodiversity and Conservation at the DEA;
- Chairperson of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Board;
- Director: Park Operations at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP);
- iNkosi Tembe of the Tembe Traditional Council;
- iNkosi Zikhali of the Mbila Traditional Council, who was assisted by the representative of the iSimangaliso Land Claim Trusts on the National People and Parks Steering Committee;
- iNkosi Nxumalo of the Mabasa Traditional Council; and
- The municipal manager of the uMkhanyakude District Municipality and former uMhlabuyalingana municipal manager.

Purposeful sampling means selecting participants according to the aims of the research and the participants' status and role or function in an organisation (Coyne, 1997:624). According to Patton (1990, cited in Coyne, 1997:624), the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich participants who disclose significant information about issues or characteristics important to the research topic.

The eight individuals were selected based on the roles they fulfil in stakeholder relations at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. All participants fulfilled leadership roles. Four participants' interviews were as mentioned conducted via telephone owing to logistical constraints. All interviews were voice-recorded and transcribed.

4.4 Data collection

The primary objective of data collection is to gather reliable data from participants. In this study reliable data would assist in analysing the functioning and challenges encountered in relation to stakeholder relations of three traditional authorities within the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

4.4.1 Reliability and validity

Reliability is reliant on the replicability, consistency and dependability of the results obtained. The most important issue in research is to ensure reliability and validity. Joppe (2000) defines reliability as:

The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable.

According to Hersen and Thomas (2007:25), “the majority of reliability studies of structured and semi-structured interviews focus on diagnostic consistency”. In the present research, interviews conducted with the responsible managers or custodians of the stakeholder management strategy at the IWP, stakeholders in the form of traditional leaders and land claims trusts, the leadership in the DEA that oversees iSimangaliso as a public entity, and the municipal leadership of the geographical area within which these traditional leaders and iSimangaliso fall were all information-rich respondents. This added to the external reliability of the study. In other words, if these respondents were to be interviewed again, the researcher would in all probability gain the same information.

The researcher stated in chapter 1 that the aim of the present study was to analyse stakeholder relations of three traditional authorities in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. The themes, as highlighted in the literature review in chapter 2, were used as a guideline to develop and analyse the transcribed interviews to help ensure validity. For the purpose of this study, construct validity was employed.

Bagozzi *et al.* (1991:423) state that in construct validity, key informants are frequently used to measure the properties of an organisation. For the present study key stakeholders and custodians of the stakeholder management strategy were selected because of their knowledge and the positions they hold in the organisations they represent in order to provide information on the stakeholder relationships. Furthermore, the internal validity was increased by using, in large part, the same interview schedule.

4.4.2 Data analysis

According to Sloan (2006:96), qualitative data obtained from interviews can be analysed by using a thematic analysis technique in order to extract the important elements from semi-structured interviews. Sloan (2006:96) furthermore indicates that thematic analysis is measured as appropriate when the data are collected from semi-structured, open-ended interviews – also when these have been audio-recorded and transcribed. Each semi-structured interview that was conducted for this study was transcribed and analysed through qualitative thematic analysis. Such data analysis involves the non-numerical analysis and interpretation of observations, in order to understand the significance and patterns of relationships (Babbie, 2004:370). The interview findings are discussed in section 4.5.

4.4.3 Limitations and delimitations

The study focused on analysing the stakeholder relations of three traditional authorities in the uMhlabyalingana municipal area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP). This was mainly necessitated by the deterioration in stakeholder relations which was negatively affecting operations and good governance at the IWP. Although the present study unlocked various possibilities, as discussed below, certain limitations need to be taken into consideration.

The first limitation of the study is that it focused on the relations with only three traditional authorities in the north of the IWP and did not consider the views of the other nine traditional authorities around the IWP. This has the consequence that the findings of the present study cannot be generalised or applied to the stakeholder experiences of all traditional authorities around the IWP or other conservation areas that are affected by traditional authorities in South Africa. The second limitation is that the study did not include further existing stakeholders of the IWP and for this reason also cannot be generalised to the overall experience of stakeholders at the IWP.

Although a purposeful sampling was used to select participants for the semi-structured interviews, it can also be regarded as a limitation of the study. Through its limitation to leadership role players in a managerial capacity who are responsible for governance at the DEA, IWP and the leadership of the three traditional authorities, the study excludes the views of other managers, lower levels of leadership, and general members of traditional authorities that may be affected by stakeholder relations in and around the park.

Another potential limitation may have been an element of bias, because the researcher is a staff member of the Department of Environmental Affairs. Every effort was however made to ensure that the participants' views were reflected accurately, without prejudice.

A delimitation applied in this study was not to use a mixed method approach by sending out questionnaires to all staff at the IWP and other selected stakeholder groups in order to broaden the study.

4.5 Analysis and interpretation of the data

Bryman (2012:624) states that one of the most common approaches to qualitative data analysis in fieldwork is the identification and use of themes. Mouton (2013:108) further argues that, in the end, the analysis culminates in and involves breaking up the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. This leads to a better understanding of the data. Babbie (1998:110) states that researchers thereafter interpret the collected data for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect on the reasons that initiated the enquiry. Likewise, Mouton (2013:109) explains that interpretation means relating one's results and findings to existing theoretical frameworks and showing whether these are supported or not.

In this study, the collected data were analysed through identified themes in order to extract the valuable information. Irrelevant data identified during collection were discarded.

4.5.1 Presentation of the findings

The presentation of analysed data in this chapter is arranged as follows:

- Section 4.5.1.1 – analysis of the profile and biographical data of the respondents.
- Section 4.5.1.2 – evaluation of Theme 1 which deals with the stakeholder concept in order to understand the participants' involvement and experience, and the value and importance of stakeholder relations.
- Section 4.5.1.3 – evaluation of Theme 2 which deals with stakeholder strategy in order to understand whether the IWP has a relevant and effective stakeholder strategy in place, what the goals of this strategy are, and whether the strategy is comprehensive and responsive to the needs of the stakeholders.
- Section 4.5.1.4 – discussion on Theme 3 which deals with the identification, prioritisation and classification of stakeholders.
- Section 4.5.1.5 – evaluation of Theme 4 which deals with the kind of relationships that are important to have with stakeholders and then delves into describing the stakeholder relations with the three traditional councils identified in this study as well as the challenges in these specific relationships.
- Section 4.5.1.6 – discussion on Theme 5 which deals with stakeholder engagement structures and communication in order to understand what formal structures are in place to engage with stakeholders, what methods of communication with stakeholders are in place, whether these methods are beneficial and, more specifically, how communication and consultation take place with the three traditional councils identified in this study.
- Section 4.5.1.7 – reflection on Theme 6 which comprised the responses of participants to open-ended questions related to what they had learnt about stakeholder relations and whether they had anything they wanted to add.

4.5.1.1 *Profile of the respondents*

Three questions were posed to respondents to gather information about their profiles, namely:

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender?
3. What is your experience / how long have you been working with the IWP?

Below is a summary of the answers gathered by means of these interview questions.

The nine respondents who were interviewed were between the ages of 33 and 53 years. The respondents consisted of one female and eight males and had been working with the IWP for between 5 to 19 years. It was clear from the number of years they had been involved with stakeholder relations, their seniority and the positions they held that they were capable of describing and explaining how stakeholder relations were managed at the IWP.

4.5.1.2 *Theme 1: Stakeholder concept*

Four questions were posed to respondents under the stakeholder concept theme, namely:

1. To what extent are you involved as a stakeholder at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)?
2. How do you experience stakeholder relations at the IWP?
3. Do you place a high value on stakeholder relations with the IWP?
4. Do you believe that sound stakeholder relations will add value to the IWP?

Below is a summary of the answers gathered by means of these interview questions.

The participants articulated their involvement in stakeholder relations through their daily roles, which were:

- (i) responsible managers or custodians of the stakeholder management strategy at the IWP;
- (ii) stakeholders in the form of traditional leaders and land claim trusts;
- (iii) leadership in the Department of Environmental Affairs that oversees iSimangaliso as a public entity; and
- (iv) municipal leadership within which geographical area these traditional leaders and iSimangaliso fall. The municipality is also a stakeholder.

The literature review highlighted the fact that the stakeholder concept draws from systems theory in that organisations, in this instance the IWP, are considered an open system that constantly interacts with several stakeholders. This interaction requires the development of cooperative strategies. It was therefore important to confirm and understand the involvement of the participants in stakeholder relations at the IWP. By indicating their involvement, the participants confirmed that they were stakeholders, defined by Freeman (cited in Zsolnai, 2006:38) as “those groups without whose support the organisation would cease to exist”. The participants’ involvement also aligned with systems theory which posits that an organisation is a system and its stakeholders are

subsystems (Greeff, 2011:2). Furthermore, it was clear that the actions of the organisation and its stakeholders were interconnected and affected each other.

After establishing the roles and involvement of the participants in stakeholder relations, it was important to understand their experience of stakeholder relations at the IWP. In describing their experience of stakeholder relations at the IWP, all participants responded negatively. The participants described their negative relations as follows:

- Hostile
 - Not harmonious
 - Difficult
 - Could have been better
 - Ill-treatment
 - Misunderstanding
 - Complex
-
- They (the IWP) do things without the proper involvement of communities

Jahansoozi (2007a:398) indicates that stakeholder relations theory postulates the need for organisations to build resilient and strong relationships with their key stakeholders if they are to maximise the organisation's (in this instance the IWP) ability to reach its goals. Freeman (2005:122), too, refers to the necessity of an organisation to manage its relationships with stakeholders in an action-oriented way. This necessitates the creating of meaningful relationships with stakeholders, which is according to the participants, currently not the case at the IWP.

All nine participants however agreed that a high value should be placed on stakeholder relations by expressing the following sentiments:

- It is important
- It should be prioritised
- iSimangaliso cannot function without good working relations with its stakeholders
- We cannot operate without each other or function in silos
- If the community does not see the park as its asset, it can't exist
- It determines whether or not we are able to improve the value of the assets that we are looking after
- We are the custodians of the land on behalf of the nation, therefore stakeholder relationships should be of extreme importance

Participants thus placed a high value on stakeholder relations. It was however noteworthy that the high value that was placed on good stakeholder relations came with a condition or qualification from some stakeholders which they articulated as "nothing for us without us on our land". The

stakeholder-participants' bond with the dispossessed land is extremely strong. The reasons put forward are that some stakeholders' forbears are buried on the land inside the park and the land is still needed for cultural practices like harvesting "iNcema" and traditional fishing. This also, according to systems theory, accentuates dependence, connectedness and interrelatedness between the IWP and its stakeholders. All participants also highlighted and confirmed that sound stakeholder relations will add value to the existence of the IWP.

4.5.1.3 Theme 2: Stakeholder strategy

Three questions were posed to respondents under the stakeholder strategy theme, namely:

1. To your knowledge, does the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) have a relevant and effective stakeholder strategy in place?
2. Are you aware what the goals and plans are for stakeholder relations management at the IWP?
3. In your view, is the stakeholder strategy comprehensive and responsive to the needs of the IWP and its stakeholders?

Below is a summary of the answers gathered by means of these interview questions.

All participants were asked if they felt that the IWP had a relevant and effective stakeholder strategy in place. There was general agreement on the following:

- The IWP does not have a relevant and effective stakeholder strategy in place.
- The current strategy is "not adequate" or is "reactionary but definitely not proactive".
- The current strategy needs "adaptation" and "improvement" as it is "not as responsive as it should be"

Furthermore, as validation that a proper stakeholder strategy was not in place, stakeholder-participants indicated that if there were such a strategy in place, there would have been "development by now in the north of the park" and that the non-existence of a stakeholder strategy, which would have brought development to the north of the park, was the cause of "mistrust and conflict". As indicated in chapter 2, this provides a beneficial theoretical underpinning for the role of stakeholder relations in the IWP, since it revealed how an organisation's survival and prosperity depends on relationships within itself and in its environment (Barker *et al.*, 2001:20; Cutlip *et al.*, 2002:21-23).

Given the finding that there was not a relevant and effective stakeholder strategy in place, all participants were committed to, and indicated the importance of, a proper stakeholder strategy. One participant indicated that if this situation was not remedied and a proper strategy was not put in place, "it will be like Jerusalem – unprecedented wars forever".

4.5.1.4 Theme 3: Identification and prioritisation of stakeholders

Four questions were posed to respondents under the theme of identification and prioritisation of stakeholders, namely:

1. Do you prioritise certain stakeholders?
2. Why are these stakeholders prioritised?
3. Could you identify these prioritised stakeholders?
4. How would you classify these stakeholders?

Below is a summary of the answers gathered by means of these interview questions.

Participants identified the stakeholders that they believe should be prioritised as follows:

- (i) aMmakhosi (traditional leaders)
- (ii) Local government
- (iii) Land claimants or land claim trusts
- (iv) People who live in and around the park
- (v) Provincial government
- (vi) Private sector
- (vii) Other government departments
- (viii) iNgonyama Trust
- (ix) Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

Manowong and Ogunlana (cited in Chinyio & Olomolaiye, 2010:121-129) accentuate the significance of identifying suitable stakeholders with whom to work, of understanding their needs, and of knowing how to manage relationships with stakeholders. Therefore, it was important to note that all participants agreed that certain stakeholders at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) should be prioritised. Respondents indicated that there was “a feeling” that land claim trusts were for too long the only prioritised group. Another noteworthy observation from the respondents was that prioritisation was issues-based and therefore – being dependent on particular issues – certain stakeholders were prioritised.

Participants classified the identified stakeholders as “critical stakeholders”, “first role players”, “ones you can hardly do without” and “crucial”, classification is by “stake – both legally and socially”. However, the overall observation of the participants was that this “proper prioritisation” is not yet practised. This is a significant finding, supported in chapter 2 by the stakeholder salience model which, according to Mitchell *et al.* (1997), reveals that organisations identify and prioritise stakeholder interests subjectively based on the perceptions of managers about specific elements or characteristics their stakeholders possess. These perceptions reveal how urgent, powerful and legitimate respondents believe the stakeholders to be. The primary view of the stakeholder salience theory by Mitchell *et al.* (1997:584) is defined as “the degree to which managers give priority to different competing stakeholder claims”. Therefore, the more attributes (i.e. power,

legitimacy and urgency) a stakeholder has, the more important managers consider them to be. It is clear that this model should not be adopted by the IWP in order to identify and classify stakeholders.

4.5.1.5 Theme 4: Relationship with stakeholders

Three questions were posed to respondents under the theme of relationship with stakeholders, namely:

1. What kind of relationships do you believe are important to have with your stakeholders?
2. How would you describe the stakeholder relations with three of the traditional councils (Tembe, Mabaso and Zikhali) in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area around the northern sections of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)?
3. Are there challenges in the relationship with these three traditional councils?

Below is a summary of the answers gathered by means of these interview questions.

According to the literature review, the stakeholder concept is essentially normative (Donaldson & Preston, 1995:74). The normative paradigm implies that organisations with high moral standards will naturally place value on true stakeholder engagement characterised by qualities such as trust, fairness and dialogue (Amaeshi, 2010:16), which according to the responses in 4.4.1 are not in place, as phrases such as “mistrust” and “conflict” are generally used to describe stakeholder relationships at the IWP.

Furthermore, Jahansoozi (2007b:943) reinforces the importance of trust, commitment, satisfaction, control mutuality, and dialogue as essential characteristics in measuring stakeholder relationships. This underscores the need to build enduring relationships between the IWP and stakeholders – which requires continuous commitment, engagement and dialogue between the parties.

In describing the specific relationship between the IWP and the three traditional councils, all participants used negative phrases such as, “in terms of percentage it would be 5%”, “tense”, “full of dissatisfaction”, “improving but not satisfactory” and “varied”. The participants reflected that the challenges in the relationship are due to the following reasons:

- Very little development has taken place in the north of the park
- Communities are getting desperate in terms of benefitting
- Decisions are dictated and not negotiated with interested and affected stakeholders
- There is no proper communication

There was a general acknowledgment that tourism benefits were exaggerated when the park was established and this led to the claims that the park does not seem to meet the expectations of most stakeholders. Therefore, it is necessary to manage relationships with these stakeholder groups.

Systems theory also stresses the value of interaction and feedback in relationships within a society (Blumberg, 2008:21).

4.5.1.6 *Theme 5: Stakeholder engagement structures and communication*

Four questions were posed to respondents under the theme of stakeholder engagement structures and communication, namely:

1. Are there formal structures in place to engage with stakeholders?
2. What methods of communication or consultation with stakeholders are used?
3. Which one of these methods is the most beneficial?
4. How do you communicate or consult specifically with the three traditional councils in the uMhlabyalingana area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)?

Below is a summary of the answers gathered by means of these interview questions.

In aiming to understand what methods are in place to engage and communicate with stakeholders, the management at the IWP indicated that communication with stakeholders has not always been “great” as the park deals with 12 aMmakhosi and 14 land claimant communities. One participant described the situation as follows: “Maybe we have not cracked the language or the code to get information across.”

The park has therefore now been divided into three areas with a manager for each area to deal with it more efficiently. The three managers are responsible for the land claimants and aMmakhosi in their area and a fourth manager deals with park-wide issues like the broader aMmakhosi forum and the land claimant forum that meet twice a year. The management also indicated that there were no terms of reference in place for any structures or engagements with stakeholders.

The three traditional authorities all indicated that there were no formal structures in place and that engagement with them took place on an ad hoc basis. The traditional leaders indicated that there was no annual plan or calendar presented to them for engagements and that they would prefer an annual calendar of formal engagements with them. They also indicated that such engagements should take place quarterly to allow for joint strategising. These should be properly constituted and integrated structures with terms of reference, inclusive of land claimant trusts. The traditional leaders further proposed a bigger structure that should meet at least once a year. This structure should include all stakeholders of the IWP in order to get to know each other. There were no other opportunities to engage with, for instance, business stakeholders and tourism associations in order to “close the gap between us”. Such a structure will assist in “cascading the information to the wider community”. There is a contention that the stakeholders are not engaged in an integrated structure as the IWP has a specific strategy of “divide and rule”.

In considering other methods of communication apart from formal structures between the stakeholders and the IWP, the participants proposed varied methods of communication. These included direct communication, social media, community radio, attending traditional council meetings, through the local government, formal letters, emails, phone calls and other meetings. The participants saw all of these methods as complementary to each other. The traditional authorities insisted on formal structures to “close the communication gaps” and expressed a need for “some kind of consistent way of engaging through People and Parks Forums”. The new People and Parks Forums that are being introduced at the IWP – as are established in other parks around the country – were raised by all participants as a possible way forward and this particular forum was described as a concept that should be “adopted and used”.

4.5.1.7 Theme 6: Open-ended responses of participants

Two questions were posed to respondents under the theme of open-ended responses of participants, namely:

1. What have you learnt from stakeholder relations at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP)?
2. Do you have anything else you would like to add in relation to stakeholder management?

Below is a summary of the answers gathered by means of these interview questions.

All respondents indicated the importance and value of good stakeholder relations to ensure that stakeholders do not feel disrespected. The respondents further laid emphasis on the following issues:

- The need to involve communities from the outset
- The value of being objective and maintaining a helicopter view
- The desirability of maintaining respect for the important role of traditional councils and leaders
- The need for real development in the northern part of the park
- The belief in protecting the environment and promoting tourism, but not at the expense of people – there needs to be a balance
- If the needed developments are not forthcoming, other methods – like mining – should be explored to develop the communities
- Each traditional council and stakeholder has different issues and there must be a space created to deal with these issues
- Stakeholders cannot be taken for granted

The management of the IWP indicated that stakeholder relations are “dynamic” and that the stakeholder management strategy needs to be revised and needs “constant working on”. The management also indicated that the stakeholder strategy is included in its Annual Performance Plan to be reviewed in the current financial year.

The value of good stakeholder relations is set out in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA) (CBD, 2004). It focuses on the subject of governance for protected areas and calls for all relevant sectors of society to participate.

PoWPA has focused on a number of key areas which are important in dealing with stakeholders in protected areas. The programme stresses the importance of participation, innovation, respect, benefit-sharing, free prior and informed consent and good governance principles which should underpin stakeholder relations. These important guiding principles should be adhered to by the IWP.

4.6 General summary and interpretation of responses

The outcome of the semi-structured interviews included participants' responses that reflected wide-ranging views on both the challenges and failures, and the positive aspects regarding the stakeholder engagement strategy of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP). The interviews also produced recommendations that can be used as building blocks in guiding a more responsive and comprehensive stakeholder relations strategy for the IWP.

A positive outcome of the interviews was that all participants agreed on the following:

- A comprehensive and responsive stakeholder engagement strategy is of utmost importance to the proper functioning of the IWP.
- A high value should be placed on stakeholder relations.
- Certain stakeholders at the IWP should be prioritised.
- All of the methods of communication taking place at the IWP are complementary to each other.
- Good stakeholder relations are important and valuable to ensure that stakeholders do not feel disrespected.

The challenges pertaining to stakeholder relations were described as follows:

- There is an overall negative experience of stakeholder relations at the IWP.
- The IWP does not have a relevant and proper stakeholder strategy in place.
- The current strategy needs adaptation and improvement as it is not as responsive as it should be.
- Only one stakeholder group, namely land claim trusts, has been prioritised and therefore proper prioritisation has not yet been implemented.
- The stakeholder relationship between the IWP and the three traditional councils has shortcomings. The problem is a lack of trust, which is attributed to very little development in the north of the park and inadequate communication in this regard.
- There is a clear disconnect between stakeholders and management at the IWP. The traditional authorities all indicated that there were no formal structures in place for

engagement and that engagement with them took place on an ad hoc basis, while management felt there were formal structures in place for engagement.

The recommendations emanating from the interviews to improve stakeholder relations were the following:

- There is a need for a predictable annual stakeholder engagement plan in the form of People and Parks Forum meetings with clear terms of reference.
- These meetings should take place on a quarterly basis to allow joint strategising and the structures should be integrated and also include land claimant trusts.
- A bigger structure must be implemented and should meet at least once a year. This structure should include all stakeholders of the IWP so that attendees can get to know each other and have the opportunity to engage with each other. This will assist in closing the gap between stakeholders and will also assist in cascading the information to the wider community.
- Stakeholder relations are dynamic and therefore stakeholder relationship management and the strategy need to be revised, according to the management of the IWP.
- The kind of relationship to foster with stakeholders is professional, open with clear terms of engagement, transparent, inclusive and efficient.

4.7 Chapter conclusion

This chapter provided a detailed discussion of the research design, design instruments, approach and method adopted for the study. It furthermore provided a detailed overview, analysis and interpretation of the semi-structured interviews.

A thematic analysis technique was used in the interpretation and analysis of the semi-structured interviews. Six thematic areas were identified to collect and interpret the data. The analysis clearly identified those areas where there were challenges in the stakeholder relations strategy, as well as those areas which contained recommendations. This analysis could be used to ensure more comprehensive and responsive stakeholder relations in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park and more specifically with the three traditional authorities in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the park.

The next chapter illustrates and presents how the set objectives of the study were achieved. The recommendations of the study, limitations and possible future research that could be undertaken are also spelt out.

CHAPTER FIVE:

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to analyse stakeholder relations of three traditional authorities in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP). The poor stakeholder relations, coupled with the dire socioeconomic conditions in the areas surrounding the IWP, places enormous pressure on good governance at the IWP. Deficiencies in good governance related to stakeholder relations may consequently impede the success of this important conservation area and World Heritage Site. For this reason, this research set out to help safeguard the IWP from future stakeholder engagement failures.

This empirical study was conducted to obtain the perspectives of the stakeholders, being the traditional authorities, the Department of Environmental Affairs, the uMhlabuyalingana Municipality and the designated leadership of the IWP on, inter alia, the challenges they face and the factors that should be considered to ensure improved stakeholder relations.

This final chapter summarises the findings of the study in line with the data collected and processed from the semi-structured interviews. Recommendations are presented based on the research objectives, literature study, empirical investigation, and empirical findings. Furthermore, possible future research is suggested.

5.2 Realisation of the objectives of the research

At the beginning of this study several objectives were set out. These objectives included:

- analysing the current stakeholder relations at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) against relevant stakeholder theories and principles;
- analysing the statutory and regulatory requirements relating to effective operation of public entities in South Africa;
- assessing the shortcomings and challenges pertaining to stakeholder relations of three traditional councils within the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the IWP; and
- recommending corrective measures on how to improve stakeholder relations and engagement at the IWP.

An overview is provided in the next section to indicate how the research objectives were achieved.

5.3 Summary and findings of the study

The findings assess the relevance of the study in terms of reaching its set objectives. The findings are also the basis on which the recommendations are made.

Objective one was to analyse the current stakeholder relations at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP) against relevant stakeholder theories and principles. This objective was achieved in chapter 2 through the theoretical exposition of providing an overview of systems theory, stakeholder theory and stakeholder management in protected areas. Furthermore, the objective was attained through the semi-structured interviews conducted and described in chapter 4. One of the findings was that all participants agreed that a comprehensive and responsive stakeholder engagement strategy was of utmost importance to the proper functioning of the IWP. All interviewees agreed that a high value should be placed on stakeholder relations. All participants also agreed that certain stakeholders at the IWP should be prioritised. Lastly, participants reflected on what kind of relationships they believed were important to have with stakeholders and their answers ranged from professional to open with clear terms of engagement, transparent, inclusive, and efficient.

Objective two was to analyse the statutory and regulatory requirements relating to the effective operation of public entities in South Africa. The objective was achieved by means of a discussion in chapter 3 of the need and establishment of public entities; governance of public entities; and the legislative and regulatory environment that affects the work of the IWP by reflecting on the international and domestic regulatory framework to which it has to adhere and within which it has to operate.

Objective three was to assess the shortcomings and challenges pertaining to stakeholder relations of three traditional councils in the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the IWP. This objective was achieved through semi-structured interviews, underpinned by the literature study, as reflected in chapter 4. The shortcomings and challenges were described as follows:

- There is an overall negative experience of stakeholder relations at the IWP. The IWP does not have a stakeholder strategy in place. At best, it has a strategy that needs adaptation and improvement. There is acknowledgement that the strategy is not as responsive as it should be.
- In respect of identification and prioritisation of stakeholders, only one stakeholder group, namely land claim trusts, has been prioritised and therefore proper prioritisation has not yet been implemented.
- The stakeholder relationship between the IWP and the three traditional councils is described in negative terms. The problem is a lack of trust which is attributed to very little development in the north of the park and deficient communication in this regard.
- There is a clear disconnection between stakeholders and management at the IWP. The traditional authorities all indicated that there were no formal structures in place for engagement and that engagement with them took place on an ad hoc basis, while management felt there were formal structures in place for engagement. The IWP management felt that stakeholder relations were dynamic and that stakeholder relationship management and therefore the strategy merely needed to be revised).

Objective four was to recommend corrective measures on how to improve stakeholder relations and engagement at the IWP. This objective was achieved by providing recommendations about improvements in stakeholder relations that can be made. The semi-structured interviews clearly indicated the need for a predictable annual stakeholder engagement plan in the form of People and Parks Forum meetings. Furthermore, through the interviews a distinct preference was expressed that such a forum should have clear terms of reference, and should take place quarterly to allow for joint strategising. These structures should be integrated and should also include land claimant trusts. There was also a recommendation for a bigger structure that should meet at least once a year and include all stakeholders of the IWP. This would ensure greater interaction among the diverse stakeholders of the IWP and would contribute to closing the gap between stakeholders. It would also assist in cascading information to the wider community. In relation to the ways in which communication takes place at the IWP, the participants saw all these methods as complementary to each other. All participants indicated the importance and value of good stakeholder relations to ensure that stakeholders did not feel disrespected.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the analysis of the theories and on the findings of the empirical study, in order to ensure improved stakeholder relations and engagement at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (IWP).

- The IWP should review its stakeholder relations strategy to ensure that it is comprehensive and responsive to the needs of stakeholders. The communication channels with stakeholders should also be open and transparent.
- The organisational design of the IWP should reflect the importance of stakeholder relations.
- Stakeholder relations and engagement should be reflected as a key result area in the IWP Annual Performance Plan (APP) and the IWP Integrated Management Plan (IMP).
- A performance management system should be implemented for officials at the IWP. A key result area should be stakeholder relations and engagement.
- Formal structured engagements in the form of an annual calendar should be agreed upon with stakeholders. These structured engagements should be in the form of People and Parks Structures, which are underpinned by clear terms of reference in order to ensure accountability for all stakeholders. KwaZulu-Natal Ezemvelo Wildlife which is responsible for the conservation and tourism functions at the IWP should be part of formal engagements with stakeholders to ensure accountability and direct feedback to stakeholders. Other relevant national, provincial and local government departments should also be part of the formal annual engagements related to specific mandates.
- The development of the north of the park should be prioritised. This prioritisation should be accompanied by an agreed implementation plan with clear time frames and an approved budget in consultation with the stakeholders. Thereafter a prospectus should be developed

with investment opportunities in the park, followed by an IWP investment summit to market these opportunities.

- Respect and understanding of traditional and cultural practices should be cultivated among IWP staff through a training programme.
- Integrated planning with the uMhlabuyalingana Municipality, provincial government, KZN Ezemvelo Wildlife and other relevant government departments should be improved.
- An integrated structure should be established with the Ingonyama Trust, the Department of Land Affairs and the Land Reform Commission in order to deal with the outstanding land matters in and around the IWP.
- All stakeholder engagement interventions should be monitored and evaluated by the IWP management, Department of Environmental Affairs management, the IWP Board, and People and Parks Forums, and should be subject to parliamentary oversight.

The study focused on analysing the stakeholder relations of three traditional authorities within the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. This was mainly necessitated by the deterioration in stakeholder relations which was negatively affecting operations and good governance at the IWP. Although the present study unlocked various possibilities as indicated above, certain limitations need to be factored in. The first limitation is that the study focused on the relations with the three traditional authorities in the north of the IWP only, and did not factor in the views of other stakeholders of the IWP. This means that the findings of the present study cannot be generalised or applied to the experiences of all stakeholders of the IWP or how all traditional authorities experience stakeholder relations at the IWP or other conservation areas that are affected by traditional authorities in South Africa.

Consequently, future research could look at the following:

- The World Heritage Site status of the IWP is obstructing development in and around the park. Such a study could shed light on the realistic development potential of the park and to what extent communities and traditional authorities in and around the park could benefit.
- The mandate of the IWP and the needs and expectations of communities and traditional authorities that live in and around the park are compatible. The testing of this hypothesis could provide findings that could determine broader stakeholder relations and the viability of the park in its current form.
- The IWP's viability and sustainability is vulnerable owing to outstanding land claims in the Park. A study on this subject could provide valuable information related to the viability of the park if communities and traditional authorities will not be accepting compensation but rather will request restitution of their land.
- A case study into the IWP's viability on incorporating of the IWP into the South African National Parks (SANParks) could be undertaken. A study of this kind could provide findings in terms of the sustainability of the IWP given that its mandate overlaps with that of

SANParks as well as heed the call from the Presidential Review Committee (PRC) on state-owned entities (SOEs) that indicated that government should ensure the consolidation of SOEs.

The final conclusion of this study is provided hereunder.

5.5 Final conclusion

This study focused on analysing stakeholder relations with three traditional authorities within the uMhlabuyalingana municipal area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. In the analysis the researcher found that the park does not have a comprehensive and responsive stakeholder strategy in place and that this had detrimental consequences, such as a lack of trust between parties; stakeholders feeling disrespected; and an overall negative experience of stakeholder relations. Therefore a shift in approach by the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is required by developing a more responsive and comprehensive stakeholder relations strategy that ensures that formal, accountable and responsive stakeholder engagement structures are in place, wherein traditional authorities are prioritised and their roles are respected.

It is evident that, if the challenges that are elucidated in this study are not urgently addressed, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park will continue to invest in a dysfunctional stakeholder engagement strategy. This will compromise the long-term viability and sustainability of the park as a World Heritage Site.

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Appendix 1: Semi Structured interview questions – Leadership of the IWP

Questions	Notes
<u>Biographical information</u> Age: Gender: Experience / working with the IWP:	
<u>Stakeholder Concept</u> 1. To what extent are you involved in stakeholder relations? 2. How do you experience stakeholder relations at the IWP? 3. Do you place a high value on stakeholder relations? 4. Does stakeholder relations add value to the IWP?	
<u>Identification and prioritisation of stakeholders</u> 5. Do you prioritise certain stakeholders? 6. Why are these stakeholders prioritised? 7. Could you identify these prioritised stakeholders? 8. How would you classify these stakeholders?	
<u>Relationship with stakeholders</u> 9. What kind of relationships do you believe are important to have with your stakeholders? 10. How would you describe the stakeholder relations with three of the traditional councils (Tembe, Mabaso and Zikhali) in the uMhlabuyalingana Municipal area around the northern sections of the IWP? 11. Are there challenges in the relationship with these three traditional councils?	
<u>Communication</u> 12. Are there formal structures in place to engage with stakeholders?	

13. What methods of communication or consultation with stakeholders are used? 14. Which one of these methods are the most beneficial? 15. How do you communicate or consult specifically with the 3 traditional councils in the uMhlabuyalingana area of the IWP?	
<u>Conclusion</u> 16. What have you learnt from stakeholder relations at the IWP? 17. Do you have anything else you would like to add in relation to stakeholder management?	

Appendix 2: Semi Structured interview questions with the leadership of the Department of Environmental Affairs

Questions	Notes
<u>Biographical information</u> Age: Gender: Experience / working with the IWP:	
<u>Stakeholder Concept</u> 1. To what extent is the DEA involved in stakeholder relations at the IWP? 2. How would you describe your experience of stakeholder relations at the IWP? 3. Do you believe a Public Entity which reports to the DEA such as the IWP should place a high value on stakeholder relations? 4. Does stakeholder relations add value to the IWP?	
<u>Stakeholder Strategy</u> 5. Does the DEA believe that the IWP has a relevant and effective stakeholder strategy in place? 6. In your experience, is the stakeholder relations strategy comprehensive and responsive to the needs of the IWP and its stakeholders?	
<u>Identification and prioritisation of stakeholders</u> 7. Do you believe certain stakeholders should be prioritised at the IWP? 8. Which stakeholders do you believe should be prioritised at the IWP? 9. How would you classify these prioritised stakeholders?	
<u>Relationship with stakeholders</u> 10. What kind of relationships do you believe are important to have with stakeholders? 11. Has the DEA been involved or taken part in stakeholder engagements	

with three of the traditional councils (Tembe, Mabaso and Zikhali) in the uMhlabuyalingana Municipal area around the northern sections of the IWP? 12. How would you describe these relations? 13. Is it important to have sound stakeholder relations with these three traditional councils?	
<u>Communication</u> 14. Are there DEA prescripts or requirements to the IWP related to formal structures that should be in place to engage with stakeholders? 15. Are you aware of any formal structures that are in place to engage with stakeholders at the IWP and to what extent is the DEA involved? 16. Do you know what methods of communication or consultation with stakeholders are used at the IWP?	
<u>Conclusion</u> 17. What have you learnt from stakeholder relations at the IWP? 18. Do you have anything else you would like to add in relation to stakeholder management?	

Appendix 3: Semi Structured interview questions with the three traditional councils

Questions	Notes
<u>Biographical information</u> Age: Gender: Experience / working with the IWP:	
Stakeholder Concept 1. To what extent are you as a traditional council involved as a stakeholder at the IWP? 2. How do you experience stakeholder relations at the IWP? 3. Do you place a high value on stakeholder relations with the IWP? 4. Do you believe that sound stakeholder relations will add value to the IWP?	
<u>Stakeholder Strategy</u> 5. In your experience, does the IWP have a relevant and effective stakeholder strategy in place? 6. What are your expectations of stakeholder relations at the IWP? 7. In your view as a stakeholder, is the stakeholder relations strategy at the IWP comprehensive and responsive to the needs of you as stakeholders?	
<u>Identification and prioritisation of stakeholders</u> 8. Do you believe you should be prioritised as a stakeholder? 9. Why do you believe you should be prioritised as a stakeholder? 10. Who else do you believe should be prioritised stakeholders? 11. What kind of stakeholder do you believe you are? (How would you classify yourself as a stakeholder?)	

<u>Relationship with stakeholders</u> 12. Do you believe it is important to have a sound stakeholder relationship with the IWP? 13. How would you describe the stakeholder relations the IWP has with the three traditional councils (Tembe, Mabaso and Zikhali) in the uMhlabuyalingana Municipal area around the northern sections of the IWP? 14. Are there challenges in this relationship and why?	
<u>Communication</u> 15. Are there formal structures in place for engagement between you as stakeholders and the IWP? 16. What methods does the IWP use to communicate or consult with you as stakeholders? 17. Which one of these methods are the most beneficial? 18. How do you as a traditional council communicate or consult specifically with the IWP?"	
<u>Conclusion</u> 19. What have you learnt from stakeholder relations with the IWP? 20. Do you have anything else you would like to add in relation to stakeholder management?	

Appendix 4: Semi Structured interview questions with the Municipal Leadership

Questions	Notes
<u>Biographical information</u> Age: Gender: Experience / working with the IWP:	
<u>Stakeholder Concept</u> 1. From a municipal perspective, to what extent are/were you involved in stakeholder relations with the IWP? 2. From a municipal perspective, how do/did you experience stakeholder relations at the IWP? 3. From a municipal perspective, do you place a high value on stakeholder relations with the IWP? 4. Does stakeholder relations add value to the IWP?	
<u>Stakeholder Strategy</u> 5. To your knowledge, does the IWP have a relevant and effective stakeholder strategy in place? 6. Are you from a municipal perspective aware what these goals and plans are for stakeholder relations management at the IWP? 7. In your view, is it comprehensive and responsive to the needs of the IWP and its stakeholders?	
<u>Identification and prioritisation of stakeholders</u> 8. From a municipal perspective, did the IWP prioritise certain stakeholders to your knowledge? 9. Why are/were these stakeholders prioritised? 10. Could you identify these/those prioritised stakeholders? 11. How would you classify these stakeholders?	

<u>Relationship with stakeholders</u> 12. What kind of relationships do you believe are important to have with stakeholders? 13. From a municipal perspective, how would you describe the stakeholder relations with three of the traditional councils (Tembe, Mabaso and Zikhali) in the uMhlabuyalingana Municipal area around the northern sections of the IWP? 14. Are there challenges in the relationship with these three traditional councils that you are aware of?	
<u>Communication</u> 15. From a municipal perspective do you believe there are/were formal structures in place to engage with stakeholders? 16. From a municipal perspective what methods of communication or consultation with stakeholders are used by the IWP? 17. Which one of these methods are the most beneficial?	
<u>Conclusion</u> 18. What have you learnt from stakeholder relations at the IWP? 19. Do you have anything else you would like to add in relation to stakeholder management?	