

An ecotourism model for South African National parks

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SUMMARY

An ecotourism model for South African National Parks

The primary objective of this study was to develop an ecotourism model for South African National Parks. South African National Parks' current ecotourism/tourism management strategies were analysed and it was found that no clear guidelines regarding the development and management of ecotourism in South African National Parks exists. As South African National Parks (SANParks) is one of the largest conservation and ecotourism providers in South Africa, and because ecotourism tends to occur in sensitive ecological and human communities, the need for an ecotourism model for South African National Parks is crucial. The absence of such a model will prevent the effective and sustainable management, monitoring and control of ecotourism in South African National Parks.

A literature study was conducted into sustainable-, responsible- and ecotourism as well as current national and international policies concerning ecotourism in national parks or nature-based tourism.

Sustainable tourism requires that tourism development should be of such a nature that a balance is kept between the economy, socio-cultural environment and the physical environment. This is referred to as the triple bottom line. The goal of sustainable tourism is to maximise the positive impacts and minimise the negative impacts on the just mentioned triple bottom line aspects. Responsible tourism has the same goals as sustainable tourism, but stresses the importance of all stakeholders taking responsibility of ensuring a sustainable tourism industry. It should therefore be seen as a pathway to achieve sustainable tourism, rather than as an end in itself. Ecotourism forms part of the sustainable/responsible tourism paradigm. From the literature, four main pillars were identified on which ecotourism is based, namely: conservation and enhancement of natural and cultural attractions; environmental education; sustainable management practices and the provision of an enlightening tourist experience. The literature review also indicated some principles supportive of the pillars that are important if ecotourism is to take place, namely: natural and cultural environment; local community upliftment; long-term planning; ethical behaviour of all stakeholders; environmentally-friendly practices and tourist satisfaction.

Quantitative research was conducted. An explorative research approach was followed by the means of a self-administered questionnaire with the aim of determining the perceptions, of both the demand side (visitors to South African National Parks) and from the supply side (managers of South African National Parks) on the subject of ecotourism. Fifty-six (56) constructs pertaining to aspects of ecotourism were measured on a five-point Likert scale. The constructs were based

on a literature review regarding responsible- and ecotourism. Sources that were used to a large extent to develop the questionnaire include the works of Frey and George (2010), Saayman (2009), Fennell (2008), Spencely (2008), Björk (2007), Diamantis (2004), DEAT (2003). The questionnaire for the visitor survey was launched on the website of South Africa National Parks during March 2011 and ran for one month. During this time, 993 respondents completed the questionnaire. The same questionnaire was sent via electronic mail to the managers of SANParks, namely regional and general managers, hospitality services managers and managing executives. A total of 25 questionnaires were completed.

The results of the empirical research were processed by the North-West University's Statistical Consultation Services (Potchefstroom Campus). The data was analysed by means of the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software programme. Statistical methods that were used include: descriptive statistics; exploratory factor analysis; factor correlation matrix and a t-test.

The results of the descriptive statistics revealed that the following ecotourism aspects were rated as most important by visitors: everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to maintain a litter-free environment; animals should not be fed; everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to save water and electricity. The managers, however, rated the following as the most important ecotourism aspects: to ensure managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the South African National Parks' policy to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities; do not feed the animals; and to comply with all relevant national, provincial and local legislation, regulations, licences and permits as may be required.

Six factors were identified from the exploratory factor analysis: Factor 1: Product development; Factor 2: Local community involvement; Factor 3: Environmentally friendly practices; Factor 4: Ethics; Factor 5: Food and activities; Factor 6: Policies.

The factors recorded serve as important guidelines for the development and management of ecotourism products in South African National Parks. For instance, the factor with the highest mean value was "ethics". Visitor respondents felt very strongly that rules and regulations should be adhered to by visitors and that severe penalties should be implemented in the case of non-compliance. This was also the definite view of staff members.

The research made the following contributions to the discipline of tourism and specifically ecotourism:

- This research presents the first ecotourism model for South African National Parks which can assist park management in creating ecotourism products that provide a

sustainable ecotourism experience and secure the future of ecotourism in national parks.

- It was the first time that the perception of ecotourism was determined from both a demand and supply side in South Africa National Parks, which assisted in identifying the key factors for ecotourism products from.
- The results of this research paved the way for SANParks in the development of an ecotourism policy for South African National Parks.
- The results further made a contribution to the future development of a national ecotourism policy for South Africa (which currently does not exist). Such a policy can then be applied to provincial parks, private game reserves and game farms in South Africa.
- The research contributed to the development of a sustainable ecotourism rating criteria for South African National Parks to allow them to grow closer to an ideal managed system that is in line with sustainable / responsible management aspects.
- The results were presented at the First International Conference on Tourism and Management Studies in the Algarve, Portugal on the 27th October 2011.
- A contribution was also made to the literature on ecotourism in terms of clarification of what is expected by the users (tourists) of ecotourism products and what SANParks' managers view as important aspects of ecotourism and how ecotourism should be developed and managed.
- Finally, this study contributed to the research concerning national parks in terms of ecotourism development and management.

Key terms: ecotourism; national parks; sustainable tourism; responsible tourism; model

OPSOMMING

‘n Ekotoerisme-model vir Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke

Die primêre doel van hierdie studie was om ‘n ekotoerisme-model vir Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke te ontwikkel. Suid Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke se huidige ekotoerisme-/toerisme-bestuurstrategieë is geanaliseer en daar is bevind dat geen duidelike riglyne met betrekking tot die ontwikkeling en bestuur van ekotoerisme in Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke bestaan nie. Aangesien Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke een van die grootste bewarings- en ekotoerismevoorsieners in Suid-Afrika is asook die feit dat ekotoerisme geneig is om in sensitiewe ekologiese en menslike gemeenskappe voorkom, is die behoefte aan ‘n ekotoerisme-model van kritieke belang. Die afwesigheid van so ‘n model sal die doeltreffende bestuur, monitering en beheer van ekotoerismeontwikkeling in Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parkeverhoed. ‘n Literatuurstudie is uitgevoer oor volhoubare, verantwoordelike en ekotoerisme asook oor huidige en internasionale beleide rakende ekotoerisme in nasionale parke of natuurlike omgewings.

Volhoubare toerisme kom daarop neer dat toerisme-ontwikkeling van so ‘n aard moet wees dat ‘n balans bewaar word tussen die ekonomie, sosiokulturele omgewing en die fisiese omgewing of ook bekend as die drieledige basiese aspekte (“triple bottom line aspects”). Die doel van volhoubare toerisme is om die positiewe impakte op die pas genoemde “triple bottom line aspects” te maksimaliseer en die negatiewe impakte daarop te minimaliseer. Verantwoordelike toerisme het dieselfde doel as volhoubare toerisme, maar benadruk die belangrikheid daarvan dat alle belanghebbendes verantwoordelikheid daarvoor moet aanvaar om ‘n volhoubare toerismebedryf te verseker en dit moet dus beskou word as ‘n weg wat gevolg kan word om volhoubare toerisme te bewerkstellig. Ekotoerisme maak deel uit van die volhoubare/verantwoordelike toerismeparadigma. Uit die literatuur is vier hoofpilare geïdentifiseer waarop ekotoerisme gefundeer is, naamlik die bewaring en bevordering van natuurlike en kulturele attraksies, omgewingsopvoeding, volhoubare bestuurspraktyke en die voorsiening van ‘n leersame toerisme-ervaring. Die literatuuroorsig het ook sommige ondersteunende pilare aangedui wat belangrik is vir ekotoerisme om te kan plaasvind, naamlik natuurlike en kulturele omgewing, plaaslike gemeenskap; verkwikking, onderrig, ekotoerismepraktyke en toerismebevrediging.

Kwantitatiewe navorsing is uitgevoer en ‘n verkennende navorsingsbenadering is gevolg aan die hand van ‘n self-opgestelde vraelys met die doel om die persepsies rakende ekotoerisme van die vraag-kant (besoekers) en ‘n aanbod-kant (bestuurders) te bepaal. 56 konstrunkte met betrekking tot ekotoerisme-aspekte is gemeet op ‘n vyf-punt Likert-skaal (1 = geensins belangrik nie; 2 = redelike belangrik; 3 = belangrik; 4 = baie belangrik; 5 = uiters belangrik). Die konstrunkte is gebasseer op ‘n literatuuroorsig rakende verantwoordelike- en ekotoerisme.

Bronne wat grootliks van gebruik gemaak is tydens die ontwikkeling van die vraelys, sluit die volgende in: Frey and George (2010), Saayman (2009), Fennell (2008), Spencely (2008), Björk (2007), Diamantis (2004) en DEAT (2003). Die vraelys vir die besoekerondersoek was gedurende Maart 2011 op Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke se webwerf geloods. Die tydraamwerk vir die ondersoek was een maand, en 993 respondente het die vraelys ingevul. Dieselfde vraelys is elektronies na die bestuurders van SANParks gestuur, wat streeks- sowel as algemene bestuurders, onthaaldiens-bestuurders en uitvoerende bestuurders ingesluit het. 'n Totaal van 25 vraelyste is ingevul.

Die resultate van die empiriese navorsing is deur die Noordwes-Universiteit se Statistiese Konsultasiedienste (Potchefstroomkampus) geprosesseer. Die data is deur middel van die (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) sagtewareprogram geanaliseer. Statistiese metodes wat aangewend is, het die volgende ingesluit: beskrywende statistiek, verkennende faktoranalise, faktorkorrelasiematriks en 'n t-toets.

Die resultate van die beskrywende statistiek het getoon dat besoekers die volgende ekotoerisme-aspekte as die belangrikste beskou is: almal (personeel en besoekers) het 'n verantwoordelikheid om 'n rommelvrye omgewing te onderhou; diere moet nie gevoer word nie; almal (personeel en besoekers) het 'n verantwoordelikheid om water en elektrisiteit te bespaar. Die bestuurders het die volgende as die belangrikste ekotoerisme-aspekte beskou: om seker te maak dat bestuurders, personeel en kontrakwerkers alle aspekte van die Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke-beleid nakom om negatiewe impakte op die omgewing en plaaslike gemeenskappe te voorkom en dit te verstaan; moenie die diere voer nie; en om te voldoen aan alle toepaslike nasionale, provinsiale en plaaslike wetgewing, regulasies, lisensies en permitte soos vereis word.

Ses faktore is tydens die verkennende faktoranalise geïdentifiseer: Faktor 1: Produkontwikkeling; Faktor 2: Betrokkenheid van die plaaslike gemeenskap; Faktor 3: Omgewingsvriendelike praktyke; Faktor 4: Etiese beginsels; Faktor 5: Kos en aktiwiteite; Faktor 6: Beleide.

Die faktore dien as belangrike riglyne ter ontwikkeling en bestuur van ekotoerismeprodukte in Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke. Die faktor met die hoogste gemiddelde waarde was "etiese beginsels". Besoekerrespondente het besonder sterk daarvoor gevoel dat sowel besoekers as die personeel reëls en regulasies moet gehoorsaam en dat streng boetes opgelê moet word vir oortredings.

Die navorsing het die volgende bydrae tot die toerisme-dissipline, en veral tot ekotoerisme, gelewer:

- Hierdie navorsing bied die eerste ekotoerisme-model vir Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke om parkbestuurders by te staan in hul taak om ekotoerismeprodukte wat 'n ekotoerisme-ervaring bied, te skep en om die toekoms van ekotoerisme in nasionale parke te verseker.

- Dit was die eerste keer dat die persepsie rakende ekotoerisme vanuit 'n vraag- en aanbodkant in die Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke geanaliseer is. Die sleutelfaktore vir ekotoerismeprodukte is aan die hand van 'n faktoranalise bepaal.
- Die resultate van hierdie navorsing verskaf waardevolle inligting wat SANParks sal help om 'n ekotoerismebeleid te ontwikkel – iets wat tans by Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke ontbreek.
- Die resultate kan ook meehelp ter ontwikkeling van 'n nasionale ekotoerismebeleid vir Suid-Afrika (wat tans nie bestaan nie) en kan dan op provinsiale parke, private wildreservate en wildplase toegepas word.
- Die navorsing het bygedra tot die ontwikkeling van volhoubare ekotoerismekriteria vir die Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke om nader aan die ideale bestuurstelsel te vorder wat in ooreenstemming is met volhoubare / verantwoordelik bestuurde aspekte.
- Die resultate is op die *First International Conference on Tourism and Management Studies in the Algarve, Portugal*, op die 27ste Oktober 2011 gerapporteer.
- 'n Bydrae is ook gelewer tot die literatuur oor ekotoerisme met betrekking tot die vereistes wat gebruikers (toeriste) aan ekotoerismeprodukte stel; wat die bestuurders van die ekotoerismebedryf as belangrike aspekte van ekotoerisme beskou; en hoe ekotoerisme ontwikkel en bestuur moet word.
- Ten slotte het die studie 'n bydrae gelewer tot navorsing oor nasionale parke met betrekking tot ekotoerisme-ontwikkeling en -bestuur.

Sleuteltermes ekotoerisme; nasionale parke; volhoubare toerisme; verantwoordelike toerisme; model

ACRONYMS USED IN THIS STUDY

DEAT	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
ECOS	Ecotourism Opportunity Spectrum
LAC	Limits of acceptable change
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
ROS	Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
SANParks	South African National Parks (management body)
TIES	The International Ecotourism Society
TOS	Tourism Opportunity Spectrum
TSC	Tourism Sustainability Council
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Commission
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

~Margaret Mead~

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa's natural resources form the basis of the tourism industry; attracting millions of local and international eco-tourists every year. Nature-based or in particular ecotourism is also one of the fastest growing sectors in the tourism industry (Burger, 2008:524). One of the largest conservation and ecotourism providers in South Africa is South Africa National Parks (Saayman, 2009:346; SANParks, 2008:2). The term "ecotourism" is embraced by many tourism organisations, whether or not their actions are driven by ecotourism principles (Reid 1999:29; Geldenhuys, 2009:3). It sometimes seems that tourism organisations make use of ecotourism labels, and market their product accordingly, but the question needs to be asked whether or not these products adhere to basic ecotourism principles for, if not, this can result in negative impacts on the experience of tourists, on the environment and on the local communities (Reid, 1999:29).

The term ecotourism dates back to the 1960s when a Mexican ecologist, Hertzner, first introduced the term, because of the increasing threat by exploitation through mass tourism, to both the cultural and natural environments of destinations. These threats have increasingly been recognised and an intense debate concerning the ecological and social costs of tourism development has evolved (Pforr, 2001:68; Björk, 2007:26; Wearing & Neil, 2009:1).

At first, ecologically oriented tourism aimed to deal with the issues of the unrestricted growth of mass tourism. This has since led to alternative approaches to tourism development, which in turn have led to a range of new terms such as alternative tourism, sustainable tourism, and ecotourism which together form an integrated part of nature-based, or wildlife-based, tourism (Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:19; Pforr, 2001:68). Alternative tourism differs from conventional tourism (mass tourism) in the sense that it follows a sustainable approach based on three pillars. These pillars seek to improve the quality of life host communities; to create a high-quality experience for the tourist in order to ensure economic efficiency; and to sustain the quality of the environment (Diamantis, 2004:4; Geldenhuys, 2009:12). Hertzner (as quoted by Higham 2007:2; and by Fennell, 2008:17), as the first person to introduce the term ecotourism, identified four principles on which ecotourism should be based. These are that ecotourism should make a minimum environmental impact, should have the minimum impact on and maximum respect for the host community, should create maximum economic benefits for the host community and should offer the maximum, recreational satisfaction to participating tourists.

The aim of this first chapter is to provide an overview of the problem statement that will be discussed and analysed through the course of the study. It will therefore address the following: firstly, the problem statement will be discussed and defined, secondly, the primary and secondary research objectives will be derived, thirdly, the research methodology will be discussed, fourthly, the main concepts will be clarified; and finally the ensuing chapters themselves will be analysed.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Although Hertzner was the first person to introduce the term ecotourism, it was only later defined by Ceballos-Lascurain as *“travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals as well as any existing cultural manifestation (both past and present) found in these areas”* (Björk, 2007:27; Fennell, 2008:18; Van der Merwe, 2004:16).

This proved to be a restrictive definition, as no provision was included for the conservation of the natural environment. Ceballos-Lascurain later adjusted his definition by adding the conservation component as well as the idea from Hertzner to minimise the negative effects on the culture and nature and to maximise the benefits of tourism. Therefore, ecotourism was later redefined as: *“environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and accompanying cultural features – both past and present), that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor impact, and provides*

beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations” (Björk, 2007:27; Fennell, 2008:17; Van der Merwe, 2004:16).

Since Ceballos-Lascurain, a number of academics have attempted to redefine ecotourism. These are listed in Table 1.1:

Table 1.1: Ecotourism definitions

AUTHOR	KEY ASPECTS OF DEFINITION
Ceballos-Lascurain in 1987 as quoted by (Fennell, 2008:17; Björk, 2007:27; Van der Merwe, 2004:16)	Undisturbed natural areas; study, enjoyment; appreciation; culture
Ziffer in 1989 as quoted by (Björk, 2007:27)	Nature; conservation; culture; non-consumptive; local community participation; local community benefits; sustainable management; tourist awareness; appreciation for nature
Ecotourism society 1991 (quoted by Blamey, 2001:6)	Responsible travelling; protection of natural areas; local population
Australian National Ecotourism Strategy 1994 (quoted by Blamey, 2001:6)	Nature-based; interpretation and education; natural environment; ecological and cultural sustainability; local community; conservation
Van Wyk, 1995:8	Enlightening nature experience; conservation; natural resources; local community
Björk, 2007:35	Cooperation and integration all of role players; study enjoyment; nature; culture; sustainable development; minimising impacts
Weaver, 2001:15	Learning experience; nature; culture; appreciation; environmentally and socially sustainable
Fennell, 2008:23	Sustainability natural resource-based tourism; experience; learning; low-impact; ethical; local community; conservation
Powell and Ham, 2008:468	natural areas; conservation, social equity; environmental education; economic viability; host community

From the literature listed in Table 1.1, it is clear that there is no standard or universal definition for ecotourism. The literature reveals, however, that all the academics based their definition on four cornerstones or pillars; specifically, natural and cultural attractions; environmental education; management practices that adhere to the principles of ecological, socio-cultural and economic sustainability; and tourist satisfaction (experience). The four cornerstones or pillars entail the following:

- **Conservation and enhancement of natural and cultural attractions:** The natural environment contains vital resources of biodiversity and cultural heritage, which make these areas attractive sites for development projects (Hearne & Salinas, 2002:153; Wood & Glasson, 2005:391). Saayman (2009:170) accentuated the fact that the future of ecotourism is dependent on *sound environmental practices*.
- **Environmental education opportunities:** Page and Dowling (2002:69) point out that the vital characteristic that differentiates ecotourism from any other form of nature-based

tourism is *environmental education and interpretation*. Further, these are significant tools that help to create an enjoyable and meaningful ecotourism experience.

- **Management practices that adhere to the principles of ecological, socio-cultural and economic sustainability:** Sustainable tourism management is based on three aspects, environmental management, social equity and economic development. These need to be balanced to ensure sustainable tourism product development (Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131).
- **Tourist satisfaction (experience):** Clearly, ecotourism experiences are created by integrating a number of factors. The purpose of creating these experiences is to satisfy the needs and wants of current and potential eco-tourists (Chan & Baum, 2007:586; Clifton & Benson, 2006:239).

From the literature studied, an additional number of ecotourism principles were identified, supportive of the four pillars, as indicated in Table 1.2. Adherence to these principles is important for an ecotourism destination/attraction if it is to provide an ecotourism experience to tourists (Diamantis & Westlake, 2001:33).

Table 1.2: Ecotourism principles

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contributes to conservation of the natural and cultural environment. ▪ Genuine interest in nature must be fostered. ▪ Provide an opportunity to interact with nature. ▪ Increase the awareness and understanding of natural areas, cultural systems and the involvement of visitors and their influence on these systems. ▪ Provide an opportunity to experience the local culture (traditions, food and music). ▪ Environmental impacts should be minimised. ▪ Provide an enlightening travel experience (enjoyment and appreciation). ▪ Provide economic opportunities. ▪ Provide long-term benefits for local communities. ▪ Responsible and ethical behaviour of all stakeholders. ▪ Involve educational opportunities amongst all parties (local communities, tourists, industry, government and non-governmental organisations). ▪ Long-term participation of local community. ▪ Planning and management for long-term success. ▪ Maintain a balance between economy and ecology. ▪ Small-scale development. ▪ Non-consumptive. |
|--|

(Adapted from: Geldenhuys, 2009:5; Fennell, 2008:23; Reid 1999:33; Blamey, 2001:12)

From the principles listed (for example, small-scale development; long-term planning; environmental impacts should be minimised; balance between economy and ecology) in Table 1.2, it is clear that these principles are supportive of the pillars of sustainable tourism. These pillars include the following; improve the quality of life (social-cultural justice); creation of a high-quality experience (economic efficiency) for the tourist; and the sustaining of the quality of the environment (environmental integrity) (Diamantis, 2004:4; Geldenhuys, 2009:9:3; Keyser, 2009:25). From these, it is noticeable that ecotourism therefore forms part of the sustainable tourism paradigm and although both of the foregoing have attracted a large amount of attention, little progress has been made to put these principles into practice (Wight, 2003:51; Fennell, 2002:26; Björk 2007:25; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008:42).

As a result of a failure to implement the principles above, responsible tourism has since emerged, which spells out that all tourism stakeholders (the government; tourism industry; local communities; non-government organisations; and tourists) should take responsibility for their actions. Responsible tourism embraces the same goals as sustainable tourism, which are to keep a suitable balance between the economic, social and environmental aspects of tourism development. Responsible tourism is therefore directly linked to ecotourism (Keyser, 2009:42, Iyyer, 2009:51; Tassiopoulos, 2008:310).

Björk (2007:25) states that the challenge of ecotourism is to put its principles into practice. This inevitably leads to the question, “What are the current ecotourism principles applied in South Africa National Parks?” as they are seen as the leading ecotourism destinations in South Africa (Saayman, 2009:346).

In order to establish the *status quo* in South African National Parks regarding ecotourism, the Coordinated Policy Framework (CPF) that governs SANParks operations was analysed. The CPF document consists of policies applicable to all the national parks and that serves as an overall guideline for the content of the individual park management plans. The CPF states that SANParks’ business operations are based on three core pillars:

- **Conservation:** It is the primary mandate of SANParks to conserve South Africa’s biodiversity, landscapes and associated heritage assets.
- **Nature-based tourism:** SANParks have an important role to play in the promotion of **ecotourism** in South Africa to both domestic and international markets. SANParks depend on its ecotourism pillar for revenue that is necessary to supplement government funding for conservation.
- **Constituency building:** SANParks is required to build constituencies at international, national and local level in support of the conservation of natural and cultural heritage;

and ensure that a broad base of South Africans are involved in its initiatives (SANParks, 2006:13).

From the CPF, it is clear that ecotourism is a key aspect of SANParks' management operations. According to Saayman (2009:358), the management of parks covers three areas, general management (finance, marketing), conservation management (game counting, game sales) and ecotourism management (camps, game drives and picnic areas). As one of the key aspects of park management and as one of SANParks' core pillars, the question that arises is; which strategies and policies are in place in order to provide tourists with an **ecotourism experience** within South African National Parks? To find an answer to this question, the CPF was further analysed to determine SANParks commitment in providing tourists with an ecotourism experience (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3: SANParks' principles regarding ecotourism

- Provide sustainable high-quality, nature-based, value for money tourism experiences, promoting, to our strategic advantage, our biodiversity, cultural and, where applicable, wilderness qualities.
- Contribute to building a broad-based constituency for sustainability and conservation in a people-centred manner.
- Use appropriate nature-based and cultural tourism as the best possible financial opportunity to support and supplement conservation.
- Strive for customer service excellence in line with market expectations, but compliant with other values of the organisation.
- Offer a variety of opportunities and products.
- Offer equitable access, implementing the principle of subsidisation if needed.
- Recognise that, apart from limitations of the biophysical environment and the park's desired state, tourist density may need to be constrained by the experiential perceptions of those in the marketplace.
- Promote mutual benefits with our key stakeholders, as well as opportunities for growth and development of neighbouring communities, bearing in mind that SANParks is not a development agency.
- Strategic tourism planning, sustainable product development; the use of zoning; and appropriate style to achieve the desired state in the park, and in a regional context.
- Tourism should generate economic activity, involve local people in decision-making and should meaningfully support their culture and heritage.

(Source: SANParks, 2006:12)

It is clear from Table 1.3 that some key principles of ecotourism (sustainability, community involvement, local culture and heritage support, promotion of mutual benefits, and the development of neighbouring communities) are covered in SANParks Coordinated Policy Framework. Therefore, the above-mentioned principles should provide guidelines to set the strategic objectives of what must be achieved in terms of tourism development and management in South African National Parks. Unfortunately, the policy document does not specifically address **how** this is to be achieved. As a result, no clear ecotourism model exists. The following strategic objectives are applicable in South African National Parks:

- To provide sustainable high-quality nature-based, value for money tourism experiences; and promoting biodiversity, cultural and wilderness qualities.
- Contribute to building a broad constituency for sustainability and conservation in a people-centred way.
- To use responsible nature-based tourism as the best possible economic opportunity to support and supplement conservation. The core conservation values of SANParks should not be compromised, by tourism as a financial driver (SANParks, 2006:21).

In support of these strategic objectives, the following secondary objectives have been identified by SANParks for tourism development and management:

- Strive for service excellence in accordance to market expectations.
- Offer a variety of opportunities and products.
- Offer equitable access.
- Apart for carrying capacity of the biophysical environment, tourist density may need to be constrained in order to provide a valuable experience for visitors.
- Limit tourist density, in order to provide a valuable experience for visitors, in consideration of the carrying capacity of the biophysical environment.
- Recognise the wider organisational, societal and regional environments.
- Promote mutual benefits with key stakeholders.
- Strategic tourism planning and sustainable tourism product development.
- Practice healthy human resource, governance and business principles.
- Conduct sound research and market studies (SANParks, 2006:21).

In order to determine just **how** these just-mentioned principles and objectives for tourism development and management in South African National Parks are implemented, the management plan of *Kruger National Park* (KNP) was analysed as it was the only national park whose management plan has been fully approved and so is not subject currently to a review

process. It is also important to note that all the parks' plans were based on the same framework. The following methodologies, as outlined in the Management Plan for Kruger National Park, are applied in the planning and implementation of tourism programmes (SANParks, 2006:13):

- **Zoning Plan:** It is a mix of outdoor settings based on remoteness, size, evidence of human impact, or lack thereof, which allow for a variety of recreational experiences. In the KNP, these experiential zones vary from wilderness to high intensity development (a zoning plan is included in the document).
- **Limits of Acceptable Change:** The methodology is designed to balance the interests of both users of the resource and of management. It seeks to identify recreation and tourism opportunities, and to assess human use/impact relationships in order to provide managers with specific steps to determine acceptable resource conditions, and to identify management strategies to achieve the desired resource and social conditions.
- **Visitor Impact Management:** The methodology addresses three basic issues relating to the management of impacts. These are problem conditions, potential causal factors and potential management strategies. Standards are established for each indicator based on the management objectives that specify acceptable limits, or appropriate levels, for the impact. The process provides for a balanced use of scientific and judgmental considerations, and emphasises an understanding of the causal factors to better identify management strategies.
- **Visitor Experience Resource Protection:** Created by the United States National Park Service to deal with carrying capacity in terms of the quality of the resource and visitor experience, this principle contains a prescription for desired future resources and social conditions and defines what levels of use are appropriate, where, when and why. The emphasis is on strategic decisions pertaining to carrying capacity, based on quality resource values and on quality visitor experiences. It guides resource analysis using statements concerning the significance and sensitivity of the resources. Visitor opportunity analysis too is guided by statements defining important elements of visitor experience.
- **Tourism Optimisation Management Model:** This approach does not concentrate on impacts or on setting limits for use, but instead emphasises optimal and sustainable outcomes for tourism and the community. It attempts to set acceptable ranges within which they should occur. It explicitly serves a multitude of stakeholders within a region, operating over a range of protected area and private land tenures. Its optimal conditions approach covers a broad spectrum of economic, market opportunity, ecological/biodiversity, experiential and socio-cultural factors, and thus reflects the entire ecosystem.

- **Carrying Capacity:** This is defined as the amount of visitor-related use an area can support while still offering a sustained quality of recreation based on ecological, social, physical and managerial attributes and conditions. In the KNP, emphasis is still on gate quotas during peak periods. However, internationally, the focus of carrying capacity is on determining the level of use beyond which impacts exceed acceptable levels specified by evaluative standards (SANParks, 2008:96).

The management plan states the following concerning the above-mentioned methodologies:

“The next five year cycle of this management plan will focus on sharpening the application and integration of these various planning methodologies for the KNP. No one method can be applied in total isolation from the rest. The best approach is to apply a combination of methodologies in response to specific challenges surfacing when planning or implementing sustainable tourism programmes in the KNP” (SANParks, 2008:96).

The problem is, however, that although the principles, objectives and strategies are valuable for the development and management of tourism products, they do not necessarily lend themselves to easy adherence, and lack a cohesive, unified ecotourism model. This statement was echoed by Dr Hector Magome, head of SANParks, at the 7th Wildlife Ranching Symposium in Kimberley in October 2011 (Magome and Davies, 2011).

Cloete (2001:2), who developed a tourism planning and management model for provincial tourism authorities, states that each tourism organisation must establish its own model and thoughts in accordance with given criteria/principles, and with its own circumstances. The absence of such a model (tourism/ecotourism) can constrain ecotourism products' functionality to deliver a competitive product in an extremely competitive industry (Cloete, 2001:3). A holistic approach is needed to explain how existing principles fit together and, particularly, to set down specific conditions under which tourism (ecotourism) should proceed (Davis, 1999:520).

The fact that ecotourism tends to occur in sensitive ecological and human communities, makes the need for an appropriate and comprehensive ecotourism model imperative. Without this, management, planning and monitoring of ecotourism cannot take place (Honey, 2008:447; Boyd & Butler, 1996:565; Davis, 1999:520). Offering some of the most important ecotourism destinations in South Africa, South African National Parks has a vital role to play in setting the pace regarding ecotourism product offering (SANParks, 2006:13). Buckley (2001:25) suggested that ecotourism product owners (in this case, South African National Parks) need a model or framework to judge ecotourism performance and to assist in planning new ecotourism products responsibly.

After a detailed analysis was conducted concerning South African National Parks CPF and management plans, it was found that there is, to date, no specific model for managing their ecotourism products. Therefore, the problem that needs to be addressed is the development of an ecotourism model for South African National Parks.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following section will outline the primary and secondary objectives of the study:

1.3.1 Primary Objective

The primary objective of this study is to develop an ecotourism model for South African National Parks.

1.3.2 Secondary Objectives

The following, secondary objectives were identified:

- ***Objective one:***

To carry out a literature search, analysis and review regarding sustainable and responsible tourism.

- ***Objective two:***

To determine the key aspects/pillars and principles of ecotourism.

- ***Objective three:***

To investigate current international and national ecotourism policies.

- ***Objective four:***

To conduct a factor analysis on responsible and ecotourism principles.

- ***Objective five:***

To draw conclusions and make recommendations concerning development and management aspects of ecotourism in South Africa National Parks.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology consists of a literature study and an empirical study. The latter includes the research design and method of collecting data; the development of the sample plan; the development of the questionnaire and ultimately, the data analysis.

1.4.1 Literature study

A literature study was conducted based on keywords such as ecotourism, sustainable tourism development and nature-based tourism. The following tourism-related resources were used:

- Articles on ecotourism in academic journals such as *Tourism Management*, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *Journal of Environmental Management and Society*, and *Natural Resources*.
- Books on tourism, ecotourism and sustainable tourism were used for an overview and to determine the core aspects and principles of ecotourism. The works of authors such as Buckley; Butler; Diamantis; Fennell; Reid and Weaver who have each contributed significantly in this field were studied for this purpose.
- Information searches containing keywords such as ecotourism; model; and national parks were conducted in library databases and catalogues such as SABINET as well as using internet search engines such as Ebscohost and Science Direct.

1.4.2 Empirical study

Two different surveys were conducted: the first survey was conducted on visitors to South African National Parks (from demand side) while the second survey was conducted on South African National Parks' management (from supply side) involved in tourism management.

1.4.2.1 Research design and method of collecting data

The empirical research was twofold. Firstly, an exploratory research approach was followed to gain a better understanding of how visitors (in other words, the demand side) view responsible ecotourism. This research is of a quantitative nature and data was collected by means of a self-administrated questionnaire, loaded on South African National Parks website.

Secondly, an exploratory research approach was used to gain a better understanding of how the management (in other words, the supply side), in this case South African National Parks'

management, view ecotourism. A structured questionnaire (self-administrated questionnaire) was sent by e-mail to South African National Parks' managers.

1.4.2.2 Development of sample plan

The development of the sample plan included the identification of the sampling frame; and the sampling methods, which will be discussed accordingly.

1.4.2.2.1 Sampling Frame

The first survey, a web-based survey, was aimed at respondents from the demand side (visitors to South African National Parks). Web-based surveys have become a preferred method for both researchers and respondents. Benefits of the web-based method include quick responses; flexibility; lower costs and ease of data handling (Reynolds, Woods & Baker, 2007:110). According to Cooper and Emory, (1995:207) a total of 451 (n) questionnaires would be needed in order for the data in this study to be statistically valid, and to enable a statistically sound analysis. A total of 993 completed questionnaires were received back from the demand side.

The second survey was aimed at the supply side. The respondents here were the South African National Parks' management including the regional, general and hospitality services managers and the managing executives. These questionnaires were electronically mailed to the population listed. A total of 25 questionnaires were received back from the supply side.

1.4.2.2.2 Sampling Method

A specific sampling method was used for the demand and for the supply sides, respectively, and will be discussed accordingly.

Demand side:

A web-based survey was used. The questionnaire was launched in March 2011 and the timeframe for the survey was 1 month. As an incentive for participating in the research, respondents' names were entered into a draw where they stood a chance of winning a prize from SANParks that consisted of a "Getaway Weekend for 2" at the Golden Gate Hotel.

Supply side:

A probability sample method was used. The questionnaire was sent to park management, to regional and general managers, the hospitality services managers and to the managing executives of South African National Parks, via email.

1.4.2.3 Development of questionnaire

The same questionnaire was used for both the supply and for the demand sides. The questionnaire consisted of 2 sections.

In Section A, 55 items pertaining to aspects of responsible tourism and ecotourism were identified based on a literature review. It included development aspects; eco-efficiency; environmental education opportunities; local community upliftment; ecotourism activities, and ecotourism policies. South African National Parks' senior management, Mr G Phillips (Managing executive: tourism development and marketing) and Mr J Stevens (General Manager: tourism operations) formed part of the process in selecting the 55 items. The items were measured on a Likert scale of 1 (not important at all) to 5 (extremely important). The sources that were mainly used in developing the questionnaire are outlined in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4: Literature sources for responsible ecotourism

Author	Book/Article Title
Fennell, 2008	Ecotourism 2 nd ed.
Frey & George, 2010	Responsible tourism management: the missing link between business owners' attitudes and behaviour in the Cape Town tourism industry.
DEAT, 2003	Responsible tourism handbook: a guide for tourism operators.
Weaver, 2001	Ecotourism.
Saayman, 2009	Ecotourism: getting back to basics.
Geldenhuys, 2009	Ecotourism criteria and context.
Keyser, 2009	Developing tourism in South Africa: towards competitive destinations
Spenceley, 2008	Responsible tourism: critical issues for conservation and development.
Björk, 2007	Definition paradoxes: from concept to definition.
Blamey, 2001	Principles of ecotourism.
Diamantis, 2004	Ecotourism management: an overview.

Section B aimed to define the perceptions regarding specific responsible ecotourism issues in South African National Parks, for example, activities, congestion and transportation. These issues were identified during an interview with personnel of South African National Parks who are directly involved with the development and management of tourism in Parks.

A pilot run was conducted for 2 days on South African National Parks' website to identify possible constraints and problems. Subsequent to the pilot run, relevant modifications were made to the questionnaire for the final sample.

1.4.2.4 Data analysis

The results of the empirical research were processed by the North-West University's Statistical Consultation Services. The data was analysed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software programme. Statistical methods that were used to interpret data included firstly, descriptive statistics that gave an overview of aspects that were considered important by the visitors (demand side) and by managers (supply side). The techniques used in the descriptive analysis included frequency tables that indicated the frequency of the values for each aspect; measures of location that included the mean or average values of each aspect. (Tunstin, Lighthelm, Martins & Van Wyk, 2005:523).

Secondly, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted in order to reduce the variables to a smaller set of variables, while retaining most of the original information (Tunstin *et al.*, 2005:668). A pattern matrix with the principal axis factoring extraction method and Oblimin rotation method was used in which six factors were extracted by Kaiser's criterion. Further, a factor correlation matrix was used to identify possible correlations between the factors that were extracted from the factor analysis.

Finally, a t-test was applied to determine whether there was a significant difference between the mean values of the factors identified for visitors and managers (Tunstin *et al.*, 2005:668).

1.5 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

The following terms were used throughout the study and so need clarification:

1.5.1 Ecotourism

To date, there is no universally accepted definition for ecotourism (Pforr, 2001:70). Ecotourism was first defined by Ceballos-Lascurain in 1987, quoted by (Diamantis, 2004:5) as:

“travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas”.

Two years later (1989), Ziffer, quoted by Björk, (2007:27), attempted to provide a more comprehensive definition of ecotourism:

“A form of tourism inspired primarily by the natural history of an area, including its indigenous cultures. The eco-tourist visits relatively undeveloped areas in the spirit of appreciation, participation and sensitivity. The eco-tourist practices a non-consumptive use of wildlife and natural resources and contributes to the visited area through labour or financial means aimed at directly benefiting the conservation of the site and the economic well-being of the local residents. The visit should strengthen the eco-tourist’s appreciation and dedication to conservation issues in general, and to the specific needs of the locale. Ecotourism also implies a management approach by the host country or region which commits itself to establishing and maintaining the sites with the participation of local residents, marketing them properly, enforcing regulations, and using the proceeds of the enterprise to fund the area’s land management as well as community development.”

From the above definition, it is clear that ecotourism is based on the following cornerstones/pillars:

- It should foster a genuine interest in nature.
- Contribute to conservation.
- Respect and conservation of the local culture.
- Non-consumptive use of natural resources.
- Benefits accrue to the local community.
- Create tourist awareness of conservation issues and local community issues.

Fennell (2008:24) aimed to define *ecotourism*, after conducting a content analysis of 85 definitions, as:

“a sustainable form of natural resource-based tourism that focuses primarily on experiencing and learning about nature, and which is ethically managed to be low-impact, non-consumptive, and locally oriented (control, benefits, and scale). It typically occurs in natural areas, and should contribute to the conservation or preservation of such areas”.

Although there are numerous definitions for ecotourism, the most valued definitions are those based on ecotourism's four pillars of the promotion and enhancement of the natural and cultural environment; environmental education opportunities; management practices that adhere to the principles of ecological, socio-cultural and economic sustainability and, finally, the tourist experience (Geldenhuys, 2009:3; Fennell & Weaver, 2005:374).

1.5.2 Sustainable Tourism

In recent years, the concept of sustainable development has grown in global popularity and has become an important aspect on the agendas of political debates (Pforr, 2001:69). The following are well accepted as the key objectives of sustainable development

- Opportunities for non-material use of natural resources.
- Ensuring equity.
- Preserving biological diversity.
- Developing a long-term sustainable economy.
- Maintaining and improving quality of life.
- Meeting the basic human needs of the present generation.
- Keeping options open for future generations (Sharma, 2010:20; Williams, 2009:110 & Wight, 2003:51).

Sustainable tourism forms part of the sustainable development concept and was defined by the World Tourism organisation, as early as 1988, being:

"envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems" (UNEP, 2002b).

From the definition, it is clear that a balance should be kept between the economic, social and environmental spheres of tourism. Therefore, the environmental, socio-cultural and economic resources of tourism must be managed in such a way as to protect biodiversity, to ensure that natural resources are used wisely; that cultural integrity is maintained; ensuring long-term economic benefits to all stakeholders; and allowing for the equitable distribution of all benefits (Keyser, 2009:33; Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131).

1.5.3 Responsible Tourism

Responsible tourism started as a consumer movement because of a research study that identified tourism as a major concern due to its impacts on local communities (Goodwin,

2009:7). The first conference on “Responsible Tourism in Destinations” was hosted in Cape Town, South Africa in 2002.

The “Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism” was one of the outcomes of the conference. It stated that responsible tourism will:

- Minimise negative economic, environmental and social impacts.
- Generate greater economic benefits for local people, enhance the well-being of host communities, improve working conditions and access to the industry.
- Involve local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances.
- Make positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, to the maintenance of the world’s diversity.
- Provide experiences that are more enjoyable for tourists through connections with local people that have greater meaning, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues.
- Provide access for physically challenged people.
- Be culturally sensitive, engender respect between tourists and hosts and build local pride and confidence (Keyser, 2009:40; Iyyer, 2009:52; Spencely, 2008:5).

Responsible tourism is based on the same pillars as sustainable tourism; that is, economic efficiency, socio-cultural justice and environmental integrity. However, the key differences between the two are that, in responsible tourism, emphasis is placed on gaining a competitive advantage through ethical behaviour; and on the responsibility of all role players namely, government; private sector; local communities; non-government organisations and tourists, to play a part in sustaining the tourism industry (Frey & George, 2010:622; Keyser, 2009:40; Spencely, 2008:5; DEAT, 2003:6). Responsible tourism should thus not be seen as substitute for sustainable tourism, but should rather be seen as a movement towards sustainable tourism (Iyyer, 2009:51).

According to the Responsible Tourism Manual for South Africa,

“responsible tourism is about providing better holiday experiences for guests and good business opportunities for tourism enterprises and enabling local communities to enjoy a better quality of life through increased socio-economic benefits and improved natural resource management” (DEAT, 2002:8).

1.5.4 Ecotourism policies

A policy is a framework that guides the development and management of the tourism industry in order to achieve its goals (Hall, 2009:42; Saayman & Swart, 2004:16). Policy development does

not occur in isolation, but is a result of the interests and values of all stakeholders who influence the development and management processes of ecotourism (Hall, 2003:21).

1.5.5 Model

The ecotourism industry can only be successful in the long-term if measures are taken to protect the natural and cultural resource base on which it depends; if it is economically viable; and if it is supported by the local community. It is therefore important to apply a holistic approach, consisting of supply-side initiatives in developing and managing ecotourism, whilst concurrently taking into account demand-side perspectives (Blamey, 2001:19). It is vital to find a way in which the multidimensional qualities of ecotourism may be integrated (Honey, 2008:33). According to Wallace (as quoted by Zografos & Oglethorpe, 2004:23), a model is a helpful tool to achieve this, as it is an abstract of reality that provides a platform for decision-making and projections for planning and implementation. A comprehensive, holistic model is therefore needed to ensure the successful planning, management and monitoring of ecotourism (Boyd & Butler, 1996:565; Davis, 1999:520; Honey, 2008:447).

1.6 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION

Chapter 1: Introduction and problem statement

Chapter 1 will focus on the problem statement followed by the research objectives and research methodology. Attention is given to appropriate concepts used throughout the study.

Chapter 2: A literature analysis of sustainable and responsible tourism

The aim of Chapter 2 is to provide a chronological development of sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism is then analysed with specific attention given to the triple bottom line aspects that include economic efficiency, socio-cultural justice and environmental integrity. The challenges pertaining to the implementation of sustainable tourism are examined. Further, the chapter focuses on the appearance of responsible tourism, important role players and on the relationship between sustainable and responsible tourism. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the future of responsible tourism.

Chapter 3: Ecotourism: a theoretical analysis

The aim of Chapter 3 is to conduct a theoretical analysis of the term ecotourism. To achieve this, an analysis of ecotourism definitions was conducted in order to identify key principles of

ecotourism. A discussion of the pillars (natural and cultural attractions; educational opportunities; sustainable management; and tourist experience) on which ecotourism is based, then follows. The positive and negative impacts that ecotourism can have on the economy, communities and the environment are highlighted and the development and management aspects of ecotourism such as facilities design, site and visitor management techniques and eco-efficient practices are discussed.

Chapter 4: Ecotourism policies

The aim of Chapter 4 is to provide an overview of international agencies involved in tourism policy formulation and national policies concerning ecotourism development and management. Therefore, the role and formulation of policies in tourism development will be discussed, followed by an analysis of international and national organisations and policies that have an impact on tourism policies. In conclusion, current policies regarding ecotourism in South Africa generally, and in South African National Parks in particular, will be discussed.

Chapter 5: Empirical results

The aim of Chapter 5 is to focus on the empirical analysis of the survey conducted with both visitors to South Africa National Parks, as well as with the managers and key personnel. The aims of the empirical research were twofold: firstly to gain an understanding of the perceptions from a demand side (visitors to South African National Parks) and secondly to gain the same understanding but from a supply side (management of South African National Parks), regarding key responsible ecotourism principles.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

The aim of Chapter 6 is to draw conclusions and make recommendations, based on the results of the research. The ecotourism model developed from this research will be discussed, as well as the contribution that the study made to literature pertaining to ecotourism.

2

CHAPTER 2

A LITERATURE ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

"The human race is challenged more than ever before to demonstrate our mastery, not over nature but of ourselves."

~Rachel Carson~

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Apprehension over the management of natural resources in relation to economic growth is on the increase as, every year, more of the globe's natural resources are consumed and polluted by the human population (Hall & Lew, 2009:42; Buckley 2004c:1&5). Environmental destruction caused by economic growth and the rate of development became the centre of attention for environmentalists in the 1980's which led to rallies against these negative impacts. In response to this global issue of resource degradation, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) published a report in 1987 entitled "Our Common Future", also known as "The Brundtland Report" (WCED, 1987). The report addressed global environmental issues and concluded that development should take only place in a way that would satisfy current needs, without compromising the possibility for future generations to satisfy their needs, that is, sustainable development (Fennell & Dowling, 2003:3; Holden, 2008:148; Coetzee & Saayman, 2009: 131; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008:30).

As one of the world's largest business sectors, the tourism industry has come under great pressure to be managed in a sustainable manner (UNEP, 2003:vii; Verbeek & Mommaas, 2008:629). Despite the economic recession over the recent past (since 2007), the tourism industry remains the foremost growth sector in the world economy. An estimated 235 million people are employed directly in the tourism industry or in related sectors and tourism is responsible for over 9% of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The global tourism economy is expected to grow by an annual 4.4% between 2010 and 2020 (WTTC, 2010:6). According to the United Nations Environment Programme and Conservation International

(UNEP) tourism's growth is largely occurring in and around the globe's remaining natural areas (TIES, 2006:2). The tourism industry relies heavily on the sustained aesthetics and hospitality of the communities in which it operates. With more and more people travelling every year, tourism can threaten profound negative impacts to the environment through the over-exploitation of natural resources and the irrevocable changes imposed on the cultural and historical heritages (Verbeek & Mommaas, 2008:629-630; Powell & Ham, 2008:468; Keyser, 2009:27). Despite the increased availability and demand for socially, environmentally and economically ethical products, it is still debatable whether or not enough is being done to achieve the goals of sustainable tourism. This doubt has led to the development of responsible tourism (Frey & George, 2010:621).

The aim of this chapter is to conduct a literature analysis of sustainable- and responsible tourism, as well as determining their main principles and the relationship between the two concepts. This chapter will address the following: firstly, the chronologic development of sustainable tourism. Secondly, a clarification of sustainable tourism related terms will be given. Thirdly, a literature review of sustainable tourism will be given in which the pillars and principles of sustainable tourism will be discussed. Fourthly, the challenges of implementing sustainable tourism will be clarified. Fifthly, the emergence of responsible tourism as well as the relationship between the latter and sustainable tourism will be analysed. Lastly, the different role players in sustainable- and responsible tourism will be examined. The chapter will end with a discussion of the future of sustainable- and responsible tourism.

2.2 CHRONOLOGIC DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

As indicated in Figure 2.1, the first steps regarding sustainable tourism development started with the publication of the Brundtland report, which addressed the effects that economic growth has had on the environment. Five principles of sustainability were identified:

- Holistic planning and strategy-making.
- Preserving essential ecological processes.
- Conservation of human heritage and biodiversity.
- Development should take place in such a way to sustain productivity over long-term for future generations.
- Achieving a better balance of fairness and opportunity between nations (Hall & Lew, 2009:53).

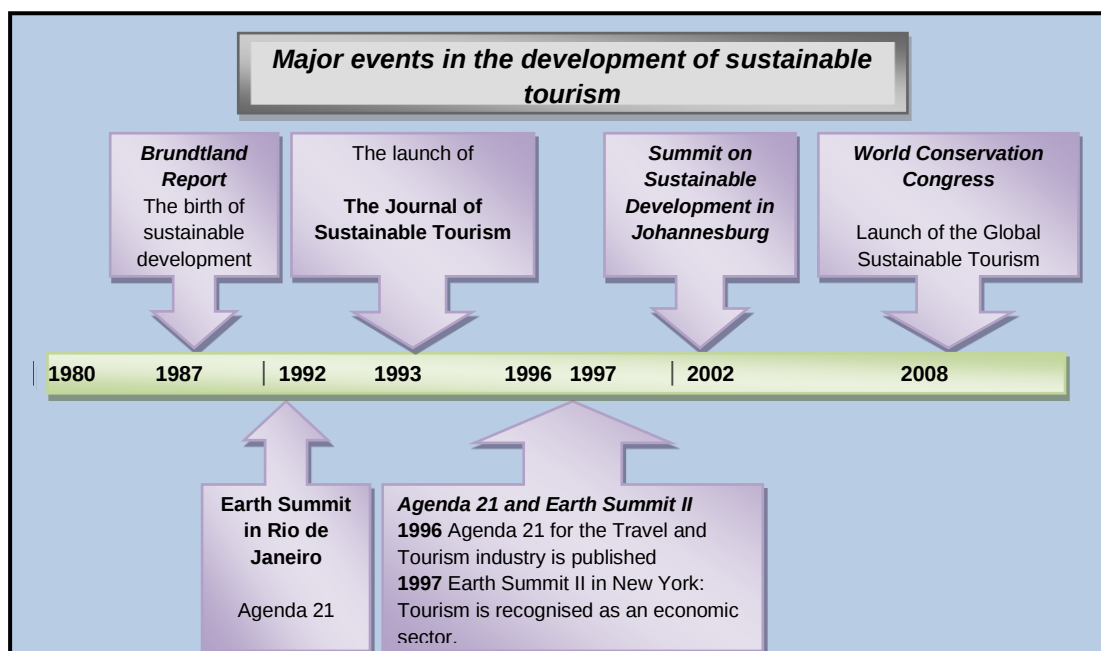


Figure 2.1: Major events in the development of sustainable tourism

(Adapted from: Dodds & Butler, 2009:43; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008:31; Holden, 2008:150; Keyser, 2009:20; Ivanovic, Khunou, Reynish, Pawson & Tseane, 2009:356)

The Brundtland report was foundational in terms of sustainable resource management and development, as well as of tourism management. Although tourism was hardly mentioned in the report, it assisted governments to realise the increasing importance of recognising tourism as a means of achieving sustainable development objectives. The reasons are that tourism produces economic gains and is, consequently, an important Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contributor; that it stimulates the investment in infrastructure; and it assists to improve the living conditions of local people (Hall & Lew, 2009:53; Moscardo, 2008:1; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008:26; Verbeek & Mommaas, 2008:629; Swarbrooke, 1999:11). Consequently, this realisation has led to the emergence of the concept *sustainable tourism development*. Although the concept was paid a great deal of attention, tourism growth continued unabated on a global scale. For example, the global tourist arrivals in 1980 were 285,997 million. These increased to 503,356 million in 1992. Obviously, these arrivals generate economic benefits, but this was often achieved at the expense of the social and ecological spheres (Keyser, 2009:24; Sharpley, 2002:16). According to Holden (2008:149), growth in any economic sector must not be confused with development of a country. Seers, as quoted by Sharpley (2009:32), pointed out that three questions should be asked in terms of a country's development, namely:

- What has been happening in terms of poverty?
- What has been happening in terms of unemployment?
- What has been happening in terms of inequality?

Seers, again quoted Sharpley (2009:32), and argued that if the answers to all of the above questions indicate a decline in the reviewed areas, it can be stated that a country/area has indeed gone through a period of development. In contrast, if the answers to the above questions indicate that the problems have grown worse, then it cannot be said that development has taken place even if *per capita* income has, for example, doubled. According to Sharpley (2009:32), the same questions are just as relevant today, but with the added dimension of environmental sustainability. It is therefore vital to distinguish between development and growth. These terms are often (erroneously) used synonymously, even though there is a significant difference. Simplistically, growth means bigger, whereas development refers to a change in circumstances for the better (Holden, 2008:149). Therefore, with the continued incidence of economic *growth* that resulted in a range of negative impacts, further urgent calls for sustainable *development* were made.

As a result, the Earth Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, where the concept of “sustainable development” gained further momentum. Important outcomes of the Earth Summit included:

- The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development that outlined 27 principles to guide sustainable development around the world.
- The Convention on Biological Diversity.
- The Statement of Forest Principles.
- The Convention of Climate Change.
- Agenda 21, an action plan towards sustainable development, which was adopted by more than 170 governments (Figure 2.1).(Keyser, 2009:20; Ivanovic, Khunou, Reynish, Pawson & Tseane, 2009:356; Holden, 2008:150; Swarbrooke, 1999:96).

Agenda 21 consists of 40 chapters that were classified into four main categories:

- ***Social and economic dimensions:*** In this category, the importance of international cooperation in order to achieve a more efficient and equitable world economy is emphasised. Issues such as combating poverty, human health issues and changing consumption patterns are addressed.
- ***Conservation and management of resources for development:*** As the survival of humans is dependent on the natural environment, this category provides a plan to manage sustainably the planet's essential resources. The current decline in biodiversity is largely the result of human activity and represents a serious threat to human development. The following issues are addressed in this category: protection of the atmosphere, management of land and water resources, protection of the oceans, deforestation, waste management, biotechnology and sustainable agricultural and rural development.

- ***Strengthening the role of major groups:*** One of the fundamental prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development is broad public participation in decision-making. Further, in the more specific context of environment and development, the need for new forms of participation has emerged. This includes the needs of individuals, groups and organisations to participate in environmental impact assessment procedures and to know of and participate in decisions. This is particularly true of those decisions that have the potential to affect the communities in which they live and work. Groups here include, in the broader sense, women, the youth, workers and their trade unions, non-governmental organisations, scientific and technological communities, indigenous people and local communities, local authorities, business and industry and farmers.
- ***Means of implementation:*** The successful implementation of Agenda 21 will depend on the following means, addressed in this last category, being (or becoming) available: financial resources and mechanisms, transfer of environmentally sound technology, science for sustainable development, education and public awareness, international institutions and international legislation. The continued active and effective participation of non-governmental organisations, the scientific community, the private sector, as well as local communities, are all important in the implementation of Agenda 21 (UNCED, 1992).

Although Agenda 21 had an impact on most areas of global activity, including tourism, tourism itself was not acknowledged as an economic sector at the Earth Summit in Rio, despite its economic significance. In 1993, the launch of “The Journal of Sustainable Tourism” was a further indication of the growing interest and importance of the concept of sustainable tourism (Dodds & Butler, 2009:43). Therefore, in 1996 the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the Earth Commission published “Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry”. This document highlighted the extreme importance of the environment as the main foundation upon which the industry relies (Keyser, 2009:20; Ivanovic *et al.*, 2009:356; Holden, 2008:150; Swarbrooke 1999:96). At the Second Earth Summit that took place in New York five years later (1997), tourism was debated as an economic sector that needed to be managed sustainably (Holden, 2008:150; Keyser, 2009:20; Swarbrooke 1999:96). Since the emergence of the concept, sustainable tourism development has become a preoccupation with academics, planners and policymakers.

Sharpley (2009:14) stated that there are a number of reasons, besides the basic economic drivers, that led to tourism being a favoured development strategy. These reasons include the facts that:

- tourism is a “growth industry” as it remains one of the world’s fastest growing industries;

- tourism redistributes wealth from richer countries to poorer regions either through direct tourist spending or international investment in tourism infrastructure, and linkages with other industries due to the goods and services required by tourists at a destination;
- tourism makes use of “free” infrastructure as the development of tourism is often based on existing natural or man-made attractions; and finally,
- there are no tourism trade barriers as countries usually do not limit the travel overseas of their citizens.

Tourism continued to be a standing theme on the agendas of numerous international events including the Summit of Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002. The main purpose of this Summit was to address some of the most pressing concerns of poverty and the environment. The promotion of sustainable tourism development, including non-consumptive and ecotourism, was also addressed, with the aim of increasing the benefits from tourism resources for the populations of host communities while still maintaining cultural and environmental integrity, while enhancing the protection of ecologically sensitive areas and natural heritages. The promotion of sustainable tourism was further advocated as a means of contributing to the strengthening of rural and local communities (WSSD, 2002). In order to achieve this laudable aim, the following actions steps were proposed:

- Enhance international cooperation, foreign direct investment and partnerships with both private and public sectors, at all levels;
- Develop programmes, including education and training programmes that encourage people to participate in ecotourism, enable indigenous and local communities to develop and benefit from ecotourism, and enhance stakeholder cooperation in tourism development and heritage preservation to improve the protection of the environment, natural resources and cultural heritage;
- Provide technical assistance to developing countries and for countries with economies in transition to support sustainable tourism business development and investment and tourism awareness programmes, to improve domestic tourism, and to stimulate entrepreneurial development;
- Assist host communities in managing visits to their tourism attractions to their maximum benefit, while ensuring the least negative impacts on, and risks for their traditions, culture and environment, with the support of the World Tourism Organisation and other relevant organisations;
- Promote the diversification of economic activities, including through the facilitation of access to markets and commercial information, and participation of emerging local enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (WSSD, 2002).

Even though the subject has been discussed extensively, there remains confusion concerning the definition, description and measurement of sustainable tourism (Dodds & Butler, 2009:43; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008:31; Ioannides, 2001:51; Pforr, 2001:70). As a result of this continuing confusion, the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria were developed in order to directly address this issue. The launch of these “criteria” took place during the World Conservation Congress in 2008, which will be further discussed under Section 2.5 of this chapter.

The following section aims to clarify some of the confusion regarding terminology.

2.2.1 CLARIFICATION OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM RELATED TERMS

Although responsible-, nature-based and ecotourism have the same goal as sustainable tourism namely, minimising negative social, economic and environmental impacts, whilst maximising the positive effects of tourism development, they should not be used interchangeably (Frey & George, 2010:622; Pforr, 2001:69). Thus, it becomes essential to distinguish accurately between these terms.

For the purpose of this study, a brief outline with the focus points of the above-mentioned terms is given in Table 2.1 below, based on an analysis by Frey & George (2010:622).

Table 2.1: Focus points of sustainable tourism-related terms

Term	Definition	Author	Focus
Sustainable tourism	Envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.	World Tourism Organisation (UNEP, 2002b)	The responsible use of resources for present and future generations. Maintaining a balance between economic, social and environmental aspects of tourism.
Responsible Tourism	Responsible tourism is about providing better holiday experiences for guests and good business opportunities for tourism enterprises, and enabling local communities to	Department of Environmental affairs and tourism (DEAT, 2002:8).	Develop a competitive advantage. Establish meaningful partnerships.

	enjoy a better quality of life through increased socio-economic benefits and improved natural resource management.		Promote sustainable use of local resources. Encourage natural, cultural, social and economic diversity. Transparency.
Nature-based tourism	Nature-based tourism is primarily concerned with the direct enjoyment of some relatively undisturbed phenomenon of nature.	Valentine (as quoted by Eagles, Bowman & Chung-hung, 2005).	Tourism in a natural setting. Enjoyment of nature. Consumptive and non-consumptive.
Ecotourism	Ecotourism is environmentally responsible travel to, and visitation of, relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and accompanying cultural features – both past and present) that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor impact, and provides beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations.	(Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996:20)	Environmental conservation. Community participation. Learning experience. Nature-based. Responsible travel.

(Adapted from: UNEP, 2002b; DEAT, 2002:8; Frey & George, 2010:622; Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996:20; Eagles, Bowman & Chang-Hung, 2005:7; DEAT 2002:8)

The remainder of this chapter will focus on sustainable and responsible tourism, whereas Chapter 3 will mainly focus on ecotourism and its relation to sustainable, responsible and nature-based tourism.

2.3 THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development implies a balanced management approach concerning the economy, social-cultural environment and the natural environment (Keyser, 2009:25; Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131; George, 2007:319; Queiros, 2003:75). The objectives of sustainable development are outlined in Figure 2.2.

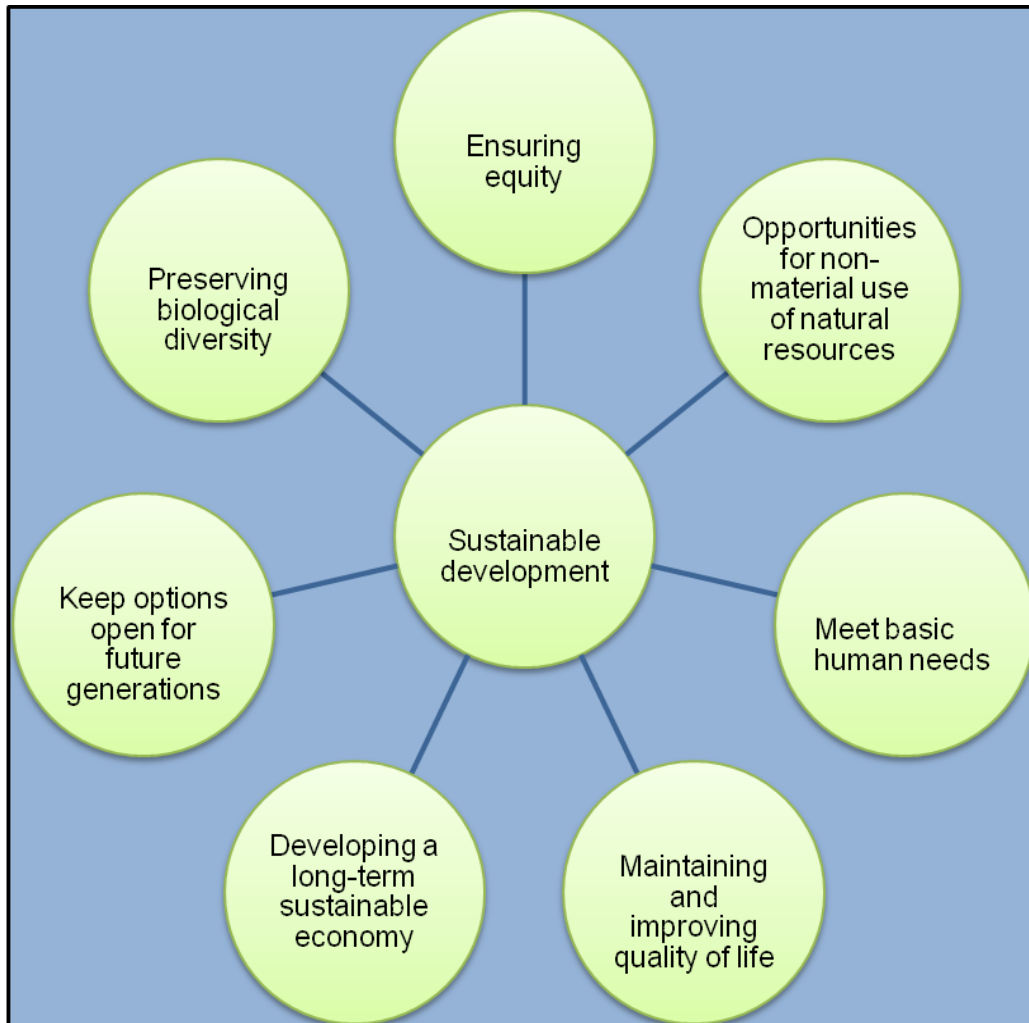


Figure 2.2: Objectives of sustainable development

(Source: Sharma, 2010:20; Williams, 2009:110; Wight 2003:51; Hall & Lew, 2009:267)

Forming part of the bigger framework of sustainable development, sustainable tourism refers to tourism development that is viable over time and where the environment's ability to support other activities remains uncompromised. Not only should tourism be sustainable in itself, but it should contribute to the broader scope of sustainable development policies and objectives (Telfer & Sharpley, 2008:42; Wight 2003:51; Fennell, 2002:26). Sustainable tourism development was defined as early as 1988 by the World Tourism Organisation as:

“envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems” (UNEP, 2002b).

From the above definition, it becomes clear that sustainability involves the environmental, socio-cultural and economic aspects of development. These aspects are often referred to as the “triple bottom line” or the pillars of sustainable tourism (Figure 2.3). A suitable balance must be kept between the three concepts to ensure their long-term sustainability (Garrod & Gössling, 2008:141; Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131; Queiros, 2003:74; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:46; Keyser, 2009:25).

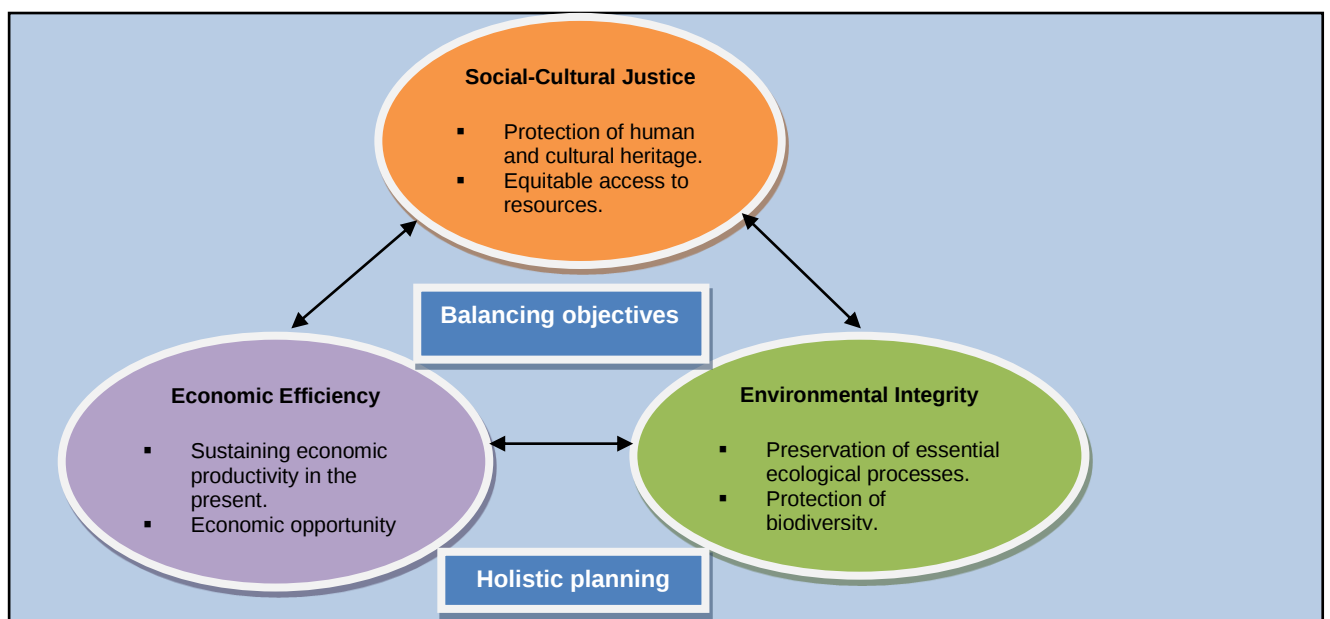


Figure 2.3: Triple bottom line of sustainable tourism
(Source: Keyser, 2009:25).

However, the phrase “sustainable tourism” became a subject of much controversy concerning what the term really means; who defines what is sustainable and what is not; and also, what does it mean in practice (Williams, 2009:11; Keyser, 2009:32; Queiros, 2003:74; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008:32). In an attempt to bring some consistency and clarity to the abundance of definitions, the World Tourism Organisation published the following revised definition for sustainable tourism in the Agenda 21 for travel and tourism in 2004 (Keyser, 2009:33):

“Continuously improving the attractiveness of a tourism destination, whilst ensuring that local people’s lives are bettered through participation in the benefits of tourism and the destination’s human, environmental, economic and cultural resources are used responsibly”.

Following this, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (hereafter referred to as UNWTO) outlined the following goals specific to sustainable tourism:

- Make optimal use of environmental resources that make up a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.
- Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities; conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values; and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.
- Ensure viable, long-term economic operations; contribute to poverty alleviation; provide socio-economic benefits such as stable employment, income-earning opportunities and social service to all relevant stakeholders and ensure the fair distribution thereof (Keyser, 2009:33).

It is not only the vagueness of the definitions, but also the conflict of interests, that added to the confusion over what sustainability in tourism means. On the one hand, it is argued that economic growth is necessary (WTTC, 2010:8; Saarinen, Becker, Manwa & Wilson, 2009:9; Sharpley, 2009:2). According to the World Tourism and Travel Council (hereafter referred to as WTTC), the tourism industry will continue to grow in importance as the world's highest priority sector due to its leading role in alleviating poverty, job creator and exports (WTTC, 2010:8). Nevertheless, the growth of the tourism industry as an economic sector will lead to environmental problems (Saarinen *et al.*, 2009:9; Sharpley, 2009:2). With more people travelling every year, greater pressure is being placed on natural resources in the term of usage, pollution and climate change, to name but three of the concerns (Holden, 2008:69).

According to the United Nations Environment Programme (hereafter referred to as UNEP), the world's 692.5 million international tourists in 2001 were estimated to have generated no less than 4.8 million tons of solid waste (UNEP, 2003:3). The question can be asked, how much solid waste is being generated 10 years later? Another serious threat to the environment, receiving global attention, is that of climate change and the tourism industry's contribution to this threat. It was estimated that the tourism industry contributed to 4.9% of the global greenhouse gasses emissions, 40% of which can be attributed to air transport (UNWTO, 2008:34).

Therefore, economic advancement that harms the environment is not sustainable. Sustainable tourism development implies minimising the negative impacts on the environment but also providing an incentive to encourage preservation and protection (Keyser, 2009:25; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:45). Tourism is a resource-dependent industry and, if uncontrolled, can threaten

the viability of the tourism industry in general. Without a healthy physical and social environment, tourism businesses cannot provide the quality that the tourist seeks (Verbeek & Mommaas, 2008:629-630; Powell & Ham, 2008:468; Keyser, 2009:27). A healthy economy enables a destination to pursue initiatives designed to improve the environment by providing incentives that encourages preservation and enhancement of the quality of life for the local community (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:46). According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, only when basic needs such as food, shelter and basic health-care are met, will people concern themselves with higher order needs, such as environmental protection. This is an area of particular concern in Africa as Africa faces enormous poverty problems. It can be said, therefore, that a healthy economy is essential for a healthy environment. Thus the needs and aspirations of the local community must be considered and planned for over the long term (Williams, 2009:111; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:46).

In order to assist with the challenge of balancing of the triple bottom line aspects, a United Kingdom interest group called "Tourism Concern", in collaboration with the "World Wide Fund for Nature", published a document named "Beyond the green horizon: principles for sustainable tourism" in 1992 (Edgell, 2006:22). It included discussion of the following key aspects:

- Using resources in a sustainable manner.
- Reducing over-consumption and waste.
- Maintaining natural, social and cultural diversity.
- Integrating tourism into a national and local strategic planning framework.
- Supporting local economies.
- Involving local communities.
- Consultation between the industry and other stakeholders.
- Training of staff that integrates both sustainable practices and the recruitment of local personnel in order to improve the quality of the product.
- Responsible marketing that will enhance customer satisfaction and respect for the natural and social environments.
- Undertaking research to monitor the industry and solve problems (Edgell, 2006:22)

From this section, it is evident that sustainable tourism plays a significant role in global development. A multitude of new sustainable tourism principles and philosophies are still being developed, although the key principles pertain to keeping a balance between the triple bottom line aspects, minimising negative impacts and maximising positive effects. The need to move along from mere semantics to the actual implementation of sustainable tourism is becoming more apparent, but it has to date proved a challenging aspiration (Edgell, 2006:23; Weaver, 2006:31; Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005:35).

The following section will focus on the challenges of sustainable tourism.

2.4 IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Although sustainable tourism development seems like a logical approach that should be embraced, the implementation thereof has proved to be more complex (Frey & George, 2010:621; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008:42; Queiros, 2003:74). Even with guidelines such as Agenda 21 to mentor sustainable tourism development, it has still proved to be a difficult task to get sustainable tourism operational. In addition, many stakeholders feel that, since the first Earth Summit in Rio, almost twenty years later, little progress has been made towards implementing and realising sustainable tourism (2011) (Keyser, 2009:39; Lane, 2009:22). The following are proposed as possible reasons for the slow progress of implementation:

- **No driver or imperative:** The industry has not been governed adequately to achieve sustainability.
- **Growth:** The growth of the tourism industry does not necessarily mean sustainable development and, in many cases, growth is associated with a large number of negative impacts.
- **Denial:** The industry fails to recognise the negative impacts and therefore denies the need for a different approach.
- **Concept of social marketing:** The use of marketing techniques to bring about behavioural change, rather than increased consumption, is still in its early stages and is little understood by the tourism industry.
- **Partnership building:** Is essential for a holistic sustainable tourism approach, but this too is in its early stages and little understood.
- **A leaderless industry:** The diverse and fragmented nature of the tourism industry has prevented a strong unified leadership from emerging.
- **The industry does not work closely with academic researchers:** Effective links between the industry and academic research are rare.
- **The concept of social and environmental responsibility:** It remained a new and even unfamiliar concept in many industries, including tourism, until recently (Lane, 2009:22).

One of the main challenges to implementing sustainable tourism so far was the confusion concerning what sustainable tourism really means. The absence of universally accepted standards further contributed to the uncertainty (Williams, 2009:11; Keyser, 2009:32; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008:32; Queiros, 2003:74). It therefore remains a challenge to incorporate social, economic and environmental programmes, funds and initiatives, and to develop new methods of

managing travel and tourism businesses in a more systematic and dynamic way (UNEP, 2002a:7).

A step in the right direction was taken by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the United Nations Foundation and the Rainforest Alliance when they reached out to more than 80000 people, and involved over 40 of the world's leading public, private, non-profit, and academic institutions. These institutions and organisations worked together to analyse the thousands of then-existing worldwide criteria on sustainable tourism development (Harms, 2010:115; Saarinen, 2009:272; Keyser, 2009:39; TSC, 2009). During the World Conservation Congress in 2008 held in Barcelona, Spain, the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria were announced. These criteria are sub-divided into four main categories, those of effective sustainability planning; maximising social and economic benefits for the local community; enhancing cultural heritage; and reducing negative impacts to the environment (Harms, 2010:115; TSC, 2009). The criteria aim to make the following contributions towards a global sustainable tourism industry:

- To serve as basic guidelines for all tourism providers to achieve sustainability.
- To help tourists identify sustainable tourism providers.
- To serve as a universal standard for information media to recognise sustainable tourism providers.
- To help certification and other voluntary programs ensure that their standards meet a universally accepted baseline.
- To offer governmental, non-governmental and the private sector a starting point for developing sustainable tourism requirements.
- To serve as basic guidelines for education and training bodies, such as hotel schools and universities (TSC, 2009).

The criteria serve as a guideline of what should be done and they should be used in combination with indicators to track progress made (TSC, 2009). Keyser (2009:37) states that the development of such indicators is important to operationalise the theory of sustainable tourism. The World Tourism Organisation, quoted by Keyser (2009:28), identified a set of baseline, sustainability issues and indicators for tourism destinations to be able to measure their progress towards sustainability. These baseline indicators are outlined in Figure 2.4.

Baseline Issue	Baseline Indicators
Effects of tourism on communities	- Ratio of tourists to locals (average and peak periods/days). - Percentage of those who believe that tourism has helped bring new services or infrastructure (questionnaire-based). - Number and capacity of social services available to the community (percentage that are attributable to tourism).
Sustaining tourist satisfaction	- Level of satisfaction by visitors (questionnaire-based). - Perception of value for money (questionnaire –based.) - Percentage of return visitors (questionnaire-based).
Tourism seasonality	- Tourist arrival by months or quarter (distribution throughout year). - Occupancy rates for licensed (official) accommodation by month (peak periods relative to low season) and percentage of all occupancy in peak quarter or month). - Percentage of business establishments open all year. - Number and percentage of tourist industry jobs that are permanent or full-year (compared to temporary jobs).
Economic benefits of tourism	- Number of local people (and ratio of men and women) employed in tourism (also ratio of tourism employment to total employment.) - Revenues generated by tourism as percentage of total revenues generated in the community.
Energy management	- Per capita consumption of energy from all sources (overall, and by tourist sector – per person daily). - Percentage of businesses participating in energy conservation programmes, or applying energy saving policy and techniques. - Percentage of energy consumption from renewable resources (at destinations, establishments).
Water availability and conservation	- Water use (total volume consumed and litres per tourist per day). - Water saving (percentage reduced, recaptured or recycled).
Drinking water quality	- Dams Percentage of tourism establishments with water treated to international potable standards. - Frequency of water-borne diseases: number/percentage of visitors reporting water-borne illness during their stay.
Waste water management	- Percentage of sewage from site receiving treatment (to primary, secondary, tertiary levels). - Percentage of tourism establishments (or accommodation) on treatment system(s).
Solid waste management (Garbage)	- Waste volume produced by destination (tonnes by month). - Volume of wastewater recycled (m³) / Total volume of waste (m³) (specified by different types). - Quantity of waste strewn in public areas (garbage counts).
Development control	- Existence of a land use or development planning process, including tourism. - Percentage of area subject to control (density, design, etc.).
Controlling use intensity	- Total numbers of tourist arrivals (mean, monthly, peak periods). - Number of tourists per square metre of site (for example, at beaches, attractions).and per square kilometre of the destination (mean number/peak period average).

Figure 2.4: WTO baseline indicators for sustainable tourism
(Source: Keyser, 2009:28)

By incorporating the values and principles of the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria in the planning stages and monitoring progress by utilising indicators such as the baseline indicators of the World Tourism Organisation, the tourism industry can help itself to maximise profits and become more sustainable in the long run (Keyser, 2009:37; Harms, 2010:116). As a way forward in achieving sustainable development, tourism industry leaders need to set an example by implementing sustainable tourism practices. From the literature, it is clear that sustainable tourism development must follow a balanced economic, environmental and social approach. It must aim to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive effects; provide economic benefits for the local community; improve quality of life; maintain biological diversity and use resources in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, it must be recognised that there remains a need for a multi-stakeholder process wherein all stakeholders take responsibility for the future of travel and tourism (UNEP, 2002a:7).

This highlights another possible reason for the little progress that has been made to date. Who, exactly, bears the responsibility for ensuring that sustainable tourism happens? Everyone expects others to behave in a sustainable way (Keyser, 2009:39). This confusion, this lack of certainty, subsequently led to the surfacing and usage of yet another term, that of responsible tourism. This term will be discussed in the following section.

2.5 RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Responsible tourism started originally as a consumer movement. In the mid-nineties, Volunteer Services Overseas (VSO) and Tearfund (a UK Christian relief and development agency that works in over 50 countries) started campaigning for responsible tourism. This campaign came about as a result of a research study that identified tourism as one of the major issues affecting the communities that volunteers worked in (Goodwin, 2009:7). In 1998, Tearfund conducted market research and found that 45% of participating consumers would be more likely to book a holiday with a company that had a written code that guaranteed good working conditions, protected the environment and supported local charities in the tourist destination. That figure, increased to 52% within just two years, indicating that there was an increasing demand/need from tourists for responsible behaviour by the tourism industry. This trend is indeed placing pressure on the industry to become more responsible (Goodwin, 2009:8; Tearfund, 2002:7). This, together with global pressure on companies in all industries to enhance their Corporate Social Responsibility, assisted the responsible tourism movement to gain international attention (Frey, 2007:317).

South Africa was the first country in the world to adopt the “Responsible Tourism” initiative as part of their national tourism policy (1996 White Paper on Development and Promotion of

Tourism in South Africa) (Goodwin, 2007:1). According to the White Paper, responsible tourism implies the following:

- A proactive approach by tourism industry partners to develop market and manage the tourism industry in a responsible manner, to create a competitive advantage.
- Responsibility to the environment through a balanced and sustainable tourism approach.
- The government and businesses have a responsibility to involve the local communities through the development of meaningful economic linkages (for example, by supporting local businesses for supplies).
- Respect and protect local cultures from commercialisation and over-exploitation.
- Communities have a responsibility to become actively involved in the tourism industry.
- Ensure the safety, security and health of the visitors.
- Employers and employees in the tourism industry have a responsibility towards each other, as well as to the customer.
- Responsible trade union and employment practices.
- The government must act in a responsible manner.
- Tourists should display responsible conduct, with respect to the environment and culture of the country (DEAT, 1996).

South Africa hosted the first conference in Cape Town regarding “Responsible Tourism Destinations” in 2002. The conference resulted in a declaration, The Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism, which urged tourism businesses to “adopt a responsible approach, to commit to specific responsible practices, and to report progress in a transparent and auditable way and, where appropriate, to use this for market advantage” (Keyser, 2009:40; Goodwin, 2007:1).

The Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism, *inter alia*, states that responsible tourism will:

- Minimise negative economic, environmental and social impacts.
- Generate greater economic benefits for local people and enhance the well-being of host communities, improves working conditions and access to the industry.
- Involve local people in decisions that affect their lives.
- Make positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, to the maintenance of the world’s diversity.
- Provide experiences that are more enjoyable for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people and through a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues.
- Provide access for physically challenged people.

- Be culturally sensitive; engenders respect between tourists and hosts; and builds local pride and confidence (Keyser, 2009:40; Iyyer, 2009:52; Spencely, 2008:5).

(These principles, as outlined in the “White Paper on Tourism, 1996” and “The Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism, 2002”, contributed significantly to the development of the questionnaire used for the empirical research.)

Not only is responsible tourism management necessary to ensure a sustainable tourism industry, but it makes sound business sense for the individual tourism business. Frey (2007:317) outlines a number of benefits of responsible tourism management. These are as follows:

- **Increased community support:** communities will be supportive of tourism and will protect natural resources in the area if they understand the value that tourism can add to the community.
- **Stronger brand positioning:** tourism businesses can increase their brand position by advocating their responsible management practices.
- **Enhanced corporate image and reputation:** implementing socially responsible practices will enhance the image of a tourism business, and consequently lead to brand recognition and loyalty.
- **Employee morale:** service levels and productivity will increase when employees feel valued.
- **Price premiums:** Tearfund’s study (as discussed earlier) further revealed that tourists are likely to pay a premium if they know it will be used for the benefit of the local community and environment.
- **Industry awards and recognition:** Awards to tourism businesses can aid in the promotion of the products of the tourism businesses and could lead to further positive word-of-mouth marketing and publicity.
- **Diversification of the tourism product:** Partnerships with local entrepreneurs can lead to new and innovative products (Frey, 2007:324).

Responsible tourism can be seen as a path towards sustainable tourism, as illustrated in Figure 2.5 (Iyyer, 2009:51). It has the same goals as sustainable tourism, which are economic efficiency, socio-cultural justice and environmental integrity. These are very similar to the four pillars on which ecotourism is based, those of conservation and enhancement of natural and cultural attractions; sustainable management of the physical, economic and socio-cultural environment (see Chapter 3, Section 3.2). A major difference between sustainable and responsible tourism is that responsible tourism recognises the need for of all role players, government, private sector, local communities, non-government organisations and tourists alike,

to take responsibility for their actions and so play a part in sustainable tourism development (Keyser, 2009:42, Iyyer, 2009:51; Tassiopoulos, 2008:310; DEAT, 2003).

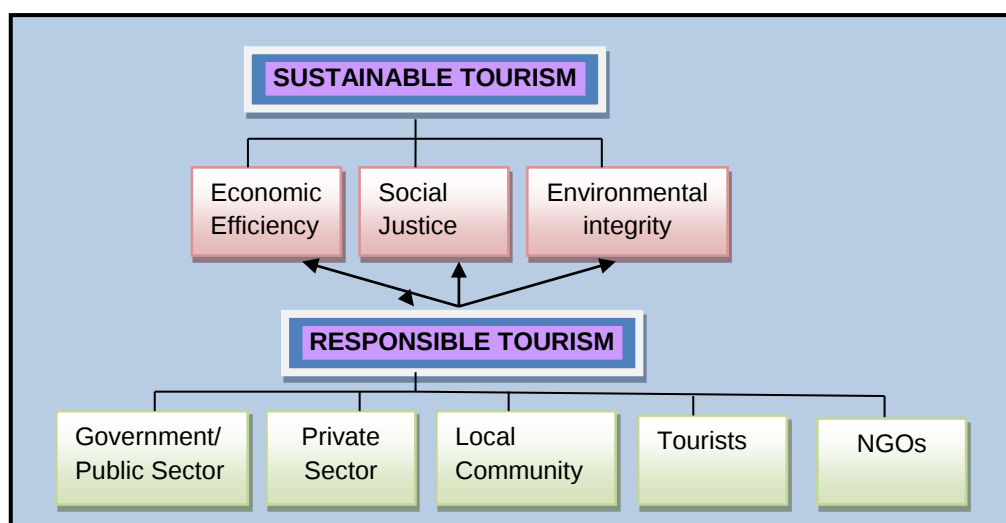


Figure 2.5: Responsible tourism

(Adapted from: Keyser, 2009:39; Iyyer, 2009:51; DEAT, 2003; Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131)

Based on the analysis of literature regarding sustainable and responsible tourism, the following similarities and differences were identified (Table 2.2):

Table 2.2: Similarities and differences of sustainable and responsible tourism

Similarities between sustainable- and responsible tourism	Differences between sustainable- and responsible tourism
▪ Applicable to all forms of tourism. ▪ Keeping a balance between economic, social and environmental objectives. ▪ Minimise the negative impacts of tourism. ▪ Local community involvement. ▪ Improving quality of life. ▪ Develop tourism in an ethically sound manner. ▪ Maintaining and preserving natural and cultural diversity. ▪ Generate economic benefits for the local community.	▪ Sustainable tourism emerged because of academic researchers and pressure groups, whereas responsible tourism can be seen as a consumer driven movement. ▪ Main focus of sustainable tourism is to preserve the resources for present and future generations, whereas responsible tourism places more emphasis on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and gaining a competitive advantage through ethical behaviour.

▪ Alleviating poverty.	▪ Responsible tourism recognises the need for all stakeholders to take responsibility for sustainable tourism development. ▪ Responsible tourism is not a substitute for sustainable tourism, but should rather be seen as a movement and a pathway towards sustainable tourism.
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(Adapted from: Sharma, 2010:20; Frey & George, 2010:622; Williams, 2009:110; Goodwin 2009; Keyser, 2009:40; Iyyer, 2009:52; Spencely, 2008:5; Tassiopoulos, 2008:310; DEAT, 2003:6; Wight, 2003:51; Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131)

Responsible tourism emphasises the responsibility of all stakeholders to ensure a sustainable tourism industry. Given this, the role players involved in responsible tourism will be discussed in the following section.

2.6 ROLE PLAYERS IN SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Professor Harold Goodwin, director of the International Centre for Responsible Tourism, stated clearly in his inauguration speech that:

“Responsible tourism has become a movement, but for the movement to continue to achieve change, we need rebellious tourists and rebellious locals, we need activists in destinations and tourism enterprises, and we need travellers and holidaymakers to hold the operators and accommodation providers to account” (Goodwin, 2009:13).

It is therefore clear that responsible tourism places emphasis on **all role players’** responsibility to develop a sustainable tourism industry (Keyser, 2009:42, Iyyer, 2009:51; Tassiopoulos, 2008:310; DEAT, 2003:6; Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131). The following role players in responsible and sustainable tourism will be discussed, the public sector, the private sector the local community, non-government organisations (NGOs) and tourists.

2.6.1 The public sector

Tourism is a mechanism for economic development and has great appeal for governments (the public sector) as an opportunity for long-term investment. Due to the impacts that tourism has on the economy, on communities and on the environment, it is essential that an appropriate framework be put in place to maximise the benefits of tourism for citizens, as well as tourists. It is the primary responsibility of the government, with regards to tourism, to draw up such a

framework to promote responsible practices within which the industry is to be planned and developed (Tlhagale, 2003:172; Shaw & Williams, 2002:318).

There are, however, several other actions that should be undertaken by the government to ensure the successful planning and promotion of tourism. These are:

- **Regulation:** Most of the core tourist attractions like beaches, national parks and heritage sites are owned by the government, and therefore the government should play a role to protect the country's natural and cultural heritage. The government's regulatory role over the tourism industry should also span health and consumer protection, building permissions, employment, development, education and training, transport and any other area that might affect the tourism industry.
- **Planning and transformation:** This can in some cases only be accomplished by public sector organisations due to the possession of adequate funds and power. Planning concerning tourism takes place in many different forms (development; infrastructure; and land-use), institutions (different government agencies) and levels (national, provincial and local) (George, 2007:148; Keyser, 2009:158).
- **Coordination:** Due to the fragmented nature of tourism within the economy, coordination should occur both vertically (between the different levels such as national, provincial and local) and horizontally (between different government agencies such as South Africa Tourism and the South African Department of Transport).
- **Marketing:** The effective marketing of tourism is another important responsibility of the government. This is usually the task of government agencies known as Destination Marketing Organisations, for example, "South Africa Tourism".
- **Research:** Governments play an important role in funding tourism related research projects in order that performance and changes in the tourism industry can be monitored (George, 2007:149; Murphy & Murphy, 2004:288; Saayman, 2009:72; Keyser 2009:158).

From the above, it is clear that the government's role is essential to support and influence the tourism industry. There are, however, barriers that will limit the government's/public sector's role in sustainable tourism planning and development. These are outlined in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Barriers regarding government's role in sustainable and responsible tourism development

- Many public sector bodies lack financial resources to play a role in tourism development.
- A lack of trained and expert staff in tourism and in the public sector.
- The cycle of elections affects the willingness of politicians to make long-term decisions on which sustainable tourism depends.
- Corruption limits the potential role of the government to develop a sustainable tourism industry.

(Source: Swarbrooke 1999:97)

The role of the public sector in sustainable and responsible tourism will be discussed further in Chapter 4 concerning development and implementation of ecotourism tourism policies.

2.6.2 The private sector

The tourism industry consists of both the private and public sectors. Whereas the public sector refers to tourism products that are government owned, such as national parks and other natural and cultural heritage sites, the private sector consists of tourism products and services that are privately owned, for example, guest houses, hotels lodges (accommodation), restaurants, travel agencies, visitor attractions and tourism transport services (Keyser, 2009:156). Further, the tourism industry is responsible for the provision of tourism products, for example, visitor attractions, transport and accommodation. The tourism industry also forms an important link between the environment, tourists and local community and it is imperative that this position is amplified to influence tourists at destinations and also to encourage the local community to participate in projects that will enhance the overall well-being of the community and environment (Saayman, 2009:73).

The involvement of the private sector in sustainable and responsible tourism development is of the utmost importance to ensure the success of a sustainable tourism industry (Holden, 2008:194).

The reason for this is that the private sector has a significant role to play in the following areas:

- To stimulate economic development and to enhance the quality of life in a community. The private sector brings investment to the community and ensures high quality tourism management. Tourism businesses should ensure that economic leaks are minimised by employing and purchasing locally (UNWTO, 2003:4; Keyser, 2009:156; DEAT, 2003:7).
- To provide quality tourism products and services in order to sustain the local tourism industry. Tourists are increasingly demanding tourism products where they can learn

about the destination and its people, as well as reduce any negative impact. Therefore, if businesses in a destination work together to promote good economic, social and environmental practices it will produce a competitive advantage for the destination (Edgell, 2006:31; Keyser, 2009:156; George, 2007:317).

- To work in partnerships with government and local communities as a way to better develop the tourism industry and so provide long-term benefits. Local communities will seek to sustain and contribute to a positive tourism experience, if they have a vested part in the tourism operation (Edgell, 2006:31; Keyser, 2009:156; DEAT, 2003:7).
- To be environmentally responsible and, in that way, contribute to the enhanced quality of the environment and the provision of an enlightening experience for tourists (DEAT, 2003:19; Saayman, 2009:73).

2.6.3 Tourists

Tourists are the buyers of tourism products and are, therefore, an essential role player in sustainable and responsible tourism. Tourists visit tourist destinations in order to fulfil and satisfy specific needs and desires. They are becoming more insistent on high quality tourism experiences (Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010:164; Swarbrooke, 1999:142). However, the tourist is a guest, and so should behave in an environmentally and culturally ethical manner for, unless tourists take a true interest in responsible tourism, little will be achieved either by government or by industry efforts (Saayman, 2009:72; Swarbrooke, 1999:142; Keyser, 2009:162).

Tourists that aim to behave in a sustainable and responsible manner can reduce the impact of tourism in the following ways:

- Informing themselves of the culture, politics and economy of the communities visited.
- Anticipating and respecting the expectations and assumptions of the local cultures.
- Respect the traditions, values and privacy of the local community.
- Respect the laws and regulations of the destination they visit, such as keeping to the speed limit, not littering, and remaining within designated areas.
- Supporting local economies by purchasing local goods, and participating with small, local businesses.
- Respect the natural environment and leaving only footprints.
- Conserving resources by supporting businesses that are environmentally conscious, and by using the least possible amount of non-renewable resources (Iyyer, 2009:51; Saayman, 2009:72; Keyser, 2009:164).

2.6.4 Local community

Communities and culture are often the reason why tourists travel to certain destinations, so that they can experience the “way of life” of the different communities. Sustaining such communities is, therefore, a crucial element of sustainable and responsible tourism (Hall & Richards, 2003:1). The local community has the right to understand, appreciate and conserve its natural and cultural resources and to benefit from them. It is also important that the local community realise the role they have to play in order to sustain the industry. The community will be more inclined to fulfil their role in terms of developing a sustainable tourism industry if they are involved in the planning process and receive benefits from the industry. Involvement must occur from the planning stages in order that suitable decisions can be made, and support gathered for tourism development projects. (Neth, 2008:30; Hall & Richards, 2003:1; Cole, 2006:630).

The local community's role in responsible tourism development includes the following:

- To act as guardians of the area's natural and cultural heritage on which the industry is based and dependant.
- To act as hosts for tourists visiting the area. Tourism is a service industry and is greatly reliant, therefore, on the goodwill and helpfulness of host communities.
- To build partnerships with private and public sectors and so identify ways in which they can actively contribute to tourism development in the area.
- To provide complementary products and services for tourism businesses, such as arts and crafts or ethnic cuisine (Cole, 2006:630; Singh, 2008:64; Keyser, 2009:160; Holden, 2008:206).

2.6.5 Non-government organisations

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has advocated that non-government organisations (NGOs) become involved in responsible tourism for NGOs play an important role in helping to shape the course of sustainable and responsible tourism development. These NGOs represent the views of members who have combined forces to raise awareness of issues, such as environmental conservation, protection of heritage resources and so forth (Keyser, 2009:165; Swarbrooke, 1999:116; Jenkins & Pigram, 2003:340).

NGOs' roles would include the following:

- Facilitate interaction between the stakeholders of tourism in an area.
- Mobilising stakeholders by encouraging local level participation and employment in tourism activities and by providing non-profit programmes that aim to minimise negative impacts.

- Many NGOs play an advocacy role by monitoring tourism impacts on communities and their environments. When necessary, they urge the industry and government to adjust development policies. Fair and accurate representation of issues and concerns are important if trust is to exist between stakeholders and partnerships be developed.
- NGOs are often involved in raising and administrating funds for the purpose of biodiversity conservation and other community-based projects.
- Co-operation and consultation with public and private sector when implementing local community projects. This ensures that projects will benefit stakeholders and not, however intentionally, harm them. It is important, therefore, that NGOs have an understanding of the community's background and culture in order to prevent disharmony.
- NGOs must be able to account for their actions and for the expenditure received from members, governments and businesses.
- NGOs are obligated to respect the laws of the destinations in which they operate. (Keyser, 2009:165; Fennell, 2008:150; Jenkins & Pigram, 2003:340).

Tourism is dependent on natural and cultural resources that are being placed under increased pressure due to the increase in tourist numbers, globally. The challenge is to manage these resources in a responsible manner to secure the future of tourism (Saarinen, 2009:269). Increased awareness amongst consumers (tourists) about environmental threats will affect consumer buying behaviour (Holden, 2008:226). Tourists are increasingly demanding tourism products that are environmentally, and socially, ethical. This trend will force tourism enterprises to become more responsible in developing and managing tourism products in order to be competitive (Fairweather, Maslin & Simmons, 2005:96; Holden, 2008:227; Goodwin, 2009:8).

When approached in the correct way, sustainable and responsible tourism can play a valuable role in achieving local economic benefits, increased quality of life and an improved quality of the environment (Edgell, 2006:122; Keyser, 2009:34; Saarinen, 2009:275). The importance of comprehensive, holistic, long-term planning is an aspect stressed by several authors as being vital to ensure the success of sustainable and responsible tourism (Edgell, 2006:122; Honey, 2008:447; Saarinen, 2009:270; Keyser, 2009:34).

2.7 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to conduct a literature analysis of sustainable- and responsible tourism, as well as to determine their main principles and the relationship between the two concepts. The concept "sustainable tourism" has gained a lot of attention during the last 20 years and has had an important role to play in achieving sustainable development, due to

tourism's potential to alleviate poverty, stimulate infrastructure investment, improve living conditions of the local community, and to contribute substantially to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The main goal of sustainable tourism is to minimise negative social, environmental and economic impacts, while maximising the positive effect that tourism offers. It is argued that little progress has been made yet in achieving sustainable tourism. Because of this, the challenges that are to be faced in achieving sustainable tourism were discussed.

One of the main challenges in sustainable tourism development is the confusion over what sustainable tourism entails, and who decides that. A major breakthrough concerning this problem came with the launch of the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the United Nations Foundation and the Rainforest Alliance in 2008 that now serves as a universal guideline for sustainable tourism development.

Further, responsible tourism recognises that sustainable tourism will only be successful if all the stakeholders involved take up their individual responsibilities for sustaining a healthy tourism industry. Key role-players that were discussed include the public sector, private sector, tourists, local community and NGO's (non-government organisations).

The chapter concludes with a discussion of the future of responsible tourism. As tourists are becoming increasingly aware of threats to the environment, they are demanding more environmentally and culturally ethical tourism products. A holistic planning and management approach is therefore necessary if sustainable/responsible tourism is to play a valuable role in achieving local economic benefits, providing increased quality of life and improving the quality of the environment.

The next chapter will focus on ecotourism as part of sustainable and responsible tourism.

3

CHAPTER 3

ECOTOURISM: A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

*"Do not worry if you have built your castles in the air.
They are where they should be. Now put the foundations under them."*

~Henry David Thoreau~

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the term ecotourism first appeared in literature, much has been written about and debated concerning this complex topic (Weaver & Lawton, 2007:1168). The declaration of the year 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism, with 132 countries represented at the World Ecotourism Summit in May 2002, is an indication of the tourism industry's concern with ecotourism (Weaver & Lawton, 2007:1168 & Buckley, 2003:xiii). The appeal of sustainable ecotourism as a conservation and development tool derives both from the related benefits and from the perception that it is a feasible alternative to the more conventional and destructive form of mass tourism development (Powell & Ham, 2008:468).

The rapid growth of environmental awareness in the late twentieth century significantly influenced the tourism industry. Both tourism businesses, as well as tourists, have become increasingly more conscious of the need for environmental protection (Chan & Baum, 2007:574 & Andereck, 2009:489). This, together with the discontent of conventional (mass) tourism, has led to a higher demand for nature-based experiences of an alternative nature (Blamey, 2001:5; Fennell, 2002:12). Alternative forms of tourism differ from conventional tourism in the sense that it follows an approach that aims to sustain the environment and to improve the quality of life of local community, whilst simultaneously creating a quality experience for the tourist (Diamantis, 2004:4; Fennell, 2006:5; Saayman, 2009:12). Alternative tourism, therefore, expresses the standards on which sustainable tourism is based (See Chapter 2, Section 2.4) (Fennell, 2006:5).

Ecotourism has become one of the world's major economic sectors with the capability to play a significant role in sustainable development in those areas where the environment attracts tourism (Powell & Ham, 2008:467; Tsuar, Lin & Lin, 2005:640; Fennell, 2002:12). Although ecotourism has, for decades, been represented in the forms of tourism programmes which contained many of the practical and philosophical elements that today are attributed to ecotourism, the growth of this industry has led to great controversy surrounding the term. The debate, concerning where it occurs, what it represents, to whom it applies and under what conditions, continues to dictate the subject matter of literature. Because of the ambiguity of the term as it is often (mis)used, there is still no universally accepted standard definition for the term "ecotourism" (Fennell, 2002:11, Orams; 2001:23; Deng, King & Bauer, 2002:424).

The aim of this chapter is to conduct a theoretical analysis of the term ecotourism. In order to achieve this aim, the chapter will first give an overview of the existing definitions of ecotourism. Following this, the pillars and principles on which ecotourism is based will be discussed. Thirdly the different management models used in tourism will next be examined. Fourthly, the impacts of the ecotourism industry on the economy, local communities and the environment will be scrutinised, and finally, the development and management aspects needed to ensure a responsible ecotourism industry will be critically examined.

3.2 OVERVIEW OF ECOTOURISM

Alternative approaches to tourism development have led to the development of new terms such as alternative tourism, sustainable tourism and responsible tourism and ecotourism (Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:19; Pforr, 2001:68). Alternative tourism differs from conventional tourism in the sense that it follows a sustainable tourism development approach. As discussed in Chapter 2, sustainable tourism is based on three pillars (economic efficiency, socio-cultural justice and environmental integrity) for when tourism is managed in a sustainable manner, it has the potential to become a tool for the fulfilment of humanity's highest ambitions. To achieve economic prosperity while still maintaining socio-cultural and environmental integrity it is necessary for all stakeholders to play a part in ensuring a sustainable tourism industry. Hence, the movement known as responsible tourism emerged. It can be seen as a means to achieve just sustainable tourism development (Edgell 2006:1; Keyser, 2009:39; DEAT, 2003:6; Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131). This, in turn, led to the emergence of ecotourism as a form of sustainable tourism, based in natural areas or settings (Pforr, 2001:70). Figure 3.1 illustrates where ecotourism fits into the broader scope of alternative, sustainable, responsible and wildlife tourism.

The term ecotourism was first used by Hertzner, a Mexican ecologist in the 1960's. However, academic interest and research into ecotourism has only grown noticeably since the 1980's (Weaver & Lawton, 2007:116; Orams, 2001:23; Pforr, 2001:68; Björk, 2007:26; Wearing & Neil, 2009:1; Gale & Hill, 2009:5). It is well known in ecotourism literature that the term itself was first formally defined by the father of ecotourism, Ceballos-Lascurain, in 1987. Since the first definition by Ceballos-Lascurain, a number of researchers and academics have also attempted to define the term ecotourism, as indicated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Ecotourism definitions

AUTHOR	DEFINITION
Ceballos-Lascurain, in 1987, as quoted by Fennell (2008:17); Björk, (2007:27) and Van der Merwe (2004:16)	Travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals as well as any existing cultural manifestation (both past and present) found in these areas.
Ziffer, in 1989, as quoted by Fennell (2008:18) and Björk (2007:27)	A form of tourism inspired primarily by the natural history of an area, including its indigenous cultures. The eco-tourist visits relatively undeveloped areas in the spirit of appreciation, participation and sensitivity. The eco-tourist practices a non-consumptive use of wildlife and natural resources and contributes to the visited area through labour or financial means aimed at directly benefiting the conservation of the site and the economic well-being of the local residents. The visit should strengthen the eco-tourist's appreciation and dedication to conservation issues in general, and to the specific needs of the locale. Ecotourism also implies a management approach by the host country or region that commits itself to establishing and maintaining the sites with the participation of local residents, marketing them properly, enforcing regulations and using the proceeds of the enterprise to fund the area's land management as well as community development.
Ecotourism society 1991 quoted by Blamey, (2001:6)	Ecotourism is responsible travelling, contributing to the protection of natural areas and the well-being of the local population.

Australian National Ecotourism Strategy, 1994, quoted by (Blamey, 2001:6)	Ecotourism is nature-based tourism that includes interpretation and education of the natural environment and is managed to be ecologically sustainable. This definition recognises that the 'natural environment' includes cultural components and that 'ecologically sustainable' involves appropriate returns to local community and long-term conservation of the resource.
Van Wyk (1995:8)	Ecotourism is an enlightening nature travel experience that contributes to conservation of the ecosystem, while respecting the integrity of the host communities.
Goodwin (1996:288)	Low impact nature tourism that contributes to the maintenance of species and habitats, either directly through a contribution to conservation, and/or indirectly by providing revenue to the local community sufficient for local people to value and, therefore protect, their wildlife heritage area as a source of income.
Björk (2007:35)	Ecotourism is an activity where the authorities, the tourism industry, tourists and local people cooperate to make it possible for tourists to travel to genuine areas in order to admire, study and enjoy the nature and culture in a way that does not exploit the resources, but contributes to sustainable development.
Weaver (2001:15)	Ecotourism is a form of tourism that fosters learning experiences and appreciation of the natural environment, or some component thereof, within its associated cultural context. It has the appearance (in concert with best practice) of being environmentally and socially sustainable, preferably in a way that enhances the natural and cultural resources base of the destination and promotes the viability of the operation.
Fennell (2008:24)	Ecotourism is a sustainable form of natural resource-based tourism that focuses primarily on experiencing and learning about nature, and which is ethically managed to be low-impact, non-consumptive and locally oriented (control, benefits and scale). It typically occurs in natural areas, and should contribute to the conservation or preservation of such

	areas.
Powell and Ham (2008:468)	Tourism to natural areas that supports environmental conservation, social equity and environmental education in an effort to maintain economic viability without degrading the host environment.

Firstly, it is clearly stated in all the above definitions of ecotourism that all forms of ecotourism occur in a *natural or wildlife setting* (see Figure 3.1). Although ecotourism is part of wildlife tourism, not all wildlife tourism should be seen as ecotourism. Wildlife tourism is concerned with the enjoyment of nature or wildlife, where ecotourism requires, in addition, an active contribution to conservation (Goodwin, 2003:168; Higginbottom, 2004:3). Another important difference is that wildlife tourism can either be non-consumptive, such as viewing, photography and feeding, or consumptive, for example, hunting or recreational fishing, whereas ecotourism is recognised as a form of tourism that is non-consumptive. Viewing animals in captivity, such as in zoos, is also classified as wildlife tourism, while ecotourism requires a relatively undisturbed, natural setting (Higginbottom, 2004:3 & Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:19).

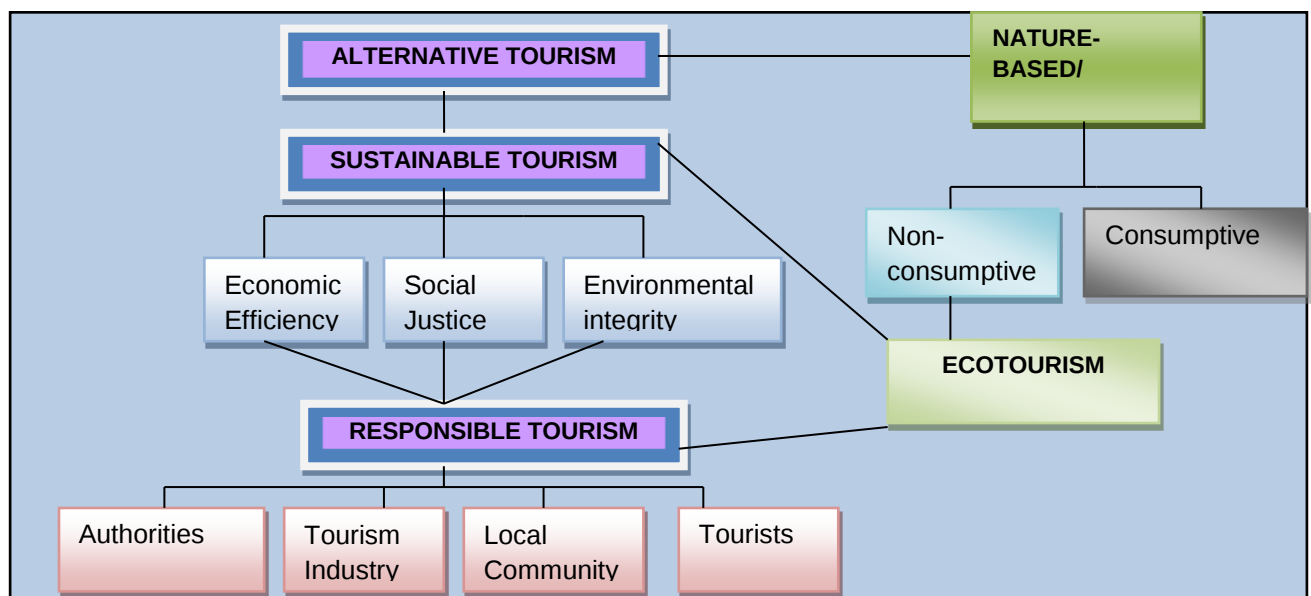


Figure 3.1 Ecotourism in the broader scope of sustainable nature-based tourism

(Adapted from: Keyser, 2009:39; Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:19; Higginbottom, 2004:3; DEAT, 2003; Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131 and Pforr, 2001:70)

Secondly, it is also clear that “*local cultures*” are an important component in ecotourism, particularly in developing countries, where they are seen as part of the natural environment and therefore part of the ecotourism product (Table 3.1). To overlook these rural communities, is to overlook a large part of the ecotourism system itself (Reid, 1999:35; Blamey, 2001:6). A third

important aspect that came from the above definitions is the word “*conservation*” (environmental protection) that, as stated in most definitions, forms a key component of ecotourism. Therefore, Ceballos-Lascurain as quoted by Higham, (2007:27), by Fennell (2008:17) and once again by Van der Merwe (2004:16), adjusted his original definition of ecotourism by adding the conservation component, as well as recognising the minimisation of the negative effects/impacts on the culture and nature and the maximisation of the benefits that ecotourism can bring. Thus:

“Ecotourism is environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and accompanying cultural features – both past and present) that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor impact, and provides beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations.”

According to Honey (2008:29), one method in minimising impacts requires that visitor numbers be limited and that their behaviour be managed. Consistent with most ecotourism definitions, a tool that is often used to achieve the just mentioned is *environmental education*, which adds another important dimension to ecotourism (Littlefair, 2004:297; Powell & Ham, 2008:468). Weaver (2001:9) states that environmental education has two main purposes. Because ecotourism draws visitors who desire to interact with the environment in order to increase their understanding, awareness and appreciation of the environment, the first purpose of education concerns providing an enlightening experience for the visitor and to being able to satisfy the demand for information regarding the natural and cultural environment. The second purpose is to influence the attitude of the visitors, as well as the host community, to behave in a more environmentally and culturally sensitive way (Honey, 2008:30; Littlefair, 2004:297; Weaver, 2001:9; Page & Dowling, 2002:67; Van Wyk, 1995:8). In addition to influencing the attitude and behaviour of the host community by the means of environmental education, involvement and benefits received also play an important role in fostering a protective attitude towards the environment (Van der Merwe, 2004:29; Cole, 2006:630). According to Hitchcock, as quoted by Cole (2006:630), the community must be involved as early the planning stages in order to make suitable decisions and to promote greater motivation on the part of the local people. These aspects, as mentioned above, were included in the questionnaire that was used for the empirical analysis part of this research.

Ways in which local communities can get involved in ecotourism can involve any or all of the following: provision of knowledge while partaking in a ecotourism activity or visiting an ecotourism product (information pertaining animal behaviour, tracking, guiding), services (catering, cleaning), facilities management and local products (souvenirs, arts and craft) (Page

& Dowling, 2002: 67, Van der Merwe, 2004:29, Diamantis, 2004:11). Local involvement can be beneficial to the community as the multiplier effects increase through local employment and the imported leakages due to expatriate (that is, non-local) workers decline. Additional benefits to the community that can emerge because of ecotourism include improved social welfare, education and infrastructure (Diamantis, 2004:11). Fennell (2002:28) states a variable of substantial importance is that development meet the needs of people over the long term, but that this must also be done in an ecologically sensitive way. It is therefore imperative that all role players recognise their responsibility in achieving the latter. Role players include authorities, the tourism providers, tourists and the local community (Björk, 2007:305, Saayman, 2009:71).

From the literature analysis of ecotourism, the following can therefore be seen as the core principles of ecotourism (Table 3.2). These principles, based on the works of **Fennell (2008); Geldenhuys (2009); Saayman (2009); and Blamey (2001)** also form part of the constructs that were used to develop the questionnaire (Appendix 1).

Table 3.2: Ecotourism principles (Adapted from: Fennell, 2008:23; Geldenhuys, 2009:5; Saayman, 2009:70 Blamey, 2001:12)

- *Contributes to conservation of the natural and cultural environment.*
- Ecotourism must be in a *natural setting*.
- *Genuine interest in nature* must be fostered.
- Provide an opportunity to *interact with nature*.
- Increase the *awareness and understanding* of natural areas, cultural systems and the involvement of visitors and their influence on these systems.
- Provide an opportunity to *experience the local culture* (traditions, food, music)
- *Environmental impacts* should be minimised.
- Provide an *enlightening travel experience* (enjoyment and appreciation).
- Provide *economic opportunities*.
- Provide *long-term benefits* for the local community.
- Responsible and ethical *behaviour*.
- Should involve *educational opportunities* amongst all parties (local communities, tourists, industry, government and non-governmental organisations).
- Long-term *participation of local community*.
- *Planning and management* for long-term success.
- *Maintain a balance between economy and ecology*.
- *Small-scale*.
- *Non-consumptive*.
- Must be *sustainable*.

Along with the ongoing debate regarding the definition of ecotourism, there is an emerging consensus that qualifying products must contribute to the *conservation and enhancement* of the natural and cultural environment; must provide *environmental education* opportunities; should be *planned and managed in a sustainable* manner and should provide the tourist with an *enlightening experience*. These four aspects form the four pillars on which, by definition, ecotourism is based (Geldenhuys, 2009:3; Diamantis, 2004:5; Van der Merwe, 2004:19; Weaver, 2005:440; Blamey, 2001:6). These four pillars were used as a basis of the questionnaire that was developed for this research. The four pillars will be discussed accordingly.

3.2.1 Pillar 1: Enhancement of the natural and cultural environment

Attractions are the key motivators for tourists to visit an area and therefore play a significant part in the success of a destination (Leask, 2010:155; Reinus & Fredman, 2007:842). Concerning ecotourism, individuals are drawn to scenically appealing environments that incorporate aspects such as fauna, flora; geographical distinctiveness and historical/cultural importance (Fennell, 2002:100; Deng, King & Bauer, 2002:426). The development of ecotourism in such areas will lead to the advancement of activities such as hiking, climbing and mountaineering, interaction with nature and learning experiences about the local natural and cultural environment (Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010:163).

These natural areas owe their attractiveness and continuing existence, largely, to conservation reserves such as national parks. It is for this reason that national parks have become popular ecotourism attractions, as well as because they usually contain extraordinary features such as remarkable natural scenery, topography; rare fauna and/or flora, unusual geological features and cultural heritage (Hearne & Salinas, 2002:153-154; Lawton, 2001:290; Saayman, 2009:346). Protected areas are desired ecotourism attractions for tourists, and it is believed that tourist spending can not only generate revenue for host communities, but will also contribute to conservation and perhaps to the financial self-sufficiency of these areas (Hearne & Salinas, 2002:153-154). Therefore, sustaining immaculate natural and cultural resources, while offering high quality ecotourism experiences, are both extremely important goals for managers of national parks. These goals need to be balanced in order to assist in the twofold goal of conservation and tourism development (Hearne & Salinas, 2002:154; Marion & Reid, 2007:5-6; Beunen, Regnerus & Jaarsma, 2008:138; Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010:165).

3.2.2 Pillar 2: Environmental education

It is irrefutable that visitors to natural areas have an impact on the environment, from vegetation trampling and trail erosion, to degrading cultural resources and allowing visitor crowding. Left unmanaged, these impacts can lead to unwanted changes in resource or social conditions, such as the loss of sensitive or rare plants and animals, or declines in visitor satisfaction. A challenge for protected area managers is, therefore, to prevent avoidable impacts, such as litter, tree damage or noisy/rude behaviour of tourists, and reduce unavoidable impacts such as trampled vegetation and wildlife disturbance (Marion & Reid, 2007:5; Shaw & Williams, 2002:305). These impacts are most-commonly addressed through education (Powell & Ham, 2008:468; Fennell & Weaver, 2005:375; Littlefair, 2004:297).

A fundamental principle of ecotourism is that it must foster learning opportunities and, although all nature-based tourism includes learning to some extent, education and interpretation serves as one of the main facets when defining ecotourism experiences (Blamey, 2001:9; Fennell & Weaver, 2005:374). Protected-area managers have long used education and interpretation as a tool for the two main purposes of satisfying tourists' need for knowledge, as well as for influencing both visitor and community behaviour towards fragile resources, in order to minimise negative impacts (Powell & Ham, 2008:468; Fennell & Weaver, 2005:375; Littlefair, 2004:297). Learning opportunities can take different forms, for example, it may be formal product interpretation through signage and lectures, or it may be informal opportunities that aim to maintain conditions and to assist in personal interactions with nature. For example, trails can be designed in a way to cause minimum exposure to others (Weaver, 2005:441). According to Marion and Reid,(2007:6), visitor and community education programmes should recognise that impacts are largely a result of ignorance concerning the potentially adverse impacts and a lack of sensitivity to the costs of thoughtless actions, rather than due to spiteful or malicious behaviour.

According to Fennell (2002:125), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNESCO-UNEP) mandated that environmental education objectives should include:

- **Awareness:** to help social groups and individuals acquire an awareness of, and sensitivity to, the total environment and allied problems.
- **Knowledge:** to help social groups and individuals gain a variety of experiences in, and so acquire a basic understanding of, the environment and its associated problems.
- **Attitudes:** to help social groups and individuals acquire a set of values and feelings of concern for the environment, and the motivation actively to participate in environmental improvement and protection.

- **Skills:** to help social groups and individuals acquire the skills to identify and solve environmental problems.

Educational programmes should therefore be designed in such a way that they will make visitors aware of their own physical and social impacts; promote enhanced ethics and encourage visitors to support and undertake low-impact practices (Marion & Reid, 2007:6).

3.2.3 Pillar 3: Sustainable development of the physical, economic and social environment

Ecotourism is inextricably associated with sustainable tourism and should therefore comply with the basic principle of sustainable development which is balancing economic, ecological, and social aspects as an integrated whole (Pforr, 2001:69). Conservationists often see ecotourism as a “win-win” situation where tourist spending serves as a tool for capitalising on biodiversity and natural sites and so can be a vital contributor to nature conservation (Wunder, 2000:466).

Community involvement is also considered an essential aspect of sustainable tourism development. The foundational reasons for this are to gain the support for, and favourable reception to, tourism development projects and to ensure that the benefits complement the local community needs (Cole, 2006:630).

The involvement of the local community can lead to a situation where not only the local community benefits, but the quality of the tourists’ experience also improves, as tourism is an industry that is greatly reliant on the goodwill, hospitality and helpfulness of host communities (Van der Merwe, 2004:29; Cole, 2006:630; Wight, 2003:51).

It has been argued that tourism can only be sustainable if appropriate planning, monitoring, evaluation and management is carried out and if the attitudes and behaviour of managers, stakeholders and tourists are ecologically, economically and ethically responsible (Deng, King & Bauer, 2002:424; Wunder, 2000:51).

3.2.4 Pillar 4: Tourist experience

Ecotourism experiences are created by integrating a number of factors. The purpose of creating these experiences is to satisfy the needs and wants of current and potential tourists (Chan & Baum, 2007:586). Eco-tourists are often motivated to visit areas where they can experience remoteness, tranquillity and closeness to nature; have the opportunity to learn about wildlife, nature and local cultures, and also may have the opportunity of a physical challenge (Chan & Baum, 2007:575, Backman, Petrick & Wright, 2001:458; Wight 1997:218). Following is a list of ecotourism activities in which eco-tourists typically engage:

- Guided game drives;
- Nature photography;
- Camping in nature;
- Outdoor sports, such as hiking, mountain-biking and scuba-diving;
- Stargazing (astronomy);
- Picnicking in nature;
- Extreme activities such as white-water rafting, mountain-climbing; abseiling;
- Avi-tourism activities; and, of course,
- Wildlife viewing (Neth, 2008:33; Fennell, 2008:33)

The development of ecotourism in national parks will lead to attracting tourists who are characterised by their ecological or environmental interests (Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010:163). Fairweather, Maslin and Simmons (2005:94) sought to define tourists who are environmentally sensitive and so introduced the term, 'Biocentric Segments'. These market segments are sensitive to their environment and are often willing to pay a price premium for environment-friendly tourism offerings. Ecotourism demand, therefore, forces tourism businesses to become increasingly sensitive to the physical environment. Therefore, understanding eco-tourists' perceptions is vital to any ecotourism business that attempts to improve its visitors' experiences and perceived value (Chan & Baum, 2007:575; Dolnicar, Crouch & Long, 2008:199; Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010:163).

Ecotourism is expected to grow considerably in the years to come (Honey, 2008:7; Hawkins & Lamoureux, 2001:63). The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) estimated that ecotourism was growing three times faster than the tourism industry as a whole (Honey, 2008:7). This dramatic increase in visitor numbers to natural areas will undeniably have impacts, both positive, and regrettably, negative ones.

From the above, it can be seen that ecotourism is fundamentally founded on four pillars and various principles. An aspect that came out clearly from the literature review is that, to date, no defined model exists for managing ecotourism in natural areas, such as that found in national parks. The next section will focus on the different management models that have so far been developed to minimise the impacts of tourism, in its generic sense, in natural areas. The aim of this following section is to identify aspects that should possibly be incorporated in an ecotourism model for national parks as no clearly defined model has yet been found in the literature.

3.3 MODELS USED TO MANAGE IMPACTS OF TOURISM

A number of planning and management models have been developed to manage the negative impacts of tourism in natural areas. Two of these, for example, are the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) and Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC). Although these models were not explicitly developed for ecotourism planning and management, they provided important aspects that can be used in an ecotourism model. These models essentially seek to protect the natural resources while, at the same time, to provide tourists with an enlightening nature experience (Fennell, 2008:66): The models are as follows:

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) was one of the first models to be adopted for the management of recreational activities in natural areas. The purpose of this model is to determine carrying capacities and thereafter to manage the impacts of recreational activities in the natural environment (Geldenhuys, 2004:31; Wearing & Neil, 2009:79; Boyd & Butler, 1996:559). The ROS presents various categories of land use management; from primitive to urban, and identifies site characteristics that influence opportunities for recreation. The ROS was developed to help natural resource managers gain an understanding of physical, biological, social and managerial relationships. Emphasis is placed on the maximisation of recreational use while protecting the natural resource base (Geldenhuys 2004:32; Butler & Waldbrook, 2003:25).

The ROS addresses the following aspects (Figure 3.2):

- ***Allocating and planning recreational resources:*** to determine what recreational activities are appropriate to offer in an area by considering the opportunities available; their reproducibility and spatial distribution
- ***Inventory of recreational resources:*** a multi-organisational effort is necessary to compile an inventory of recreational opportunities in an area.
- ***Estimating the consequences of management:*** to determine what the impact of management decisions will be on the environment.
- ***Matching visitor experiences with available opportunities:*** a flow of information of opportunities available, as well as the needs and wants of visitors is essential (Clark & Stankey, 1979:21).

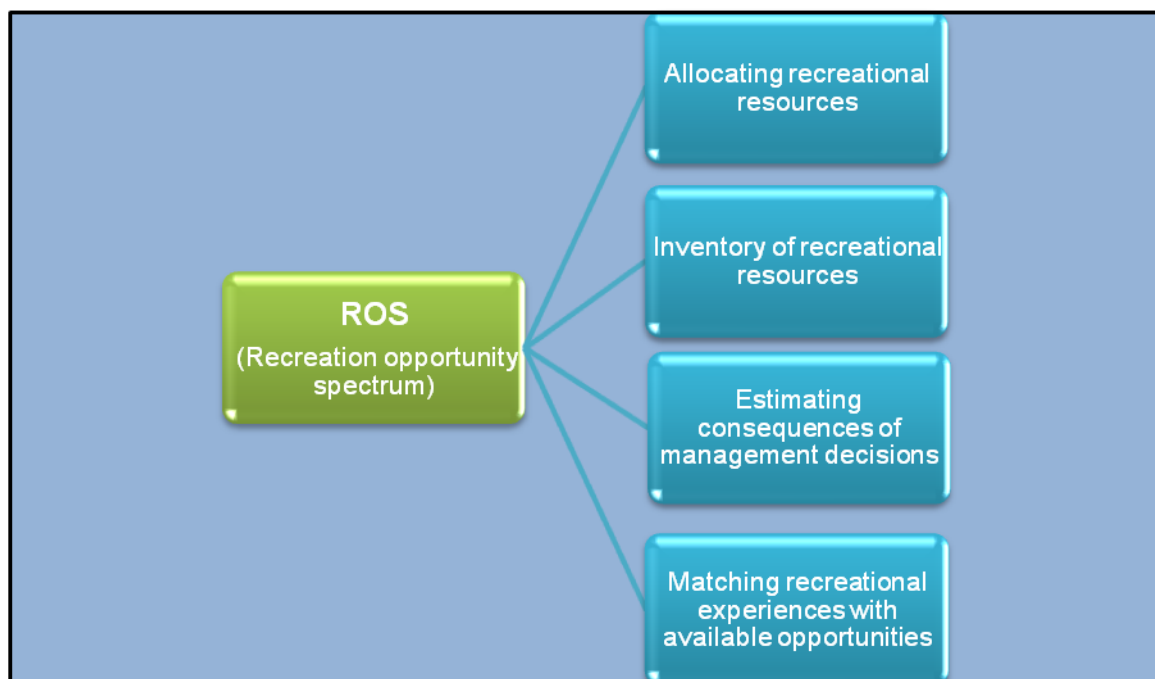


Figure 3.2: Recreation opportunity spectrum
(Adapted from: Clark & Stankey, 1979:21)

Fennell (2008:66) argues that although the ROS has been relatively successful in the sphere of outdoor recreation management, it has not been widely accepted by tourism researchers because this model lacks a tourism-specific approach.

Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC)

The Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) model was developed to shift the focus from addressing the problem of identifying maximum levels of use before an area starts to deteriorate (carrying capacity) to determining what type of conditions are desirable. The LAC model is used to determine the acceptable conditions of an area by incorporating social, economic and environmental dimensions. The LAC model involves the adoption of a set of indicators that are indicative of the area's desirable conditions (Holden, 2008:191). The emphasis of the model is therefore to determine how much change in a certain area is acceptable to maintain desirable conditions, and how to manage it accordingly (Hall & Page, 2005:186).

The model consists of nine implementation steps:

- ***Identify area issues and concerns:*** it is important identify special features in a specific area that that require attention.
- ***Define and describe wilderness recreation opportunity classes:*** any wilderness area contains zones with different physical and biological features, user levels and wilderness experiences.

- **Select indicators of resource and social conditions:** indicators are elements representative of what the desirable conditions in a selected area are.
- **Inventory existing resource and social conditions:** the inventory should include features and conditions of an area.
- **Specify standards for resource and social conditions:** identify the range of conditions for each indicator that are considered appropriate and acceptable.
- **Identify alternative opportunity class allocations:** explore different opportunities to address various interests, concerns and values.
- **Identify management actions for each alternative:** it is important to know what management actions will be needed to achieve the desired conditions for each alternative.
- **Evaluation and selection of a preferred alternative:** it is important to evaluate the positive and negative impacts of alternatives.
- **Implement actions and monitor conditions:** the monitoring program focuses on the indicators selected in step 3 and compares their condition with those identified in the standards (Stankey, McCool & Stokes, 1984:25).

Figure 3.3 outlines the LAC implementation process.

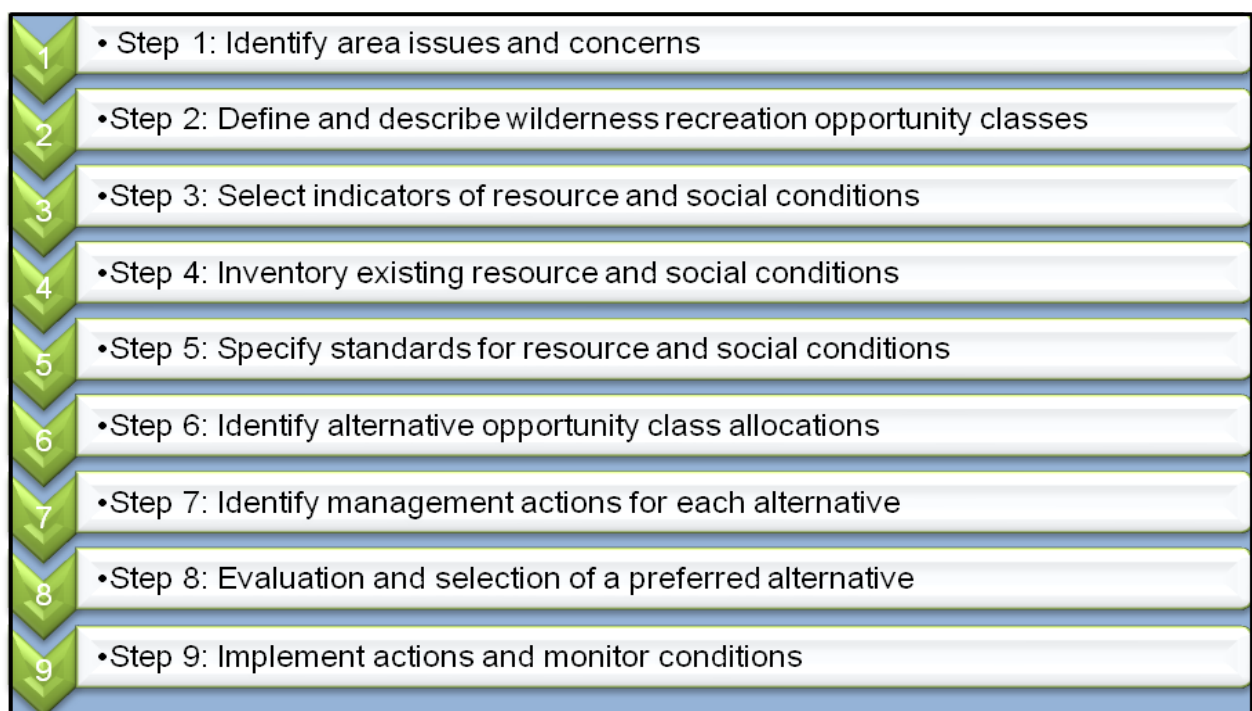


Figure 3.3: Limits of acceptable change process

(Adapted from: Ahn, Lee & Shafer, 2002:3; Stankey *et al.*, 1984)

The LAC model places a considerable degree of accountability on managers and does not necessarily allow for multi-stakeholder participation (Fennell, 2008:66; Fennell, Butler & Boyd,

2004:117; Boyd & Butler, 1996:559). Another limitation of the LAC, in terms of tourism development, is that critical dimensions such as visitor characteristics and economic activities associated with tourism are not included in the model (Hall & Page, 2005:187).

The Tourism Opportunity Spectrum (TOS)

The need for a more comprehensive approach that considers a variety of tourism opportunities led to The Tourism Opportunity Spectrum (TOS) being developed as a modification of the ROS (Fennell, 2008:66; Geldenhuys, 2004:33). The appeal of TOS lies in the fact that it provides a model that incorporates accessibility, other non-recreational resource uses, on-site management, social interaction, acceptability of visitor impacts and regulations in the context of tourism development. The core aspects of TOS are outlined in Figure 3.4:

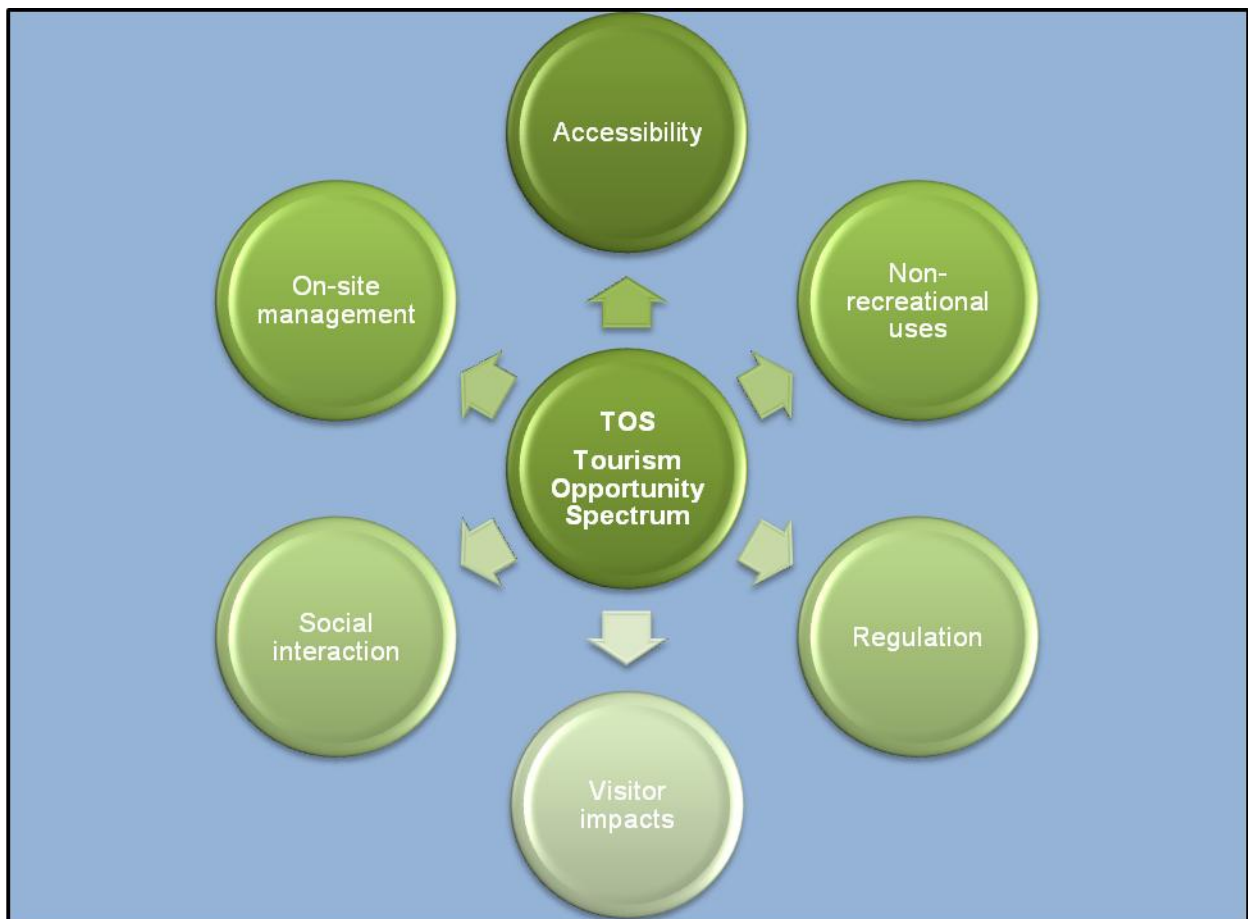


Figure 3.4 Key aspects of the Tourism Opportunity Spectrum (TOS)
(Adapted from: Butler & Waldbrook, 2003:26)

TOS can be seen as a tool that assists in decision-making regarding which tourism activities should be permitted or prohibited (Fennell, 2008:66; Butler & Waldbrook, 2003:26; Boyd & Butler, 1996:559). The TOS model does not specifically address conditions under which ecotourism development should take place.

Ecotourism Opportunity Spectrum (ECOS).

Boyd and Butler (1996:558) developed a model that concentrates specifically on opportunities for ecotourism at destinations, the Ecotourism Opportunity Spectrum (ECOS). It is based on existing models such as the ROS and the TOS (Figure 3.5).

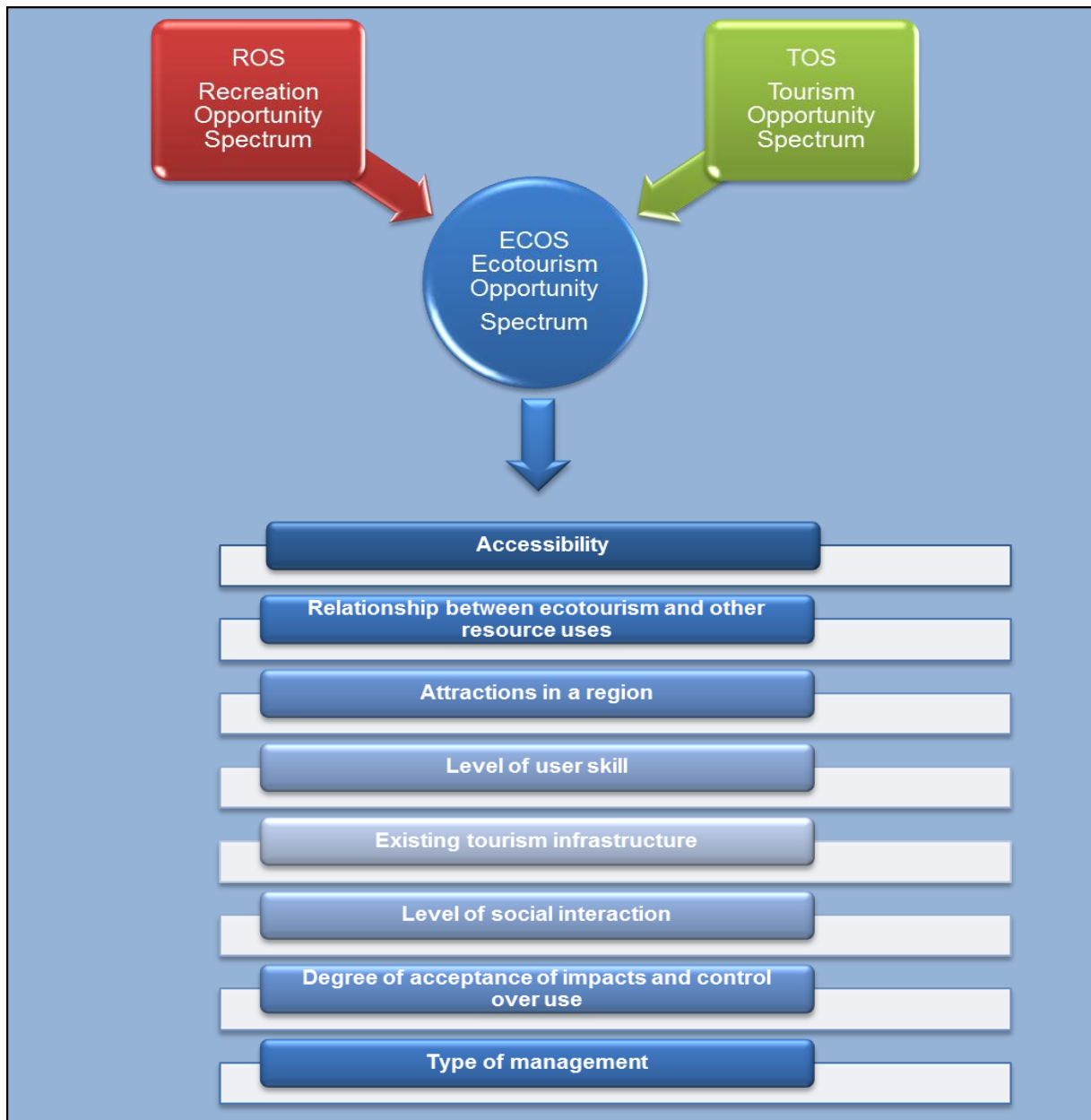


Figure 3.5: Ecotourism opportunity spectrum

(Adapted from: Boyd & Butler, 1996:561)

The ECOS model was developed to analyse the factors that affect and imply multi- stakeholder participation in managing an area as an **ecotourism** site (Neth, 2008:51). The ECOS-model can be used as a tool for analysis of ecotourism prior to development, based on the following eight factors:

- **Accessibility:** includes the ease of access to an area; accessibility and transport within the particular area; and access to information.
- **Relationship between ecotourism and other resource uses:** refers to the presence of other resource users and their compatibility with ecotourism.
- **Attractions in a region:** the types of attractions and ecotourism experience to be offered.
- **Level of user skill:** Eco-tourists' levels of skill and prior knowledge have implications for the opportunities that an area may offer and for the type of experiences that may be obtained.
- **Existing tourism infrastructure:** emphasis is primarily on provision of accommodation to suit the needs of eco-tourists.
- **Level of social interaction:** the level of interaction between eco-tourists and local communities, as well as other eco-tourists, will have an impact on the type of ecotourism opportunities that an area may offer.
- **Degree of acceptance of impacts and control over use:** refers to the degree of impacts and the need for control to be exercised over impacts that occur.
- **Type of management:** ecotourism development may be regarded as where the product (opportunity and experience) can be maintained over the long term, thus ensuring the viability of the resource base on which it is based. Ecotourism in an area should also be compatible with established local activities (Neth, 2008:51; Boyd & Butler, 1996:561).

Boyd and Butler (1996:565) caution that although all of the mentioned models provide valuable strategies for planning and managing tourism in natural areas, each includes a considerable degree of generality. Account must be taken of the fact that ecotourism destinations comprise of unique and complex social and environmental systems, and differ in terms of sensitivity to impacts (Buckley, 2003:239). From the models discussed above, the following can be extracted as important factors:

- Managing negative impacts on the environment;
- Identifying indicators of desirable environmental conditions in a specified area;
- Inventory of biological resources;
- Determine carrying capacity;
- Multi-stakeholder participation;
- Accessibility;
- Site management; and
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation.

The following section will provide more insight regarding ecotourism impacts.

3.4 IMPACTS OF ECOTOURISM

Concern is growing around the world concerning the long-term sustainability of ecotourism and of the impacts that tourism has on the environment. The fundamental issue regarding the planning and management of ecotourism is that deliberate steps need to be taken to reduce the negative impacts of tourism, through choice of activity, equipment, location and timing; carrying capacity limitations and education (Johansson & Diamantis, 2004:304; Buckley, 2001:379). Nicholson-Lord, quoted by Page and Dowling (2002:148), stated that:

“The world, clearly, is not going to stop taking holidays – but equally clearly we can no longer afford to ignore the consequences, and if one of the major culprits has been the industrialization of travel, a genuine post-industrial tourism, with the emphasis on people and places rather than products and profits, could turn out to be significantly more planet-friendly”.

Ecotourism has an impact on three main categories, be they either positive or negative. These are the economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts (Eagles, 2001a:359; Diamantis, 2004:14). The significant feature of ecotourism is the impact it has on people, communities and environments (Eagles, 2001a:359). The impacts that can be expected from ecotourism will be discussed next.

3.4.1 Economic impact

National and local governments are increasingly recognising tourism as a means to stimulate economic development (Page & Dowling 2002:151). Revenue gained from tourism operations can be used for the development of infrastructure and can thereby improve the financial position of local communities (Johansson & Diamantis, 2004:304). According to Hvenegaard and Dearden, as quoted by Page and Dowling (2002:151), the economic benefits of ecotourism in particular may produce higher economic returns than other resource activities.

Working opportunities that are created by ecotourism are further reasons for the recognition of this phenomenon as an economic stimulator. Local job creation is important for ecotourism for the following three reasons: firstly, it is important to note that the conservation of an area will reduce traditional resource use; secondly, ecotourism may be supported due to the fact that the local community is benefiting from ecotourism development and finally, when the community receives benefits, the exploitive pressure on natural resources may be reduced and residents will be more supportive of tourism and conservation (Lindberg, 2001:363). Besides the fact that communities can benefit from incentives, it may also provide funds for conserving regional biodiversity and therefore ensuring long-term sustainability (Johansson & Diamantis, 2004:304;

Page & Dowling, 2002:151; Hearne & Salinas, 2002:153-154). Economic benefits like those just mentioned may serve as motivation for the establishment of protected areas such as those of which national parks form a part (Page & Dowling, 2002:151).

Saayman and Saayman (2006:68) state that protected or conservation areas are usually attractive tourism development areas. This will often lead to the development of other amenities such as shopping facilities; filling stations; art and craft shops, restaurants and the like. As these developments will themselves lead to increased visitation, they will inevitably impose environmental, social and economic impacts (Diamantis, 2004:13; Eagles, 2001a:359). It is suggested that the costs of these impacts should be paid by those who cause them, the developers, operators and the visitors. This concept is often used as the motivation of levying fees.

However, charging fees at public natural areas is often resisted by the public. Members may feel that the management of these areas is already funded by the government, based on taxes paid by the citizens. However, it can be argued that as the funding that is provided by the government is limited (and shrinking), it may lead to a choice between implementing user fees and compromising conservation objectives. Whether or not fees should be charged will depend largely on the management objectives of the establishment or product (Lindberg, 1998:90).

According to Lindberg (1998:90), the following management objectives may exist:

- **Cost recovery:** Generation of revenue at least to cover tourism's financial costs (for example, for facility construction and maintenance) and other costs caused by tourism (for example, the repair of environmental damage).
- **Generation of profit:** Generation of revenue in excess of costs, with the excess being used to finance traditional conservation activities, or to achieve other objectives.
- **Generation of local business opportunities:** This would typically involve low or no fees in an effort to maximise the number of visitors.
- **Generation of foreign exchange and/or tax revenues from tourist purchases:** As with business opportunities, this would typically involve low or no fees, in effort to maximise number of visitors.
- **Provision of maximum opportunities for learning and appreciation of natural resources:** This may involve low or no fees, though overall learning and appreciation might be increased by charging fees and using the resulting revenue to enhance education programmes.
- **Visitor management:** Implementation of user fees to reduce depreciative behaviour, thereby decreasing congestion, user conflict and/or environmental damage. However, achievement of this objective may necessitate relatively high fees.

Table 3.3 outlines the different categories of fees and charges applicable to ecotourism (Laarman & Gregersen, 1996:250).

Table 3.3: Categories of fees and charges

FEE TYPE	DESCRIPTION
General entrance fees	'Gate fees' allow access beyond entry points.
Fees for use	For example: Fees for visitor centres, parking, campsites, guide services, boat use, trail shelters and emergency rescue.
Concession fees	Charges (or revenue shares) are assessed on individuals and businesses that sell food, accommodation, transportation, guide services, souvenirs and other goods and services to eco-tourists.
Royalties and profit shares	Can be charged on the sale of guidebooks, postcards, tee shirts, souvenirs, books, films and photos.
Licenses and permits	For tour operators, guides, researchers, wildlife collectors, mountain climbers, river rafters etc.
Taxes	For example: Room taxes, airport taxes, vehicle taxes, excise taxes on sports and outdoor equipment etc.
Voluntary donations	Include cash in-kind gifts, often through 'friends of the parks' organisations.

(Source: Laarman & Gregersen, 1996:250)

In order to retrieve costs by levying fees, information about the demand for ecotourism and costs is needed. The demand for ecotourism depends on factors such as:

- Cost of travel in terms of time and money;
- Destination image;
- Visitor income;
- Tastes and trends;
- Availability;
- Prices of competing attractions;
- Quality of the attraction; and
- Political and economic stability (Page & Dowling, 2002:165; Lindberg, 1998:93).

According to Saayman (2000:114), there are four important aspects to be considered when determining the economic impact. These are the number of tourists; their spending; their length of stay and the multiplier effect. The economic impacts of ecotourism can be grouped into three broad categories, direct, indirect and induced impacts. Direct impacts are those arising from the

initial spending of tourists, for example, entry fees, accommodation, transport, shopping, etc. Tourism organisations in turn buy goods and services (inputs) from other businesses, thereby generating indirect impacts. In addition, the employees of tourism organisations spend their income to buy goods and services, thereby generating induced impacts. The flow of money into a region by itself cannot determine the economic impact; the amount of money that stays in the region is equally important. If the tourism organisation purchase its goods and services from other regions, then the money does not provide an indirect impact, and leaks away (Lindberg, 2001:367; George, 2007:294). According to George (2007:292), the main sources of leakages in the tourism industry are:

- Imported manufactured goods such as imported food and beverage;
- Imported inputs, such as materials for the development of tourist facilities;
- Currency conversion, banking fees, needed in connection with paying for imports;
- Management fees or royalties for (international) franchises;
- Payments to overseas companies, such as airline carriers and tour operators;
- International marketing costs, for example, overseas promotion; and
- Imported skills.

It is therefore important that ecotourism organisations ensure that they minimise leakages by reinvesting revenue generated locally (George, 2007:292; Lindberg, 2001:367; Diamantis, 2004:14). Table 3.4 provides a list of the most common positive and negative economic impacts of ecotourism:

Table 3.4: Positive and negative economic impacts of ecotourism

POSITIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS	RESULTS
Contributor to the Gross Domestic Product	▪ In South Africa, tourism contributes more that 8% to the country's GDP
Invisible export	▪ Tourism earns foreign exchange through international tourists visiting the country.
SMME opportunities	▪ Tourism creates opportunities for local communities to provide goods and services to tourists by starting up small businesses. This further stimulates job creation.
Employment opportunities	▪ Tourism stimulates the creation of both direct (jobs that are created within the tourism industry) and of indirect employment opportunities (jobs that are created by tourism support services).
Economic development	▪ Tourism will stimulate the economic development as the initial tourist spending circulates throughout the economy. This in turn

	can lead to the increased quality of life of the local community.
Redistribution of wealth	Increasing income to poorer areas through tourism can play a significant role in the redistribution of wealth.
Government revenue is earned through tourism	Government revenue generated through tourism can be reinvested in the local community through, for example, the improvement of infrastructure and recreation facilities.
NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS	RESULTS
Inflation	An increase in living and property costs often occur as a result of tourism
Leakages	- Leakages occur whenever money is spent on imports or export leakages and is not reinvested in the local economy. - Money leaks out the country's economy when goods, services and skills are imported. - Foreign investors that take the return on their investment back to their own countries create an export leakage.
Over-dependence of an economy on tourism	Tourism is vulnerable to external shocks. The over-dependence on tourism can cripple a region's economy should it be hit by a crisis such as recession natural disaster or terrorism.
Unemployment due to seasonality	The lower demand for tourism offerings in off-peak seasons leads to a large number of temporary jobs, as opposed to permanent jobs, being created.

(Adapted from: Ivanovic *et al.*, 2009:271; George, 2007:29; Diamantis, 2004:304; Lindberg, 2001:367; Saayman, 2000:116)

3.4.2 Social-cultural impacts

Social and cultural impacts transpire when people from different cultures encounter each other. 'Social impacts' can be seen as instant changes in a local community's social arrangement whereas 'cultural impacts' lead to long-term changes in the norms, social relationships and cultural practices of a community (Diamantis, 2004:16; George, 2007:300). Hosts and visitors have distinct socio-cultural backgrounds as well as different perceptions. The visitor is living in terms of unusual time and place, while to the host it is ordinary life and home. These two worlds are ordered and conditioned by respective cultures. The measure of contrasting values and conflict will depend on levels of differences as well as each world's intrinsic flexibility and ability to adjust (Saayman, 2000:138). Ecotourism, as opposed to conventional tourism, aims to

respect the local culture and protect the local community from negative impacts (Honey, 2008:31).

Different factors that can influence the socio-cultural impacts include the scale on which tourism development takes place, as this will have an impact on the number of tourists in relation to the local community. The economic level of host community must also be considered as, for example, tourists from highly developed countries visiting attractions in poor communities may not consider that the local community might not have the same opportunities that the visitors have. Lastly, cultural differences between tourists and local community, such as their respective beliefs, values and behaviours, may influence the interactions between the parties (Diamantis 2004:16; George, 2007:300).

Table 3.5 give a list of impacts that can emerge from socio-cultural contact between visitors and the host community:

Table 3.5: Positive and negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism

POSITIVE SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACTS	RESULTS
Development of cultural awareness:	▪ The tourist and the host are exposed to each other's cultures. Ecotourism has the potential to reduce stereotyping and to contribute to a mutual understanding of cultural differences; however, without a code of conduct, ecotourism can itself be insidious.
Preserving history and local heritage:	▪ Learning about, and experiencing, the local culture is often a major attraction of ecotourism. Revenue accrued from tourism in an area can be used to aid in the preservation and/or restoration of local heritage and historical buildings.
Promotes international peace	▪ Direct contact between tourists and hosts can lead to better understanding and tolerance of each other. However, the opposite can also be true and can lead to the reinforcement of derogatory stereotypes.
Enhances an appreciation of cultural traditions	▪ The host community may feel a sense of pride when tourists are interested to learn about, and to appreciate, their culture.
Improved infrastructure and public services for the local community	▪ Tourism development can benefit the local community due to the development of additional facilities and services, as well as the improvement of existing infrastructure.

NEGATIVE SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACTS	RESULTS
Skilled foreign workers are imported for the tourism industry	▪ This can give the local community a feeling of economic colonialism.
Antagonism	▪ Local community shows hostility towards tourism that, in turn, can lead to social unrest.
Westernisation and commodification of the culture	▪ The local culture is (adversely) modified to suit the needs of tourism.
Staged authenticity	▪ The originality of a culture packaged for tourism may be questionable. Many feel that when a cultural experience is staged, the original meaning is lost.
Health issues	▪ Tourists may introduce disease to the local community, for example, HIV/AIDS, Ebola virus, swine flu, bird flu

(Adapted from: Honey, 2008:31; George, 2007:300; Saayman, 2000:136; Hudman & Jackson, 2003:37)

A community-based approach to ecotourism is imperative to ensure that the positive socio-cultural impacts are maximised and that the negative impacts are minimised (Honey, 2008:31; George, 2007:306; Diamantis, 2004:11). According to Scheyvens (1999:246), ecotourism ventures should only be considered as successful if local communities are empowered and so share in the benefits that arise from ecotourism development.

Empowerment can be described as the circumstance in which the local community experiences a sense of unity and responsibility that has been strengthened by an activity, in this case, tourism. An example of empowerment could be that of profits derived from ecotourism activity being used to fund social development projects, such as water supply systems or health clinics. On the opposite side of the continuum - disempowerment can occur when tourism activity causes crime, begging, crowding, displacement of land, disillusionment and loss of authenticity (Scheyvens, 1999:248). An empowerment versus disempowerment framework was developed by Scheyvens (1999:247) (Table 3.6). It identifies the various economic, psychological, social and political empowerment and disempowerment indicators that can lead to impacts on a community.

Table 3.6: Empowerment versus disempowerment framework for determining the impacts of ecotourism initiatives on local communities

IMPACT	EMPOWERMENT	DISEMPowerMENT
Economic	- Ecotourism brings lasting gains to a local community. - Revenue earned is shared between many households in the community. - There are visible signs of improvements from the revenue earned (for example, improved water systems, houses made of materials that are more permanent).	- Ecotourism merely results in small, irregular cash influxes for a local community. - Most profits go to local elites, outside operators, government agencies, etc. - Only a few individuals or families gain direct financial benefits from ecotourism, while others cannot find a way to share in these economic benefits either because they lack capital and/or appropriate skills.
Psychological	- Self-esteem of many community members is enhanced because of outside recognition of the uniqueness and value of their culture, their natural resources and their traditional knowledge. - Increasing confidence of community members leads them to seek out additional education and training opportunities. - Access to employment and cash leads to an increase in status for traditionally low-status sectors of society for example, women, youths.	- Many people have not shared in the benefits of ecotourism, yet they may face hardships because of reduced access to the resources of a protected area. - They are therefore confused, frustrated, disinterested or disillusioned with the initiative.
Social	- Ecotourism maintains or enhances the local community's stability. - Community cohesion is improved as individuals and families work together to build a successful	- Disharmony and social decay. - Many in the community take on outside values and lose respect for traditional culture and for elders.

	ecotourism venture. Some funds raised are used for community development purposes, for example, to build schools or to improve roads.	- Disadvantaged groups bear the burden of problems associated with the ecotourism initiative while failing to share equitably in its benefits. - Rather than cooperating, individuals; families; ethnic or socio-economic groups compete with each other for the perceived benefits of ecotourism. - Resentment and jealousy become commonplace.
Political	- The community's political structure, which fairly represents the needs and interests of all community groups, provides a forum through which people can raise questions relating to the ecotourism venture and have their concerns amicably dealt with. - Agencies initiating or implementing the ecotourism venture seek out the opinions of community groups (including special interest groups of women, youths and other socially disadvantaged groups) and provide opportunities for them to be represented on decision-making.	- The community has an autocratic and/or self-interested leadership. - Agencies initiating or implementing the ecotourism venture treat communities as passive beneficiaries, failing to involve them in decision-making. Thus, the majority of community members feel they have little or no say over whether the ecotourism initiative operates or <i>the way</i> in which it operates.

(Source: Scheyvens, 1999:247)

3.4.3 Environmental impact

The environment is often seen primarily as the natural environment. However, Swarbrooke (1999:49) argues that there is more to the environment than mere natural landscapes and that it is important to understand which aspects contribute to the sum of the environment before analysing the impacts imposed on it, as listed in Figure 3.6.

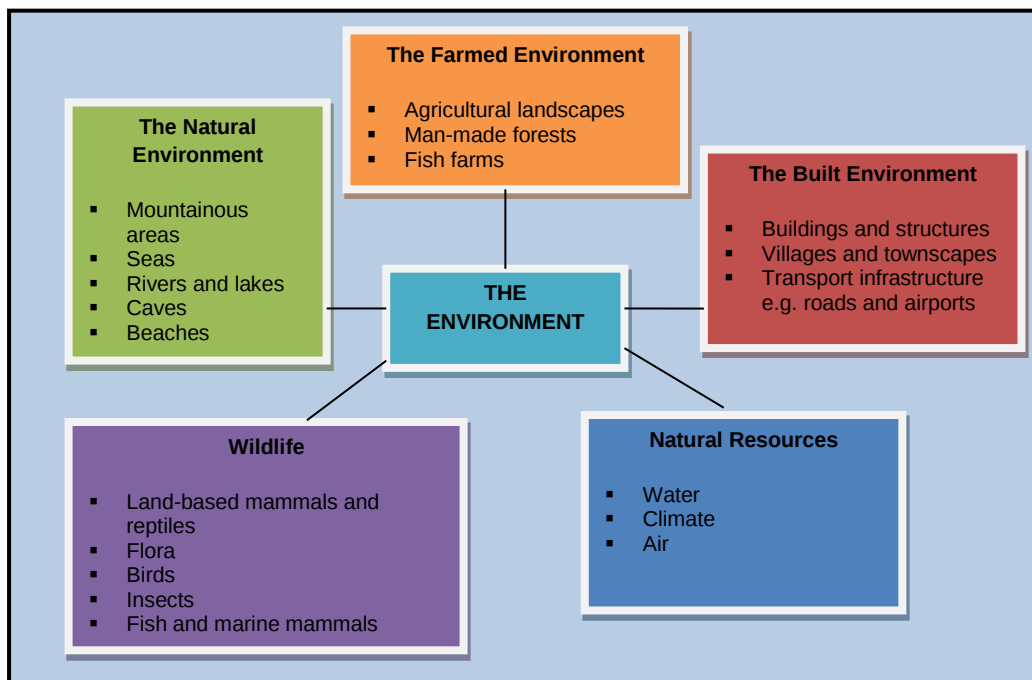


Figure 3.6: The scope of the environment

(Source: Swarbrooke, 1999:50)

Natural areas are under unrelenting pressure due to an increasing number of demands. These areas can be seen as contested land between humans for survival; conservationists; and developers of industries like forestry, mining, agriculture and tourism. Natural areas contain crucial resources – such as biodiversity, geology and cultural heritage, but at the same time, they are also popular sites for development projects and for exploiting natural resources, either through production, like minerals and logging or through consumption, such as tourism activities (Wood & Glasson, 2005: 391; Buckley, 2004c:5; Swarbrooke, 1999:49).

Ecotourism is almost inevitably concentrated in sensitive and unique natural environments. Where tourism development takes place or is proposed in natural areas, environmental impacts will unavoidably take place. (Page & Dowling, 2002:1; George, 2007:306; Holden, 2008:18; Diamantis, 2004:15; Geldenhuys & Saayman, 2009:35; Hudman & Jackson, 2003:39). These impacts can potentially be either advantageous or undesirable.

There are numerous ways in which ecotourism can have a positive impact on the natural environment. Nature conservation; improvement of degraded and disturbed areas; improvement and protection of biodiversity; the establishment or expansion of national parks and the creation of nature reserves are examples of what ecotourism strives to achieve (Diamantis, 2004:15, Newsome, Moore & Dowling, 2002:79). Ecotourism has proved to have had a positive impact on wildlife where fauna and flora species were at the verge of extinction. Many countries established wildlife reserves and implemented firm laws to protect these species and, as a

result, many endangered species have begun to flourish again (Page & Connell, 2009:435). Increased public awareness of environmental problems and appreciation of nature can sprout from tourists that come into close contact with nature. Being confronted with the value of nature may lead to environmentally-friendly behaviour in order to preserve the environment (George, 2007:308). Ecotourism can have a positive impact on the built environment as it can provide the financial means to restore and preserve historic buildings. If local governments view ecotourism as an important source of revenue, they will improve facilities and services in order to maintain tourist numbers (Page & Connell, 2009:435).

On the other hand, it is undeniable that ecotourism can have adverse impacts on the natural environment and resources. The existence of ecotourism will attract more visitors to an area. However, this will lead to impacts such as soil erosion; trampling; disturbance of wildlife modification and/or loss of habits; deforestation or destruction of vegetation because of building tourism facilities, access roads and other infrastructure. In broad terms, wear and tear of the environment (Geldenhuis & Saayman, 2009:35; George, 2008:308; Swarbrooke, 1999:52; Shaw & Williams, 2002:305; Newsome *et al.*, 2002:83). The tourism industry also relies on other sectors of the economy for the production of goods and services. This reliance also can lead to the increase in consumption of energy and water (Buckley, 2004c:10, George, 2007:308). The number of ecotourism operations has increased at a rapid rate, resulting in the depletion of natural resources. (De Haas, 2003:148).

Besides the depletion of natural resources, an increase of tourists will undeniably lead to increased disposal of waste. Pollution can take many forms, for example, water, air, noise, visual pollution and littering (George, 2007:307). Water, which is itself one of the biggest ecotourism attractions, is continuously being exposed to pollution. Recreation activities such as boating and the disposal of sewage in natural waters can have a serious negative impact on the water quality due to eutrophication, oil leaks and the consequential death of aquatic life (Saayman, 2009:178; Swarbrooke, 1999:51; Page & Connell, 2009:430). Littering by tourists affects the visual quality of the environment and can harm wildlife (George, 2007:308). Furthermore, non-biodegradable materials like plastic do not decompose and then become part of the ecosystem. This affects wildlife as animals consume these materials, which can then cause fatal blockages in their digestive tracts (Saayman, 2009:179; Page & Connell, 2009:433; Diamantis, 2004:15). Littering can also affect the feeding habits and diet of animals because animals become dependent on tourists for the provision of food in the form of leftovers and edible garbage (George, 2008:308; Buckley, 2004b:216).

Transport is another aspect that contributes to pollution, both in terms of air and noise pollution (Simmons & Becken, 2004:15; George, 2008:308 & Page & Connell, 2009:424). Simmons and

Becken (2004:15) state that the transport element in ecotourism can occur in three categories: transport that is directly associated with ecotourism, for example, four-wheel-drive vehicles used for safaris; secondly, transport between ecotourism sites or operations, and then finally, transport from home, to the ecotourism destination, and of course, the return journey. Transport is an obvious example of the conflict between the environment and tourism industry. Transport is a primary aspect of tourism as roads, cars, aircraft and airports are all needed to make it possible for tourists to travel from home to the destination, and back again. But all these come at a cost. Some of the negative effects of transport on the environment include pollution and degradation of the natural environment (Page & Connell, 2009:424).

Lastly, visual pollution takes place where structures and tourism facilities are built in natural areas in such a way that they detract from the aesthetics of an area (George, 2007:307;). The type of, and severity of, impacts depend on a variety of factors including the number of people and group sizes (more people means greater impact), the type and frequency of activity, equipment used, minimal-impact skills and practices in use, ecosystems and management philosophy (Buckley, 2004c:11). In Table 3.7, a summary is given of the possible positive and negative environmental impacts of ecotourism:

Table 3.7: Positive and negative environmental impacts of ecotourism

POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS	RESULTS
Financial contributor	▪ Restore and preserve historic buildings. ▪ Improved facilities and infrastructure. ▪ Provide funding for conservation. ▪ Improve degraded areas.
Public awareness	▪ Influence environmentally friendly behaviour. ▪ Influence on social groups to acquire skills for identifying and solving environmental problems. ▪ Encourage the wise use of resources.
Eco-efficiency	▪ Enhanced scenic quality of natural attractions and resources. ▪ Fewer health problems. ▪ Less pollution. ▪ Wise use of resources.
Conservation	▪ Protect biodiversity. ▪ Expansion of national parks or protected areas.

	▪ Revive species that were at the verge of extinction. ▪ Improved environmental quality.
NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS	CONSEQUENCES
Trampling	▪ Compacts soil which prevent seed germination, reduce water holding capacity, reduce habit of soil organisms. ▪ Damage to vegetation. ▪ Reduce the growth rate of vegetation. ▪ Erosion. ▪ Reduction in the soil's micro-fauna, which contribute to the functioning of ecosystems.
Increases use of natural resources	▪ Depletion of ground and surface water supply. ▪ Depletion of fossil fuels to generate energy for tourist activity. ▪ Over-exploitation of biological resources, for example, fishing. ▪ Depletion of mineral resources for building materials.
Transportation	▪ Increased CO₂ emissions. ▪ Water pollution from fuel spills or oil leaks. ▪ Physical effect of off-road vehicle's tyres on soil, vegetation and fauna. ▪ Collisions with animals. ▪ Impacts of tracks, for example, on animal movements. ▪ Noise and associated effects on wildlife.
Littering	▪ Detracts from aesthetic quality. ▪ Synthetic materials become part of the ecosystem as they are not biodegradable. ▪ Wildlife becomes dependent on litter from tourists for food. ▪ Death of animals due to ingestion of synthetic materials.
Pollution (Water, air, noise)	▪ Affect water quality. ▪ Sewage disposal and oil leaks and in water sources lead to eutrophication and death of aquatic life. ▪ CO₂ emissions contribute to climate change. ▪ Disturbance of wildlife. ▪ Affects environmental quality.

Disturbance of wildlife	▪ Destruction of habitats. ▪ Affect feeding habits. ▪ Disruption of breeding patterns. ▪ Fires in woodlands. ▪ Tourists picking rare plants.
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(Adapted from: Holden, 2008:19; Keyser, 2009:345; Kelly, Haider, Williams & Englund, 2007:379; Cole, 2004:46, Buckley, 2004b:216 Newsome *et al.*, 2002:102; Saayman, 2000:170; Swarbrooke, 1999:51;)

There can be little doubt that in order to maximise positive and minimise negative impacts, proper planning and management needs to take place at all levels of ecotourism development (Page & Dowling, 2002:195; Buckley, 2004c:10).

3.5. DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT ASPECTS OF ECOTOURISM

Proper planning and management is essential for the development of ecotourism products that are both authentic and sustainable. A major challenge for the ecotourism industry is to ensure that the demand for ecotourism does not exceed the resources available for its development (Page & Dowling, 2002:18). Facilities design and appropriateness of type and/or size of the development area, site and visitor management, eco-efficient practices, marketing and internal marketing are some of the important aspects that should be taken into consideration when developing an ecotourism product.

3.5.1. Facilities design and appropriateness of size and type

Ecotourism is recognised as an environmentally responsible form of tourism. Therefore, it has become necessary that the architectural design of facilities, as well as landscaping, be environmentally sensitive (Page & Dowling, 2002:210).

The ability of facilities to sustain themselves and the environment is reliant on the careful planning and design, together with the maintenance of these facilities. In the development of facilities, two key components must be taken into account. These are, firstly, tourist satisfaction and, secondly, the environment (Saayman, 2009:365). Eco-tourists want to have an authentic nature experience; therefore, the site must be developed in such a way that the ambience of the natural environment is maintained and enhanced (Saayman, 2009:365; Page & Dowling, 2002: 210). Accommodation is part of the infrastructure and hence a contributor to the ecotourism experience. The type, sense of place and environmental sensitivity are all aspects that will

determine whether accommodation will make a positive contribution to the visitors' experience (Wight, 1997:214).

Fennell (2008:203) and Wight (1997:211) aimed to provide a spectrum of different types of accommodation and its appropriateness to ecotourism (Figure 3:7). The different types of accommodation range on a continuum between hard and soft. The "hard" side signifies the more primitive and closer to nature experience, whereas the more the experience moves to the "soft" side, the weaker the ecotourism experience will become.

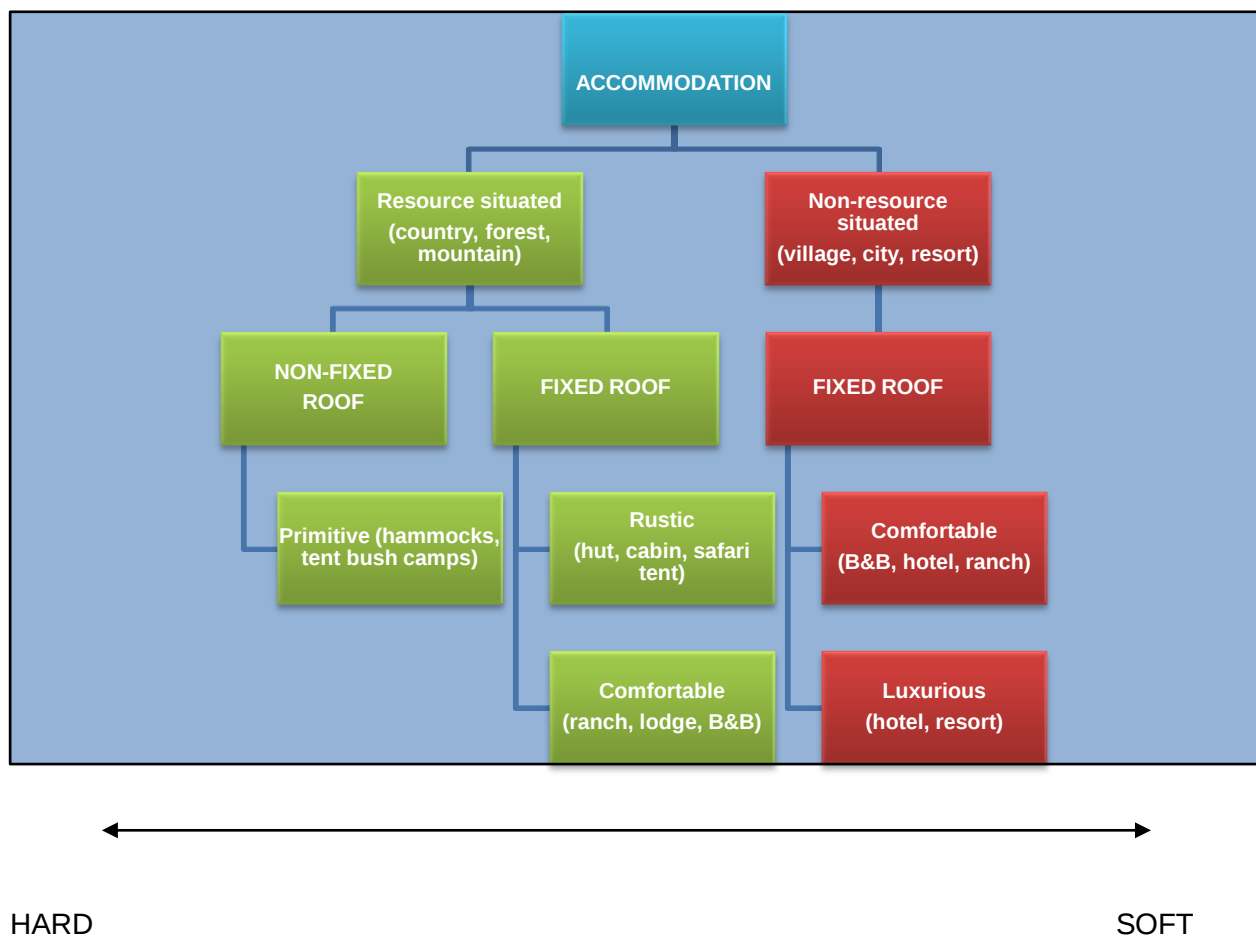


Figure 3.7 Ecotourism accommodation spectrum
(Source: Fennell, 2008:203; Wight, 1997:211)

The question then follows, what, in terms of the environment, is appropriate ecotourism accommodation? Ecotourism facilities should draw on a low impact approach together with environmental ethics. This may necessitate a complete paradigm shift from conventional facilities design (Fennell, 2008:199).

Andersen as quoted by (Fennell, 2008:199) and Wight (1997:214) stated the following are all aspects to consider when providing ecotourism accommodation:

- Accommodation type (is it representative of its setting, does it fit in with natural surroundings?)
- Environmental sensitivity (has an environmental analysis of the area been conducted; and does it demonstrate credibility and sensitivity to its environment, regarding location, building, eco-efficiency and conservation practices?)
- Building design (maintenance of ecosystems should be prioritised over view)
- Cultural sensitivity (does it fit in with cultural or local community preferences?)
- Programming (does it feature a package of environmentally-based interpretive experiences?)
- Accessibility in terms of universally challenged visitors (is it accessible for people with physical disabilities or older guests?)

In terms of the environment, ecotourism has a role to play in the global environmental situation by the application of environmentally sensitive and alternative technologies (Page & Dowling, 2002:219). For example, when buildings are insulated they can contribute to major energy saving as, potentially, less energy will be used for heating and cooling. Table 3.8 outlines guidelines for efficient environmentally friendly design and landscaping. (These aspects too were among the aspects queried in the questionnaire that was used for the empirical analysis.)

Table 3.8: Environmentally friendly design guidelines for ecotourism

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses sustainably-collected and local materials in the design. ▪ Instruct architects to incorporate local architectural styles to improve the aesthetic impact on the environment. ▪ When designing facilities, try to make the most of free natural resources such as natural light, natural heating and shading from trees, where possible. ▪ Insulate roofs and heating pipes. ▪ Double-glaze windows to prevent heat transfer. ▪ Automatically-closing doors can prevent loss of either warm or cool air. ▪ Landscaped areas should be planned to include local indigenous species. |
|--|

(Source: DEAT, 2003:20)

Low impact construction has the added advantage of greatly reducing operational costs in the long term, and therefore makes good business sense (UNWTO, 2002:45).

3.5.2 Site and visitor management

It is inevitable that the presence of visitors in natural areas will have an impact on the environment; from vegetation trampling and trail erosion to degraded cultural resources and visitor crowding. (Marion & Reid, 2007:5; Page & Dowling, 2002:229). Without proper regulation, problems of over-exploitation may be intensified by ecotourism (Wearing & Neil, 2009:37). The management strategies of these impacts can be divided into two main groups, site management and visitor management. The first focuses on manipulating the environment by the means of zoning, visitor movement and infrastructure. The second group, visitor management, refers to regulating visitor behaviour and the amount of use which can be achieved by visitor number limitations; education and interpretation on uses (Newsome *et al.*, 2005:31; Geldenhuys, 2004:37; Eagles, Bowman & Chang-Hung, 2005:47).

Zoning is a site management tool where certain areas of a site are assigned solely for specific uses. The intention of zoning is to restrict access; allocate areas for use and limit activities (Newsome *et al.*, 2005:178; Geldenhuys, 2004:41, Eagles *et al.*, 2005:47; Holden, 2008:184). According to Holden (2008:185), the World Tourism organization stated that,

“a protected area can be divided into zones of strict protection (a sanctuary zone where people are excluded), wilderness (where visitors are permitted only on foot), tourism (where visitors are encouraged in various compatible ways) and development (where facilities are concentrated)”.

Besides zoning, physical structures (for example, clearly posted signs), and trails can contribute to the control of visitor movement through a park. Infrastructure development also plays an important role of how the site will be used by visitors as, for example, parking areas should be located within the development area where facilities are concentrated (Eagles *et al.*, 2005:47).

In terms of visitor management, the importance of managing visitor numbers relates to two of the key principles of ecotourism. Firstly, ecotourism should be small-scale tourism and, secondly, it should minimise negative impacts. Fairly obviously, the more visitors that are allowed at a site, the greater the impact on the social-cultural and natural environment is likely to be (Lück, 2003:189; Honey, 2008:29; Geldenhuys, 2004:28). In order to manage visitor numbers, it must be determined what number of visitors can be accommodated at an ecotourism site without adverse impact. This is commonly referred to as the carrying capacity (Holden, 2008:187; Geldenhuys, 2004:28). Carrying capacity was defined by Mathieson and Wall (1982:21) as:

“the maximum number of people who can use a site without an unacceptable alteration in the physical environment and without an unacceptable decline in the quality of the experience gained by visitors”.

In other words, the environment has a threshold level beyond which the carrying capacity would have been exceeded. This consequently leads to the degradation of the environment (Holden, 2008:188). According to Selby and Herberlein, (quoted by Geldenhuys (2004:29)), there are four categories into which carrying capacity can be divided:

- **Ecological capacity:** to determine the type and degree of disturbance that an animal community is receiving from visitors. When this form of carrying capacity is exceeded, unwanted changes may occur in wildlife behaviour, and soil erosion may take place.
- **Physical capacity:** the level beyond which visitors' satisfaction declines because of overcrowding.
- **Facility capacity:** the capacity of facilities to accommodate visitors. For example accommodation carrying capacity is fixed by the availability of beds.
- **Social capacity:** the level after which unacceptable change will be caused to local cultural stability and attitudes towards tourists.

Charging visitor fees is increasingly being considered a valuable tool for managing visitor numbers (Eagles *et al.*, 2005:47; Geldenhuys, 2004:42). According to Eagles *et al.*, (2005:47), access points and reception areas are important as this is where managers have the most control over fees being collected, over visitor numbers and their behaviour. It is also the place where information about the area and desirable behaviour can most readily be distributed to visitors as they arrive.

The information given to visitors plays an important role in guiding their behaviour. Education programmes must, therefore, be designed to encourage visitors to consider the impacts of their actions and should aim to promote an ethical attitude towards the environment they are visiting (Marion & Reid, 2007:6; Eagles & McCool, 2002:132).

Finally, placing limitations on usage is another way in which visitor impacts can be managed. There are several tactics that can be used to limit the amount of use of an area, For example, the prohibition or restriction of tourist activities in fragile areas or seasons when wildlife is especially vulnerable. Issuance of a restricted number of permits for specific campsites or zones will also limit usage. The promotion of off-peak (or out-of-season) use, forbidding off-trail travel and limiting the time that visitors may spend in a certain area are all techniques that can be used to prevent over-use (Geldenhuys, 2004:39; Fennell, 2008:60).

3.5.3 Eco-efficient practices

Growing concerns over environmental degradation, the growing threat to conserving natural resources and global warming have all gained understanding in national and international policy (Holden, 2008:210). Ecotourism depends on the natural environment, its ecosystems and natural resources, such as fresh water, to keep it functioning (Holden, 2008:210). The wise use of such resources is becoming ever-more important in order to remain sufficient for current use, and that of future generations. In order to contribute to the long-term well-being of the planet and to minimise negative ecological impacts; it is essential that tourism organisations adopt eco-efficient practices (Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131; DEAT, 2003:19).

Eco-efficiency is defined as,

“reducing the amount of energy and natural resources used, as well as wastes and pollutants discharged in the production of goods and services” (Kelly et al., 2007:377).

Three key areas in which ecotourism organisations can contribute to a healthier environment are energy-, water-, and waste-management, which will each be further discussed. (Some of these aspects were also tested in the questionnaire.)

3.5.3.1 Energy efficiency

The biggest source for generating energy is the burning of fossil fuels, such as coal, oil and natural gas. Consequently, this leads to air pollution, especially greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming (DEAT, 2003:30). Heating and cooling, by conventional electric methods, in the accommodation sector is a major consumer of electricity and therefore a major contributor to generating greenhouse emissions and therefore increases the threat of global warming. It is therefore important to make use of renewable energy sources, wherever possible, in order to reduce the need for coal-produced electricity (Beeton, 1998:91).

Solar energy is a popular source of renewable energy and can be used in a number of ways in tourism establishments, for example, to heat space, generate hot water and to produce electricity. Wind energy is another source of renewable energy that can be used in order to become more energy efficient. This method is considered more economical than solar power with lower capital costs, where the conditions of an area are favourable (Becken & Hay, 2007:213 & Beeton, 1998:91). Responsible tourism operators should set targets for reducing energy consumption (DEAT, 2003:31). Table 3.9 outlines some guidelines for efficient and reduced use of energy.

Table 3.9: Guidelines for efficient and reduced energy use

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Use energy-efficient dishwashers and washing machines.▪ Adjust hot water thermostat geyser to below 50°C, rather than the normal 60 °C.▪ Use energy saving light bulbs.▪ Train staff to turn off lights, heating, ventilation and cooling systems in rooms that are unoccupied.▪ Insulate roofs and heating pipes.▪ Make use of natural ventilation, rather than air-conditioning.▪ Make sure refrigerator and freezer door seals are functioning properly. |
|---|

(Source: DEAT, 2003:31; Queiros, 2003:76).

3.5.3.2 Waste management

Waste disposal is a worldwide problem and is particularly relevant to the tourism industry because tourism operations are producers of large quantities of waste, some of which is toxic and can lead to pollution of oceans and rivers. as well as visually pollute environments (DEAT, 2003:34; Kandari & Chandra, 2004:121; Nath, 1999:290). Therefore, tourism operators should aim to minimise waste generation and its impacts.

There are two main types of waste, hard (or solid) waste, which includes paper, tins, glass, plastic and kitchen waste; and waste water which consists either of clean water that is wasted; grey water produced in kitchens and ablutions, and black water which comes from toilets (Saayman, 2009:377). There are three fundamental principles in managing waste. These principles are receiving ever-increasing coverage under the mantra of “reduce, reuse and recycle”.

- **Reduce:** the amount of waste: ecotourism businesses can reduce the amount of waste by negotiating with suppliers to use less packaging. Such packaging that is irreplaceable should be environmentally-friendly.
- **Reuse:** finding alternative uses for waste materials or choosing to use products such as dispensers that can be reused, instead of offering pre-packaged, single-servings.
- **Recycle:** separate waste by using different deposit bins, for example, separate temporary storage areas for plastic, paper and glass before disposal for further use (Middleton & Hawkins, 1998:137; Kandari & Chandra, 2004:121 & DEAT, 2003:35).

Table 3.10 provides further guidelines for effective waste management and the implementation of the above-mentioned principles. (Some of these aspects too were tested in the questionnaire.)

Table 3.10: Waste management guidelines for ecotourism

- Avoid products containing environmentally hazardous substances.
- Choose biodegradable products.
- Buy in bulk in order to minimise packaging.
- Avoid buying goods that are over-packaged. Negotiate with suppliers to reduce packaging.
- Buy recycled and recyclable products.
- Initiate a recycling programme.
- Buy locally produced goods.
- Make use of reusable dispensers, instead of disposable sachets.
- Compost food waste on-site and use it as a fertilizer.
- Maintain a litter-free environment.

(Source: Kandari & Chandra, 2004:121; DEAT, 2003:35; Middleton & Hawkins, 1998:137)

3.5.3.3 Water management

A vital natural resource to sustain the tourism industry is water. When tourism development takes place in areas where water resources are scarce, water will inevitably become a contested resource between the local community and the tourism operators. Where demand exceeds supply, it will put enormous pressure on available resources and may well lead to acrimony with the local community. The level of water consumption in the tourism industry is extremely high and tourism operators should take seriously their responsibility to conserve water (Holden, 2008:84; DEAT, 2003:26; Nath, 1999:290). Table 3.11 gives guidelines that tourism operators can do in order to minimise water use.

Table 3.11: Water-saving guidelines for ecotourism

- Install low-flow, or dual flush, toilets and waterless urinals.
- Flow restrictors can be installed in showers and taps.
- Acquire water-efficient washing machines and dishwashers.
- Separate runoff water into reusable and non-reusable streams.
- Use grey water for irrigation, landscaping and in toilets.
- Sewage should be properly treated to avoid the pollution of ground and surface water.
- Septic tanks should be located away from domestic water supplies, groundwater, rivers and lagoons.
- Install rainwater tanks.
- Repair leaks.

(Source: DEAT, 2003:28 & UNEP, 2003:27)

3.5.4 Marketing

Marketing is about the customer (eco-tourists); and how to satisfy their needs and wants (George, 2008:4). Without the eco-tourists, the ecotourism industry will not be successful, as ecotourism destinations/operations depend on tourist spending to be sustainable (Hearne & Salinas, 2002:153-154). It is therefore necessary to find out what ecotourists want and then create an ecotourism product to satisfy those needs. Previous marketing approaches tended to concentrate on either the product or sales, while the customers' needs were of secondary importance. However, more recent approaches recognise the fulfilling of the customers' needs as a priority. The most recent approaches are consumer-led, with socio-ecological concerns. These approaches consider the needs and wants of the customers as a priority. This will lead to increased sales and profits while also taking into account the long-term benefit of the community and the environment (George, 2008:4; Fennell, 2002:182).

Marketing is an integral part of strategic planning, as marketing objectives are directly influenced by the strategic goals and objectives of an organisation (Diamantis 2004:17; Page & Dowling, 2002: 250). It must be remembered that the four main pillars on which ecotourism is based are the promotion and enhancement of the natural and cultural environment; the provision of environmental education opportunities; planning and management in a sustainable manner and the provision for the tourist of an enlightening experience. It then becomes clear that ecotourism operations should indeed follow a consumer-led marketing approach, with socio-ecological concerns.

The marketing of ecotourism entails the promotion of products and services with sound social and ecological outcomes to a market that is environmentally concerned. While profit determines the feasibility of products, it should not be the only measure of success. The long-term sustainability of the environment and customer satisfaction must also be considered (Wearing & Neil, 2009:176; Diamantis, 2004:17). In order to achieve these goals, it is important for ecotourism organisations to determine which markets to target, and to have a good understanding of the target market (Beh & Bruyere, 2007:1464).

In order to have this understanding of the target market, it is important to identify ecotourist motivations. These are most useful when determining market opportunities and when seeking to provide an enlightening experience (Beh & Bruyere, 2007:1464). Research has shown that eco-tourists often seek more than the mere viewing of wildlife. They search for authentic experiences. Eco-tourists often have a desire to escape from their daily routines and to relax, to "get away from it all". It is for this reason that uncrowded, remote ecotourism destinations/sites are important aspects of the ecotourism experience. Further, eco-tourists often seek

experiences that provide a sense of closeness to nature; they want to interact with and learn more about wildlife; nature and local cultures. Other motivations include self-reflection; seeking adventure; self-actualisation and the sense of having a physical challenge (Chan & Baum, 2007:570; Backman *et al.*, 2001:458; Wearing & Neil, 2009:202; Beh & Bruyere, 2007:1467).

Besides understanding the motivations of tourists, an understanding of tourist perceptions is also important in that it provides developers with information to help prevent negative impacts on the environment and communities, whilst also creating experiences to meet the expectations of the ecotourism market (Clifton & Benson, 2006: 239; Petrosillo, Zurlini, Corlian, Zaccarelli & Dadamo, 2007:29). In a study conducted by Chaung-Hung, as quoted by Holden (2008:240), it was concluded that there are five major aspects of why people see themselves as eco-tourists. These are:

- having a sense of environmental responsibility;
- having a strong interest in learning about nature;
- having a love of nature;
- participating in ecotourism activities like observing wildlife; and
- visiting national parks and other natural areas.

According to Page and Dowling (2002:3), tourists' perceptions about the environment can be placed along a continuum ranging from anthropocentric (human-centred) to ecocentric (pro-environmental). The anthropocentric view typifies the traditional tourism perspective prior to the rise of environmentalism, where the earth is seen as a planet with a limitless supply of resources to satisfy all human needs, including tourism. The ecocentric view respects the biodiversity and fragility of the earth. Ecotourism product owners must pay attention to, and have an understanding of, eco-tourists perceptions and motivations in order to deliver a competitive ecotourism offering. (Chan & Baum, 2007:575; Dolnicar, Crouch & Long, 2008:199; Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010:163).

Another aspect that must be taken into consideration in terms of visitor experience is the role that the staff play in creating an ecotourism experience. The ecotourism industry is unique because employees form part of the ecotourism experience (George, 2008:388). According to Eagles (2001b:620), after the qualities that attract visitors to an area, the qualities of employees are the most important element of any ecotourism operation. It is, therefore, crucial to attract, properly reward and maintain good employees (Eagles, 2001b:620; Buckley, 2009:44). An internal marketing programme can be used to assist in this as it is aimed at the employees (the internal market) who play an essential role in service delivery. George (2008:388) suggests that an internal marketing programme be developed in order to bring out the best performance in

employees that will in turn positively influence the visitor's experience. The following aspects should be included in an internal marketing:

- Establishing a service-orientated culture;
- Recruiting and training of staff;
- Conducting effective internal communication; and
- Recognising and acknowledging excellent service delivery (George, 2008:388).

Eco-tourists often have high service, safety and information expectations. It is, therefore, critical that all employees be trained in order to deliver just such quality service and to be able to provide relevant and accurate information on ecology, cultural heritage, conservation in the area (Eagles, 2001b:620).

3.6 CONCLUSION

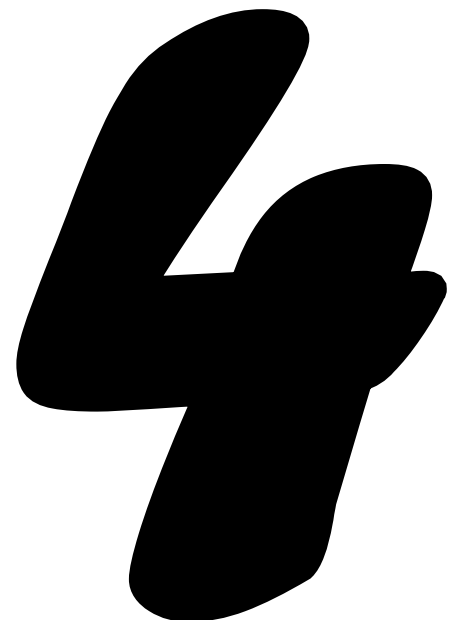
The aim of this chapter was to analyse ecotourism in order to identify key aspects that should form part of an ecotourism model for South African National Parks. This aim was achieved by an analysis of ecotourism definitions from which ecotourism principles were identified. These defining factors include the following:

- ecotourism must occur in a natural setting;
- ecotourism is a non-consumptive form of tourism;
- tourists and local communities should be made aware of environmental impacts through education and interpretation.

It was further found that ecotourism must provide the tourist with an enlightening experience of nature and the local culture, and that the local community should be involved in the planning and management of ecotourism at a destination. It is important too that long-term economic benefits accrue to the local community. The analysis also emphasised that a balance must be kept between economic advancement and the ecology, that negative environmental, social, and economic impacts must be minimised while positive impacts must be maximised.

These principles support the four main pillars on which ecotourism is based, being conservation and enhancement of natural and cultural attractions, environmental education, sustainable management and the tourist experience. A discussion on the different models used in ecotourism to manage impacts such as the recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS), limits of acceptable change (LAC), the tourism opportunity spectrum (TOS) and the ecotourism opportunity spectrum (ECOS) thereafter followed. Next, the economic, social and environmental impacts of ecotourism as well as development aspects were discussed. The following chapter

will analyse national and international ecotourism/tourism policies, as well as examining those organisations that have an impact on ecotourism development.



CHAPTER 4

ECOTOURISM POLICIES

"What we do comes out of who we believe we are."

~Rob Bell~

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism is becoming more and more a priority for national and international policy makers (Hall, 2004:135). This is because ecotourism is a type of tourism that advocates the minimisation of negative impacts, local community involvement, a balance between development and conservation and respect for the natural and cultural environment (Fennell & Dowling, 2003:10). The fact that the year 2002 was dedicated to ecotourism (International Year of Ecotourism, 2002), together with the World Summit on Sustainable Development, is further evidence of the importance of ecotourism.

Policy-making is an extremely important part of ecotourism, whether on global, national, provincial or local scale, because of its role in governing the tourism industry and its associated activities (Hall, 2009:42). Ecotourism policy does not occur in isolation, but is a result of a range of stakeholders' interests and values that influence the development and management processes of ecotourism (Hall, 2003:21). Role players in the development of ecotourism policies include government organisations, non-government organisations (NGO's) and the tourism industry. Although there is high level of agreement about the importance and value of ecotourism policies, their development is still in its beginning stage. Unfortunately, a lack of consensus over what ecotourism development constitutes, precisely, has been constraining factor in the development of sound ecotourism policies (Fennell & Dowling, 2003:10).

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of current international and national tourism policies regarding ecotourism development and management. The chapter will address three

aspects. Firstly, the role and formulation of ecotourism policy will be discussed; secondly, an analysis will be conducted of international and national tourism agencies/organisations that play a role in the formulation of ecotourism policies. Thirdly and finally, the last part of the chapter will focus on current policies regarding ecotourism in South Africa in general, but in South African National Parks in particular.

4.2 THE ROLE AND FORMULATION OF ECOTOURISM POLICY

Sustainable development has become a key concern for governments as they develop public policies. Because of tourism's role in sustainable development, these policies became central to tourism planning (Weaver, 2006:73). Policy and planning are interdependent on each other for "Planning" refers to the development of a plan that includes a vision and mission for ecotourism; goals and objectives, where strategies focus on how these objectives will be achieved. "Policy", on the other hand, spells out the guidelines that should be followed in order to implement the said plans and strategies (Saayman & Swart, 2004:16; Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:138).

Unplanned and uncontrolled tourism can destroy the resources on which it is dependant. Tourism planning should be integral to the entire resource analysis and development of an area. Without proper regulations, problems of over-exploitation and ecological degradation may actually be intensified by the development of ecotourism (Wearing & Neil, 2009:37; Fennell & Dowling, 2003:7). Governance, therefore, is needed in tourism planning to ensure that development takes place in an ethical manner. In turn, this means that the social and ecological spheres benefit from, and are exposed to, minimised negative impacts (Fennell & Dowling, 2003:10). Governance refers to a 'set of regulation mechanisms in a sphere of activity' (Fennell, 2006:209) and, according to Glasbergen (1998:2), is an opportunity for goal-oriented and intentional intervention in society. A *policy* can thus be seen as the *outcome of governance*, providing a framework for achieving goals (Fennell, 2006:209; Saayman & Swart, 2004:11). As illustrated in Table 4.1, four main categories of policies are found in tourism. These are regulatory control, distributive, self-regulatory and redistributive policies (Page & Ateljevic, 2009:251; Cooper & Hall, 2007:154; Newsome *et al.*, 2005:161).

Table 4.1: Categories of tourism policy

TYPE OF POLICY	CHARACTERISTIC	INSTRUMENTS
Regulatory Control	Refers to the key role of governments as regulators who impose laws and regulations.	Legislation and regulation; restrictions on land use planning; licensing; resource

Distributive	This form of policy involves the distribution of benefits to specific groups in society. It aims to encourage and promote tourism activities within an area.	protection laws. Reduction of taxes; subsidisation of related activities.
Self-regulatory	The focus of this form is to regulate groups – policies are created and implemented by groups or sub-systems in society for their own advancements.	Codes of conduct for visitors and staff; management agreements and partnerships.
Redistributive	Entails governmental programmes that aim to redistribute wealth. Ecotourism plays an important role in redistribution in that it aims to improve economic well-being for local communities in areas that are often economically depressed.	Economic assistance programmes; community involvement in ecotourism ventures; labour market policy.

(Adapted from: Page & Ateljevic, 2009:251; Cooper & Hall, 2007:154; Newsome *et al.*, 2005:161)

As mentioned above, ecotourism has an important role in redistribution of benefits. However, due to the complexity of ecotourism, it is no easy task to formulate an ecotourism policy, and the integration of different types of policy is often necessary (Neth, 2008:219).

The formulation of ecotourism policies is an extremely complex process for several reasons. Firstly, the lack of a universal definition for ecotourism makes it difficult to legislate something that is not properly defined. This is seen as a major one of the reasons why there is very little ecotourism-specific legislation (Hall, 2004:139, Queiros, 2003:74). Ecotourism issues are covered, therefore, under general tourism and environmental legislation (Hall, 2004:139, Queiros, 2003:74). Secondly, increased international interest in conservation and sustainable development means that local tourism policies cannot be made in isolation. Ecotourism policies are influenced by a growing number of interest groups in this field who compete in putting pressure on policymakers (Hall, 2004:141; Wray, 2009:677). As a result of these pressures and

of the need to be accountable, ecotourism policymakers need to ask the fundamental questions that follow in Table 4.2 when developing policies for ecotourism.

Table 4.2: Fundamental questions in developing an ecotourism policy

▪ WHO needs to be involved in ecotourism policy development? ▪ WHICH are the principles we want to guide our development of ecotourism? ▪ WHY will individuals and organisations want to be involved in ecotourism? ▪ WHERE do we want ecotourism to take place? ▪ WHAT kind of activities should make up ecotourism? ▪ HOW should we deliver ecotourism, if at all?

(Source: Björk, 2007:31)

The first question (Who?) refers to the role-players involved in the development of an ecotourism policy. Governments have a key role to play in providing policies within which the tourism industry operates in order to achieve sustainable development. Due to tourism's scope as a global economic sector, governments need to realise its potential for long-term investment and to achieve sustainable economic, social and environmental objectives (George, 2007:147, Horner & Swarbrooke, 2004:16; Tlhagale, 2003:172). However, sustainable tourism development cannot be achieved solely by government regulation, and the active involvement of role players, whether they are public, private, profit-seeking or non-profit, is essential. Interest groups, pressure groups and lobbyists can each significantly influence public policies. For example, organisations such as The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) and Wilderness Society have each played an influential role in establishing government policies (Hall, 2003:22; Edgell, Allan, Smith & Swanson 2007:19).

The need for governance where the responsibility of policy-making extends into both public and private sectors has led to increased interest in networks. Networks are sets of relationships that shape combined action between government, the industry, the local community and non-government organisations to formulate policies on different levels. These levels can be international, national, provincial and local (Wray, 2009:675; Dredge, 2006:270; Krutwaysho & Bramwell, 2010:674; Hall, 2003:22; Tlhagale, 2003:172; Edgell *et al.*, 2007:19; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008:80).

The second question (Which?) refers to the principles that should guide an ecotourism policy. These principles are often referred to as the four pillars of ecotourism (see Chapter 3, Section 3.2) and include the following:

- sustainable management of tourism in environmentally and culturally sensitive areas;
- improvement of the natural and cultural environment;

- provision of educational opportunities, and
- tourist satisfaction (Geldenhuys, 2009:3; Diamantis, 2004:5; Van der Merwe, 2004:19, Weaver, 2005:440; Blamey, 2001:6).

The third question (Why?) relates to the reasons why individuals would become involved in ecotourism. In order to have individuals involved, ecotourism development should contribute to the economic well-being of communities, should consider social obligations, equity and respect for communities (Shafer & Choi, 2006:617). Partnerships are a preferred policy instrument and may encourage stakeholder participation in ecotourism development. Partnerships refer to regular interaction between the stakeholders with the intention to achieve a common goal of benefiting all partners (Newsome *et al.*, 2005:156). Figure 4.1 gives an outline of some possible partnerships that can be formed between stakeholders.

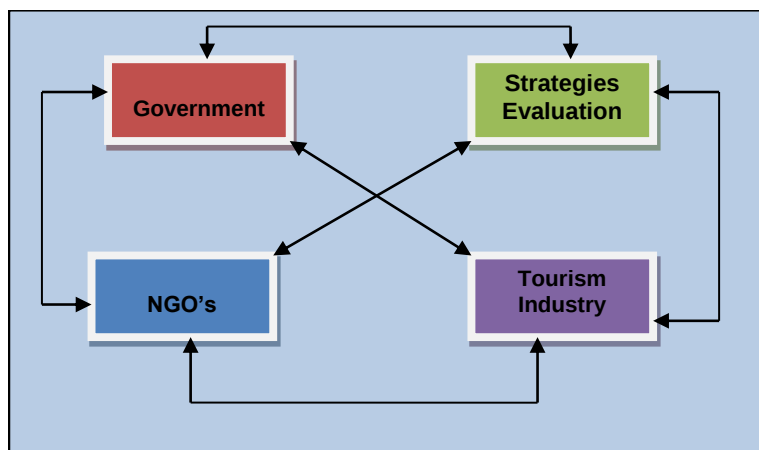


Figure 4.1: Partnerships and ecotourism

(Source: Newsome *et al.*, 2005:159)

To answer the fourth question of “Where?” ecotourism should be developed, again reference should be made to the principles that state ecotourism should be nature-based. Respect for the natural environment is essential, and proper environmental management should be practiced in order to minimise any possible negative impacts on the environment. Ecotourism must also actively contribute to the conservation of the natural environment (Powell and Ham, 2008:468; Weaver 2001:15; Björk 2007:35).

The fifth question (What?) relates to the activities that may be offered at an ecotourism destination. The answer here must take into account the fragility of the area and activities should only be offered provided they would not harm the environment. Ecotourism activities must be, as far as possible, of a non-consumptive nature (Hashimoto & Telfer, 2004:215). Further, an analysis of the target market’s perceptions and motivations should be conducted in

order to determine those activities that would be sustainable in the long run (Beh & Bruyere, 2007:1464).

When considering the “How?” of ecotourism delivery, developers must consider that ecotourism should be sustainable over the long term, should maximise positive impacts and should minimise negative impacts. In other words, it must contribute to the overall well-being of an area and be of a responsible nature (Wight 2003:51; Johansson & Diamantis, 2004:304; Fennell, 2002:26). It is imperative that tourism is not seen as an activity that will take place in isolation. For this reason alone, a holistic approach should be followed (Edgell, 2006:122; Honey, 2008:447; Saarinen, 2009:270; Keyser, 2009:34).

The above questions are a helpful guide in the development of ecotourism policies and the answers to these questions will largely determine how ecotourism is developed. It is therefore essential that policy-makers are guided by a thorough understanding of what ecotourism is, who is affected by it; and what are the impacts and potentials (Björk, 2007:31).

4.3 ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN ECOTOURISM POLICY FORMULATION

Tourism agencies/organisations are representatives of the tourism industry and play an important role in formulating and/or influencing sustainable ecotourism policies at international, national, provincial and local level (Tlhagale, 2003:171). The following section analyses international and national tourism and ecotourism organisations and related policies, together with policies relevant to national parks in South Africa.

4.3.1 International ecotourism and tourism organisations and policies

International tourism organisations are concerned with the development and promotion of tourism on a global scale. Their role is to make certain that tourism activities are planned, developed and managed according to globally accepted criteria (Tlhagale, 2003:172; Keyser, 2009:177). International tourism-related organisations that play an important role in the formulation of (eco) tourism policies, and consequently the development and management of ecotourism, are outlined in Figure 4.2. A discussion regarding each role and task will follow.

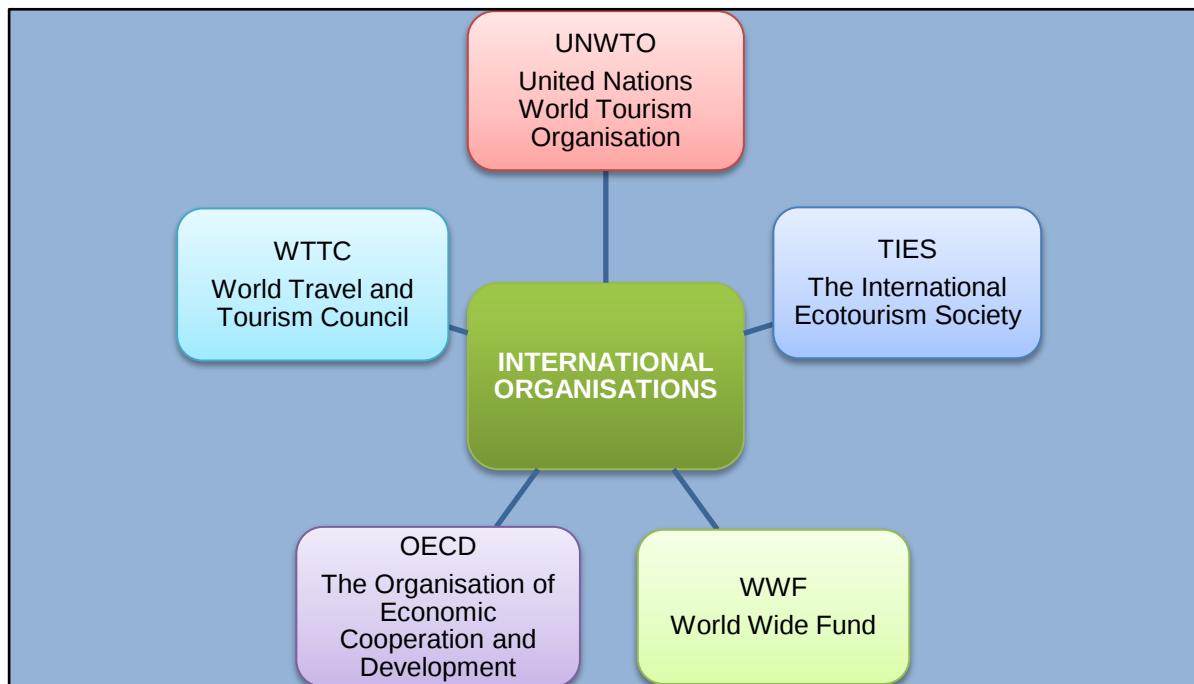


Figure 4.2: International organisations involved with ecotourism policy development

(Adapted from: TIES, 2010; OECD, 2010; Keyser, 2009:177; George, 2007:152; WTTC, 2003; Tlhagale, 2003:174; Queiros, 2003:84)

4.3.1.1 The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) is one of the leading organisations regarding the formulation of international tourism policies. It provides a forum for governments and industry members to discuss issues and to set global standards for the tourism industry. The mission of the UNWTO is to stimulate economic growth, conserve the natural environment and heritage of destinations; and to promote peace and understanding among nations (Keyser, 2009:178; George, 2007:152; Weaver, 2006:12; Tlhagale, 2003:173). Other tasks of the UNWTO include:

- Assistance to developing countries in order to achieve sustainable development;
- Conduct research and publish statistics pertaining to tourism growth and other issues;
- Environmental planning;
- Human resource development through high quality education and training; and
- Assistance to member countries in developing a competitive tourism industry (George, 2007:152; Tlhagale, 2003:174).

The UNWTO and The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) worked in collaboration with the Earth Council and published the Agenda 21 Report for the Travel and Tourism Industry in 1996. This was the action programme for the implementation of the Rio Declaration 1992, to ensure the sustainable future of the planet. It outlined nine priority areas for government involvement in sustainable tourism development (Holden, 2008:150; Keyser, 2009:20;

Swarbrooke, 1999:96; Saayman & Swart, 2004:20 Edgell, 2006:117; Weaver, 2006:13). These priorities are as follows:

- Assessing the ability of the existing regulatory, economic and voluntary frameworks to bring about sustainable development;
- Assessing the economic, social, cultural and environmental implications of tourism industry operations;
- Training, education and public awareness;
- Planning for sustainable development;
- Facilitating the exchange of information, skills and technology relating to sustainable tourism between developed and developing countries;
- Providing for the participation of all sections of society;
- Designing new tourism products with sustainability at its core;
- Measuring progress in achieving sustainable development, and
- Creating partnerships for sustainable development (Swarbrooke, 1999:96; Edgell, 2006:117).

Other relevant policies of the UNWTO include:

- The Tourism Bill of Rights and Tourist Code;
- The UNWTO statement on the Prevention of Organised Sex Tourism; and
- The 2004 indicators of sustainable development for tourism destinations: a guidebook (Tlhagale, 2003:174).

4.3.1.2 The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)

The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) is the leading, international tourism organisation that provides a forum for the private sector. The WTTC aims to work in collaboration with governments to achieve the tourism industry's potential for sustainable development and to ensure that policies reflect this (Weaver, 2006:12; Keyser, 2009:179; George, 2007:152; and Tlhagale, 2003:174).

The WTTC's strategic priorities are considered the organisation's policy platform and are as follows (Tlhagale, 2003:174):

- To think about the future for travel and tourism and make it "everybody's future" by predicting and interpreting future trends, and thus demonstrate their relevance to the industry, governments and communities;
- Measure and communicate tourism's strategic and sustainable economic contribution by working with governments to analyse the impact of tourism across economies;
- Promote the positive image of tourism as a provider of jobs and career opportunities through facilitating skilled and motivated human resources;

- Encourage free access; open markets and open skies; the removal of barriers to growth by seeking the liberalisation of policies affecting all sectors of tourism;
- Match infrastructure and customer demand by forecasting positive economic and sustainable benefits for economies, industry and communities;
- Develop access to capital resources and technological advancement as part of the foundation to accommodate growth; and
- Promote responsibility in natural, social and cultural environments by committing itself to improving the environmental performance of the tourism industry.

Apart from their contribution to the Agenda 21, the WTTC launched the 'Blueprint for New Tourism' whereby governments are encouraged to adopt its policy framework for sustainable tourism development (George, 2007:153; Weaver, 2006:13). The 'Blueprint for New Tourism' encourages partnerships between private and public sectors and matches the needs of economies, authorities and communities with those of businesses. These matchings are based on:

- Governments recognising tourism as a top priority;
- Business balancing economies with people, culture and environment; and
- A shared pursuit of long-term growth and prosperity (WTTC, 2003).

4.3.1.3 The International Ecotourism Society (TIES)

In terms of ecotourism, The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) mission is to advance responsible tourism in natural areas while, at the same time, conserve the environment and improve the quality of life of the local community through:

- Creating an international network of individuals, institutions and the tourism industry;
- Educating tourists and tourism professionals; and
- Influencing the tourism industry, public institutions and donors to integrate the principles of ecotourism into their operations and policies (TIES, 2010).

The above are seen as the leading organisations in the world that are directly involved in policy formulation on an international level within the tourism sector. However, there is a multiplicity of organisations whose primary function for existence is not that of tourism but who nonetheless make an impact on tourism policies. The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development is one such example.

4.3.1.4 The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

The OECD is a unique forum where the governments of 30 democracies work together to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of globalisation. It also has ties with 70 additional countries, most of which have observer status, including South Africa (Tlhagale,

2003:177 and George, 2007:153). According to the OECD, it is not sufficient to develop and apply tourism-only policies, as tourism involves a range of activities across economies. An integrated approach is therefore necessary in policy development, across many government departments, to minimise negative impacts and maximise tourism's full economic potential. The OECD stresses the importance of the government's involvement and commitment in developing, implementing and evaluating tourism policies, as this is seen as being central to the success of the tourism industry (OECD, 2010:9). The OECD has produced a number of reports including 'Measuring the role of tourism: OECD economies' in 2000, and 'Tourism Trends and Policies 2010' (George, 2007:153; OECD, 2010).

4.3.1.5 The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is a global organisation involved in conservation. It has shown an interest in tourism as a tool for environmental preservation (Queiros, 2003:84; Edgell, 2006:22; Weaver, 2006:12; Reid, 2003:121). The WWF's goal is to conserve biological diversity, to ensure that resources are used sustainably and to reduce pollution and wasteful consumption. The WWF works with the tourism industry to encourage best practice and policy on conservation and social issues (Queiros, 2003:84; Edgell, 2006:22).

All of the above organisations operate in the international sphere, but do influence policies on a national level. The following section will discuss organisations involved in tourism policy development in South Africa.

4.3.2 National ecotourism and tourism organisations and policies

An increasing number of countries are realising the potential, related benefits and importance of sustainable tourism development. Governments make use of public policies in order to ensure that tourism development takes place in a sustainable manner (Holden, 2008:173). Hall and Jenkins, quoted by Page and Ateljevic (2009:456), defined public tourism policy as:

“whatever governments choose to do, or not to do, in respect to tourism. This covers government action, inaction, decisions and non-decisions regarding the tourism industry.”

South Africa government consist of three levels: national-, provincial- and local government, each will be discussed accordingly (Figure 4.3) (George, 2007:155; Keyser, 2009:158; Saayman, 2009:347; Spenceley, Goodwin, & Maynard, 2004:285).

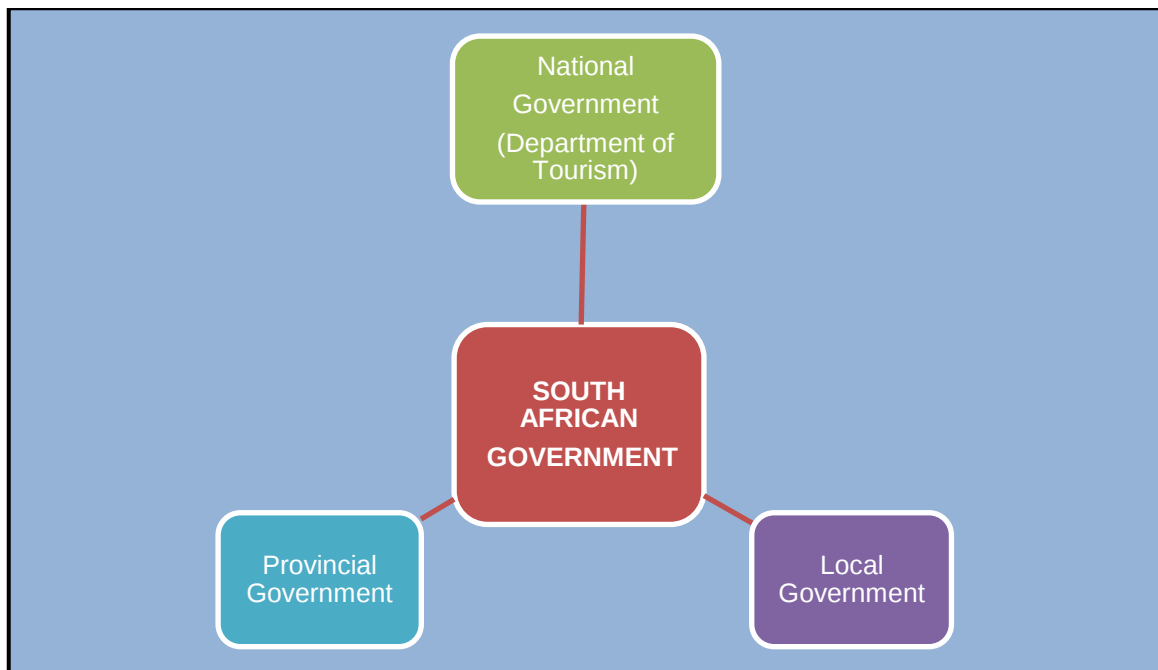


Figure 4.3: South African government structure

(Adapted from: Keyser, 2009:158; Saayman, 2009:347; George, 2007:155; Spenceley, Goodwin, & Maynard, 2004:285)

4.3.2.1 National government

In the configuration of tourism administration in South Africa, the Department of Tourism at *national level* is responsible for tourism policy, regulation; creating conditions for responsible tourism growth and development by promoting and developing tourism. Through participation and direction at this level, government intends to increase employment and entrepreneurial opportunities; and encourage the meaningful participation of previously disadvantaged individuals (SA, 2011a). The National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS), the first draft of which was launched in 2010 by the Department of Tourism, is a plan that has the core objectives of growing the tourism sector's contribution to South Africa's GDP; achieving transformation; providing appropriate jobs; establishing a travelling culture amongst South Africans and contributing to the empowerment of people. The strategy has indicated the following medium-term actions and targets to be reached by 2015:

- To grow tourism's direct contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) from an estimated R64,5 billion or 3,2% of GDP in 2009 to R125 billion or 3,5% of GDP;
- To grow tourism's total (direct and indirect) contribution to GDP from an estimated R173,9 billion or 8,7% of GDP in 2009 to R338,2 billion or 9,4% of GDP;
- To increase the number of foreign arrivals from 9,9 million in 2009 to 13,5 million in 2015;
- To increase the number of direct jobs supported by the sector from an estimated 575 000 in 2009 to 800 000; and

- To increase the number of total (direct and indirect) jobs supported by the sector from an estimated 1,4 million in 2009 to 1,9 million (SA, 2011a).

The national policy for tourism in South Africa is the 1996 White Paper for the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (Saayman & Swart, 2004:18). The vision for tourism in South Africa as stated in the White Paper is as follows:

“To develop the tourism sector as a national priority in a sustainable and acceptable manner, so that it will contribute significantly to the improvement of the quality of life of every South African. As a lead sector within the national economic strategy, a globally competitive tourism industry will be a major force in the reconstruction and development efforts of the government” (DEAT, 1996).

The White paper recognises the economic value of tourism to the country, but notes that in order to achieve its potential, tourism must be developed in such a way that it would advance other sectors of the economy, would create entrepreneurial opportunities, must be kind to the environment; and should bring peace, prosperity and enjoyment to South Africans. Responsible tourism was accepted as the key guiding principle for tourism development (DEAT, 1996).

The White Paper accepts the following principles to guide the development of a responsible tourism industry:

- Tourism will be private sector driven;
- Government will provide the enabling framework for the industry to flourish;
- Effective community involvement will form the basis of tourism growth;
- Tourism development will be underpinned by sustainable environmental practices;
- Tourism development is dependent on and the establishment of cooperation and close partnerships among key stakeholders;
- Tourism will be used as a development tool for the empowerment of previously neglected communities and would particularly focus on the empowerment of women in such communities;
- Tourism development will take place in the context of close cooperation with other states within Southern Africa; and
- Tourism development will support the economic, social and environmental goals and policies of the government (DEAT, 1996).

Further, the White Paper identifies the following as being critical for the success of the tourism industry in South Africa:

- Sustainable environmental management practices;

- Involvement of local communities and previously neglected groups;
- A safe and stable tourism environment;
- Globally competitive practices, by offering quality services and value for money;
- Innovative and responsive to customer needs;
- Focus on product enhancement and emphasise diversity;
- Effective tourism training, education and awareness;
- Creative and aggressive marketing and promotion;
- Strong economic linkages with other sectors of the economy;
- Appropriate institutional structures;
- Appropriate supportive infrastructure;
- To protect, conserve and enhance our environment, natural and heritage assets and resources;
- Proactively plan, manage and prevent pollution and environmental degradation to ensure a sustainable and healthy environment;
- Provide leadership on climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- Contribute to sustainable development, livelihood, green and inclusive economic growth through facilitating skills development and employment creation; and
- Contribute to a better Africa and a better world by advancing national environmental interests through a global sustainable development agenda (DEAT, 1996).

In order to advance the implementation of the principles for responsible tourism as outlined in the White Paper, a set of responsible tourism guidelines were developed in 2002. These guidelines were developed by DEAT (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism) in collaboration with tourism stakeholders. In 2003, the Responsible Tourism Handbook was published. The handbook provides practical examples for tourism businesses to follow to nurture the growth of their business, whilst providing social and economic benefits to communities and respecting the environment (DEAT, 2003:4). Table 4.3 provides an outline of these responsible tourism guidelines:

Table 4.3 Responsible tourism guidelines

ECONOMIC GUIDELINES
▪ Assess economic impacts before developing tourism. ▪ Maximise local economic benefits by increasing linkages and reducing leakages. ▪ Ensure communities are involved in and benefit from tourism. ▪ Assist with local marketing and products development. ▪ Promote equitable business and pay fair prices.
SOCIAL GUIDELINES

- Respect social and cultural diversity.
- Involve local communities in planning and decision-making.
- Assess social impacts of tourism activities.
- Be sensitive to the host culture.

ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES

- Reduce environmental impacts when developing tourism.
- Use natural resources sustainably.
- Maintain biodiversity.

(Source: DEAT, 2003:4)

Further, the Department of Environmental Affairs plays an important role concerning tourism, as it is responsible for the conservation of the country's valuable natural resources and attractions. The Department of Environmental Affairs works in partnership with independent statutory organisations such as South African National Parks (SANParks) and the South African National Biodiversity Institute (Sanbi), as well as with other regional and provincial conservation agencies (SA, 2011b):. The Department of Environmental Affairs has set the following strategic objectives

- To protect, conserve and enhance our environment, natural and heritage assets and resources;
- Proactively plan, manage and prevent pollution and environmental degradation to ensure a sustainable and healthy environment;
- Provide leadership on climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- Contribute to sustainable development, livelihood, green and inclusive economic growth through facilitating skills development and employment creation; and
- Contribute to a better Africa and a better world by advancing national environmental interests through a global sustainable development agenda (SA, 2011c).

4.3.2.2 Provincial government

At provincial level, there are nine provincial tourism authorities, such as Eastern Cape Tourism, the North West Parks and Tourism Board, Western Cape Tourism Board, and their ilk, that aim to promote sustainable tourism to both international and to domestic tourists (George, 2007:155). According to the White Paper, the provincial government's roles are as follows:

- Provincial tourism organisations will formulate tourism policies that are applicable to their areas, in accordance with the national policy;

- The provincial government, through provincial tourism organisations, have responsibility for marketing and promoting their destinations; and
- The provincial governments should also play a more noticeable role in tourism development activities, than does the national government. These development activities include the involvement of local communities, environmental management, safety and security of visitors, tourism plant development and infrastructure provision (DEAT, 1996).

4.3.2.3 Local government

Finally, at **local level**, tourism authorities, such as Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism and Cape Town Tourism, are responsible for the following:

- Local government has a significant impact on natural and cultural resources as well as tourism products in terms of how the environment is managed. Therefore, local government has a mandate to plan for, influence, improve and monitor tourism development.
- Local government provides the core utilities and infrastructure on which the tourism industry depends. This includes district and municipal roads, lighting, water and sewerage, public transport systems, signs and, at times, airports and ports.
- Local government also has a role to play in the operation of attractions such as museums, art galleries, sports stadia, convention centres, park based gardens, events, tours, and other amenities. Local government alongside other governmental actors enable regional marketing and provides visitor information by cooperating with provincial tourism authorities and providing visitor information desks (DEAT, 2009:9).

The next section will discuss the policies by which South African National Parks is governed and so will consequently have an impact on how ecotourism is developed and managed in the national parks.

4.4 POLICIES REGARDING SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL PARKS

South African National Parks is a government-funded institution that manages a system of 21 national parks that represents the indigenous fauna, flora, landscapes and associated cultural heritage of South Africa (SANParks, 2008:2). The main concern of SANParks is, however, the conservation and management of biodiversity (SANParks, 2006:8). South African National Parks is governed by international conventions that were signed by the South African government and by national legislation and policies (see appendix 2 for a complete list).

The following international conventions were signed by the South African government:

- ***Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (“World Heritage Convention”) 1972:*** This convention was held in October 1972 in Paris, France. Here, nations agreed to take necessary measures in order to conserve not only the World Heritage sites situated on their territory, but also to protect their own national heritage. Nations were required to disclose information on the state of natural and cultural heritage sites, and the conservation thereof. They were also required to integrate the protection of the cultural and natural heritage into regional planning programmes, increase public appreciation for heritage sites through educational and interpretation programmes and to set up staff and services at their sites. An assurance was needed also that they would undertake scientific and technical conservation research and would adopt measures to give heritage a function in the day-to-day life of the community (UNESCO, 1972).
- ***Convention on Biological Diversity 1992:*** This convention was signed at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, where nations showed their commitment to the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources (UNEP, 1992).
- ***Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, 1973:*** This convention was signed in 1973 at Washington DC. The main objectives of this convention were the protection of endangered species renowned in international trade, through appropriate trade regulating measures and monitoring the status of such species (UNEP, 1973).

Further, SANParks’ coordinated policy framework was developed to provide a general outline, within which the management of national parks can take place. The policy standpoint is based on the following:

- SANParks’ own values and policy as determined by its Executive Management and Board; and
- National policy, as set out in Figure 4.4:

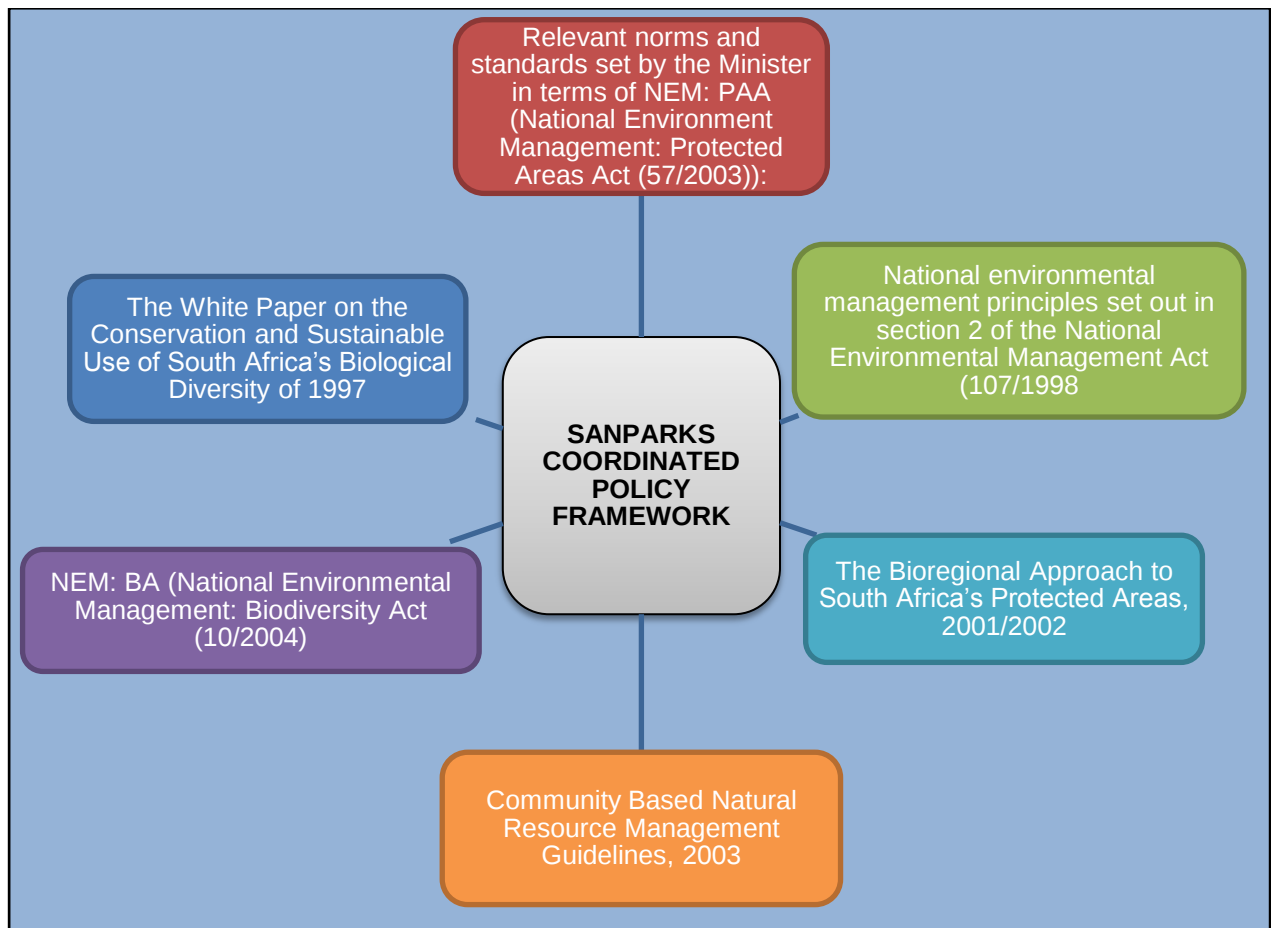


Figure 4.4: National policies that influenced the development of SANParks' Coordinated Policy Framework (Adapted from: SANParks, 2006:8)

The White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biological Diversity of 1997:

At a national level, the White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biological Diversity (1997) documents South Africa's intent to secure at least 10% of each habitat and ecosystem within the seven biomes under formal protection (DEAT, 1997).

The main goals listed by this paper are:

- The conservation of the diversity of landscapes, ecosystems, habitats, communities, populations, species and genes;
- Ensure that benefits derived from the use and development of SA genetic resources serve national interests;
- Improve the capacity to conserve and use biodiversity and to address threats to biodiversity;
- The creation of conditions and incentives that support conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; and
- The promotion of conservation and sustainable use at the international level (DEAT, 1997).

The Bioregional Approach to South Africa's Protected Areas, 2001/2002:

In 2001, the Department of Environmental Affairs, Environment and Tourism published 'A Bioregional approach to South Africa's protected areas'. This strategy document proposed an increase of the protected areas for terrestrial environments from 6% to 8%, and for marine and coastal environments from 5% to 20% (DEAT, 2007).

Community Based Natural Resource Management Guidelines, 2003:

The aim of these guidelines is to achieve the wise use and conservation of natural resources and ecosystems, improvement of livelihoods and quality of life of local people, together with the reduction of rural poverty (SA, 2003).

National environmental management principles, set out in section 2 of the National Environmental Management Act (107/1998): The aim of this Act, and more specifically section 2, is:

"To provide for cooperative environmental governance by establishing principles for decision making on matters affecting the environment, institutions that will promote cooperative governance and procedures for coordinating environmental functions exercised by organs of state; and to provide for matters connected therewith".

Relevant norms and standards set by the Minister in terms of NEM: PAA (National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (57/2003)): The aim of this act is:

"To provide for the protection and conservation of ecologically viable areas representative of South Africa's biological diversity and its natural landscapes and seascapes; for the establishment of a national register of all national, provincial and local protected areas; for the management of those areas in accordance with national norms and standards; for intergovernmental co-operation and public consultation in matters concerning protected areas; and for matters in connection therewith".

NEM: BA (National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (10/2004)):

The aim of this act is:

"To provide for the management and conservation of South Africa's biodiversity within the framework of the National Environmental Management Act 1998; the protection of species and ecosystems that warrant national protection; the sustainable use of indigenous biological resources; the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from bioprospecting involving indigenous biological resources; the establishment and functions of a South African National Biodiversity Institute; and for matters connected therewith".

In terms of managing tourism, SANParks has adopted the following strategic objectives as outlined in the Coordinated Policy Framework:

- To provide sustainable, high-quality, nature-based, value for money tourism experiences; and promoting biodiversity, cultural and wilderness qualities,
- Contribute to building a broad constituency for sustainability and conservation in a people-centred way, and
- To use responsible nature-based tourism as the best possible economic opportunity to support and supplement conservation. The core conservation values of SANParks should not be compromised by tourism as a financial driver (SANParks, 2006:21).

In support of these strategic objectives, the following secondary objectives were subsequently identified:

- To strive for service excellence in accordance to market expectations;
- To offer a variety of tourism opportunities and products;
- To offer equitable access;
- A recognition that, apart for carrying capacity of the biophysical environment, tourist density may need to be constrained in order to provide a valuable experience for visitors;
- To recognise the wider organisational, societal and regional environments;
- The promotion of mutual benefits with key stakeholders;
- The strategic planning of tourism and sustainable tourism product development;
- The practice of healthy human resource, governance and business principles; and
- To conduct sound research and market studies (SANParks, 2006:21).

Although these objectives, together with SANParks' principles with regards to tourism (as outlined in Chapter 1), provide a valuable approach, it allows a significant degree of generality. A more holistic approach is needed to explain how existing principles fit together and, particularly, to set forth specific conditions under which tourism (ecotourism) should proceed (Edgell, 2006:122; Honey, 2008:447; Keyser, 2009:34). Without this specificity, management, planning and monitoring of responsible ecotourism cannot commence (Davis, 1999:520).

4.5 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of international and national tourism policy regarding ecotourism development and management. It was found that due to the complexity of ecotourism, policy formulating should not occur in a vacuum and that a range of stakeholders

needs to be involved. A holistic approach in formulating ecotourism policies is therefore vital to ensure the goals of ecotourism will be achieved.

The chapter addressed the following aspects: first, the role and formulation of ecotourism policy, second, an analysis was conducted of the international and national tourism agencies/organisations that plays a role in the formulation of ecotourism policies. The last part of the chapter focused on current policies regarding ecotourism in South Africa and in South African National Parks. There is currently no ecotourism policy in existence for neither South Africa, nor South African National Parks. It was found that SANParks' policies concerning tourism are lacking a model that would efficiently manage South African National Parks as an ecotourism destination because its current format includes a too-permissive degree of generality. The following chapter will discuss the results the of the empirical research where the perceptions of the visitors to South African National Parks, together with those of management, were tested in order to identify key principles pertaining to responsible/ecotourism.

5

CHAPTER 5

THE EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great, you can be that generation. Let your greatness blossom.

~Nelson Mandela~

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this study is to develop an ecotourism model for South African National Parks. The empirical part of the study was twofold: firstly to gain an understanding of the perceptions from a demand side (that is, visitors to South African National Parks) and secondly from a supply side (that is, management of South African National Parks), regarding key principles of responsible ecotourism. Quantitative research was conducted.

The questionnaire used in the survey consisted of two sections:

- *Section A* (Section 5.2) sought to determine the perceptions of respondents (supply and demand side), regarding the importance of specific responsible ecotourism principles (measured on a five-point Likert scale); and
- *Section B* (Section 5.3) sought to determine the perceptions of respondents (supply and demand side) concerning specific ecotourism issues in South African National Parks, for example road congestion and transportation alternatives.

The research is exploratory of nature and a web-based survey was done for the demand side (visitors to South African National Parks). The questionnaire was hosted on South African National Parks' website during March 2011 and 993 (n) questionnaires were received back. For the supply side, a probability sampling was used. The questionnaire was sent via email to park management, which included regional and general managers, hospitality services managers and the managing executives of South African National Parks. A total of 25 (n) questionnaires were received back.

The data was analysed by the Statistical Consultation Services at the North-West University by the means of the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software programme (SPSS Inc., 2009). The data was interpreted by the means of the following methods:

- **Descriptive statistics** in order to give an overview of which aspects were considered important both by visitors (demand side) and by managers (supply side). The techniques used in the descriptive analysis included frequency tables that indicated the frequency of the values for each aspect and the measure of location, which is the mean or average value of each aspect. (Tunstin, Lighthelm, Martins & Van Wyk, 2005:523).
- **Exploratory factor analysis** was used in order to reduce the variables to a smaller set of variables, while retaining most of the original information (Tunstin *et al.*, 2005:668).
- **Factor correlation matrix** was used to identify possible correlations between the factors that were extracted from the factor analysis (Tunstin *et al.*, 2005:668).
- A **t-test** was conducted in order to determine whether or not there was a significant difference between the means of the factors identified for visitors and managers. (Tunstin *et al.*, 2005:523).

The aim of this chapter is to reflect the results of the empirical research. Firstly, the descriptive statistics of the visitors' survey will be reflected and secondly, the descriptive statistics of the managers' survey will be examined. Thirdly, the factor analysis will be discussed, fourthly, the correlations between the factors will be analysed. Fifth and finally, the group statistics (t-test) will be reviewed.

5.2 VISITORS SURVEY (SURVEY A: DEMAND SIDE)

The following will describe the data collected from the visitors' (demand side) survey.

5.2.1 Key responsible ecotourism principles: demand side

Section A of the questionnaire focused on principles of responsible ecotourism, which were based on a literature review regarding key principles of responsible ecotourism. Sources that were largely used to develop the questionnaire include the works of Frey and George (2010), Saayman (2009), Fennell (2008), Spencely (2008) and Diamantis (2004) Material sourced from The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (2003) and Björk (2007) was also used. These sources were used extensively throughout the study (see Chapter 2 Section 2.5 and Chapter 3, Section 3.3-3.5) The importance of each of the items (Table 5.1) was rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from: 1= "Not at all important" to 5 = "Extremely important".

Table 5.1: Key responsible ecotourism principles: demand side

5. Extremely important							
4. Very important							
3. Important							
2. Slightly important							
1. Not at all important							
	1	2	3	4	5		
Responsible ecotourism principles	Percentage (%)					Mean value	Std. Deviation
To comply with all relevant national, provincial and local legislation, regulations, licences and permits as may be required.	2	1	10	23	65	4.48	.836
To make the Sustainable/Responsible Tourism strategy publicly accessible within the Park Management Plans.	1	2	13	32	52	4.32	.842
SANParks' tourist facilities must blend in and respect the natural and cultural heritage of the surrounding environment.	2	2	6	21	70	4.56	.808
The use of local and natural building materials for the construction of tourist facilities.	2	4	19	31	45	4.12	.966
To provide accessible tourism to persons with universally challenged needs (for example, the blind, or those with other physical needs).	1	2	15	33	49	4.28	.855
Facilities must be designed and built to optimise natural heating, cooling and light.	1	2	12	30	56	4.37	.833
SANParks must make use of renewable energy sources where possible.	1	1	9	24	65	4.51	.790
SANParks must make use of water-saving techniques (low-flow or dual-flush toilets and low-flow showerheads).	1	2	8	21	68	4.53	.816
SANParks must make use of energy-saving techniques and devices.	1	2	8	25	65	4.51	.792
Collecting of rainwater for alternative use where feasible.	1	2	10	28	59	4.43	.815
SANParks must implement environmentally friendly purchasing policies.	1	2	16	35	46	4.22	.863
SANParks' tourism offerings must make provide tourists with the opportunity to learn and be educated about the local culture and conservation.	2	4	23	34	37	4.00	.968
Tourism offerings should be designed in a manner to allow for an enlightening nature-based experience with the least disturbance.	1	1	10	30	58	4.43	.793

5. Extremely important							
4. Very important							
3. Important							
2. Slightly important							
1. Not at all important							
	1	2	3	4	5		
Responsible ecotourism principles	Percentage (%)					Mean value	Std. Deviation
To take measures to eradicate invasive alien species.	2	1	10	21	66	4.48	.856
All stakeholders including government; tourism product providers; tourists and local communities should recognise their responsibility to achieve sustainable tourism.	2	0	7	25	67	4.55	.759
SANParks must provide a variety of facilities for interpretation.	2	7	35	36	20	3.65	.944
Visitors must be informed regarding environmentally friendly practices, for example, water-saving and recycling techniques.	1	2	12	31	53	4.33	.860
The use of environmentally friendly consumer products such as biodegradable soap, recycled paper and pesticides.	1	2	13	33	51	4.30	.867
Where possible, SANParks must make use of locally produced products.	2	5	21	29	42	4.04	1.017
SANParks should make arrangements with suppliers to minimise the amount of packaging.	1	4	19	31	45	4.14	.942
To implement practices to reduce pollution and litter.	2	0	3	16	80	4.72	.679
To implement practices to reduce negative impacts such as noise, light and erosion.	1	1	6	22	71	4.60	.746
SANParks must implement the reduce; re-use and recycle principle in all operations.	1	2	9	31	57	4.41	.811
To implement a solid waste management plan with quantitative goals to minimise waste.	1	1	10	31	58	4.43	.774
SANParks must involve interested and affected parties, including the local community, in the planning and development of new tourism products.	3	5	22	35	35	3.95	1.004
Ecotourism offerings by national parks must stimulate economic activity, provide equitable employment opportunities and empower the local communities adjacent to national parks.	4	5	26	33	33	3.85	1.057

5. Extremely important							
4. Very important							
3. Important							
2. Slightly important							
1. Not at all important							
Responsible ecotourism principles	1	2	3	4	5	Mean value	Std. Deviation
	Percentage (%)						
Equitable access to natural, historic and socio-cultural sites of significance located in the parks must be provided to local communities for their enjoyment.	8	13	30	27	22	3.43	1.187
SANParks must venture beyond its borders to a broader community in order to grow its constituency of conservation.	4	7	28	29	33	3.82	1.077
SANParks should provide a variety of products and activities within its usage zones.	5	11	37	28	19	3.47	1.066
As far as possible, local and fair trade goods and services must be bought from local suppliers.	3	7	28	33	30	3.81	1.020
To provide educational programmes for communities such as environmental education.	1	4	17	30	47	4.19	.940
To provide educational programmes for staff such as literacy skills and HIV awareness.	3	6	21	29	42	4.01	1.052
Tourism within SANParks must be in support of conservation.	1	1	5	16	77	4.66	.736
There must be an opportunity to experience traditional cuisine of the area.	8	16	36	22	19	3.28	1.163
Restaurants in SANParks must make use of free range and/or fresh organic foods and beverages where possible.	5	12	34	27	22	3.50	1.098
Restaurants should include venison dishes on the menu, and other game products such as biltong should be available for purchase.	8	14	30	26	21	3.38	1.199
The use of low impact promotional mechanisms, for example, the printing of brochures on recycled paper or making use of electronic format.	1	3	21	35	40	4.09	.916
Promotional materials must be accurate and complete and not promise more than can be delivered.	1	1	10	27	61	4.45	.814
To implement and manage actions to reduce greenhouse emissions and other contributors to climate change	1	2	15	31	50	4.26	.890

5. Extremely important							
4. Very important							
3. Important							
2. Slightly important							
1. Not at all important							
Responsible ecotourism principles	1	2	3	4	5		
	Percentage (%) of importance					Mean value	Std. Deviation
Tourism programmes must increase environmental awareness among tourists and promote positive environmental ethics.	1	1	11	30	57	4.39	.826
To provide guests with information about conservation and/or community projects.	2	3	21	29	35	4.03	.903
Sustainable/Responsible tourism development must be on an appropriate scale and human footprint.	1	1	18	34	45	4.21	.863
Ensure managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the SANParks' policy to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities.	1	0	5	22	71	4.62	.723
Commitment to fair labour practices.	2	1	16	28	54	4.31	.883
To provide staff with appropriate training programmes to improve their skills relevant to tourism in environmentally and culturally sensitive areas.	1	1	8	27	63	4.50	.775
Sustainable/Responsible tourism products must be sustainable in the long term.	1	1	11	29	59	4.43	.791
To invite customer feedback on all tourism experiences and to take corrective steps where appropriate.	1	1	9	27	62	4.49	.775
Stick to the speed limit.	1	1	5	12	81	4.70	.715
Do not talk loudly at a sighting.	1	1	6	15	76	4.63	.777
Remain inside the car (no part of the body may protrude from a window or sunroof) except at designated areas.	2	2	9	14	73	4.54	.874
Do not feed the animals.	2	0	2	5	91	4.84	.615
Visitors should not drive "off-road", or on roads with a "no entry" sign.	2	2	4	9	84	4.70	.790
Specimens should not be collected and taken out of the park.	1	1	4	8	86	4.75	.712

Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to maintain a litter-free environment.	2	0	1	5	92	4.86	.591
Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to save water and electricity.	1	1	2	10	86	4.79	.625

It is evident from Table 5.1 that all the principles of responsible ecotourism were rated with a mean value between 3 (*important*) and 5 (*extremely important*). The principle with the highest mean value of 4.86 was “the responsibility of everyone to maintain a litter-free environment”. The following were the top ten principles considered **very important** to **extremely important** by respondents:

- Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to maintain a litter-free environment (97%).
- Do not feed the animals (96%).
- Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to save water and electricity (96%).
- To implement practices to reduce pollution and litter (96%).
- Specimens should not be collected and taken out of the park (94%).
- Visitors should not drive "off-road", or on roads with a "no entry" sign (93%).
- Stick to the speed limit (93%).
- Tourism within SANParks must be in support of conservation (93%).
- Ensure managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the SANParks' policy to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities (93%).
- All stakeholders including government; tourism product providers; tourists and local communities should recognise their responsibility to achieve sustainable tourism (92%).

The following ten principles were considered to be **important** to **very important**:

- SANParks must provide a variety of facilities for interpretation (71%).
- SANParks should provide a variety of products and activities within its usage zones (65%).
- Restaurants in SANParks must make use of free range and/or fresh organic foods and beverages where possible (61%).
- As far as possible, local and fair trade goods and services must be bought from local suppliers (61%).
- Ecotourism offerings by national parks must stimulate economic activity, provide equitable employment opportunities and empower the local communities adjacent to national parks (59%).
- There must be an opportunity to experience traditional cuisine of the area (58%).

- SANParks' tourism offerings must make provide tourists with the opportunity to learn and be educated about the local culture and conservation (57%).
- SANParks must involve interested and affected parties, including the local community, in the planning and development of new tourism products (57%).
- Equitable access to natural, historic and socio-cultural sites of significance located in the parks must be provided to local communities for enjoyment (57%).
- SANParks must venture beyond its borders to a broader community in order to grow its constituency of conservation (57%).

The above principles under “*important to extremely important*” link strongly with literature regarding responsible ecotourism, which recognises the need for all stakeholders to take responsibility for their actions and should behave in an ethical manner (Keyser, 2009:42, Iyer, 2009:51; Tassiopoulos, 2008:310; DEAT, 2003:6; Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131).

The principles which had the lowest mean values (where 1 is *not at all important* and 5 is *extremely important*), but were still seen as *important* to *very important* include: restaurants should include the opportunity to experience traditional cuisine (3.28); venison dishes on the menu and other game products such as biltong should be available for purchase (3.38). Respondents believe that SANParks should provide a variety of products and activities within its usage zones (3.47); and that restaurants in SANParks must make use of free range and/or fresh organic foods and beverages where possible (3.5). Although these principles have the lowest mean values, they all have a mean value above three (3) which indicates that they are considered by respondents as *important*.

5.2.2 Visitors view (demand side) of specific responsible ecotourism issues

The aim of this section was to gain insight of how visitors view specific responsible ecotourism issues pertaining to South African National Parks.

5.2.2.1 Responsible ecotourism activities: demand side

Respondents (visitors) were asked to comment on activities that they see as responsible ecotourism activities. Their responses are tabled in Table 5.2:

Table 5.2: Responsible ecotourism activities: demand side

ACTIVITY	%	ACTIVITY	%
Guided game drives	73	Guided nature walks	9
Bird-watching	62	Horse-riding	9
Picnic sites	55	Hotel accommodation	9

Hiking trails	52	Mountain-biking	8
Guided Nature photography	48	Canoeing	7
Swimming pool	37	River-rafting	5
Guided Stargazing	32	Fishing	5
Back-pack trails	25	Conference facilities	5
Interpretation facilities	21	Other (please specify)	2
4 X 4 trails	17	Abseiling	2
Hot-air balloon rides	9	Motorcycling	1

According to Table 5.2, the activities which were predominantly seen as responsible ecotourism activities were guided game drives (73%), bird-watching (62%), picnic sites (55%), hiking trails (52%) and guided nature photography (48%). Interpretation courses such as raptor courses and tree identification were listed under “*other*”. The literature also confirms that one of the key principles of ecotourism is to provide environmental education opportunities for tourists (Page & Dowling, 2002:69; Blamey, 2001:9 and Fennell & Weaver, 2005:273). It is therefore surprising that guided nature walks (9%), based on educational grounds with a guide that would provide information to tourists while participating in the activity, had a significantly lower percentage when compared with hiking trails (52%), which in most cases have no tourist guides that lead the trail nor do they provide focussed educational opportunities to tourist. Further, it was highlighted that the possibility of luxury tented camps, which provide a more authentic and closeness to nature experience, instead of hotel type of accommodation should be explored. This clearly shows that respondents want to interact with nature.

5.2.2.2 Responsible ecotourism activities for children

Figure 5.1 indicates that the most popular choice of ecotourism activities for children amongst respondents was environmental education (91%) and interpretation activities (60%). Respondents commented that children should have interactive experiences with nature and so learn to appreciate it. The issue of providing a learning/educational experience is strongly emphasised. Some ideas that were listed by respondents include the following:

- Special game drives/walks designed for children with appropriate supervision.
- Interactive fauna and flora identification workshops.
- Adventure and survival camps.
- Nature-based Web 2.0 games (internet-based games where people can play against each other online) to either prepare for the experience or to build on it afterwards.

- Camps should have games, for example, a putt-putt facility for children. This could be linked to particular animals and enable learning animal facts/information at each hole.
- A baby-sitting service (perhaps at an additional cost) during game drives.

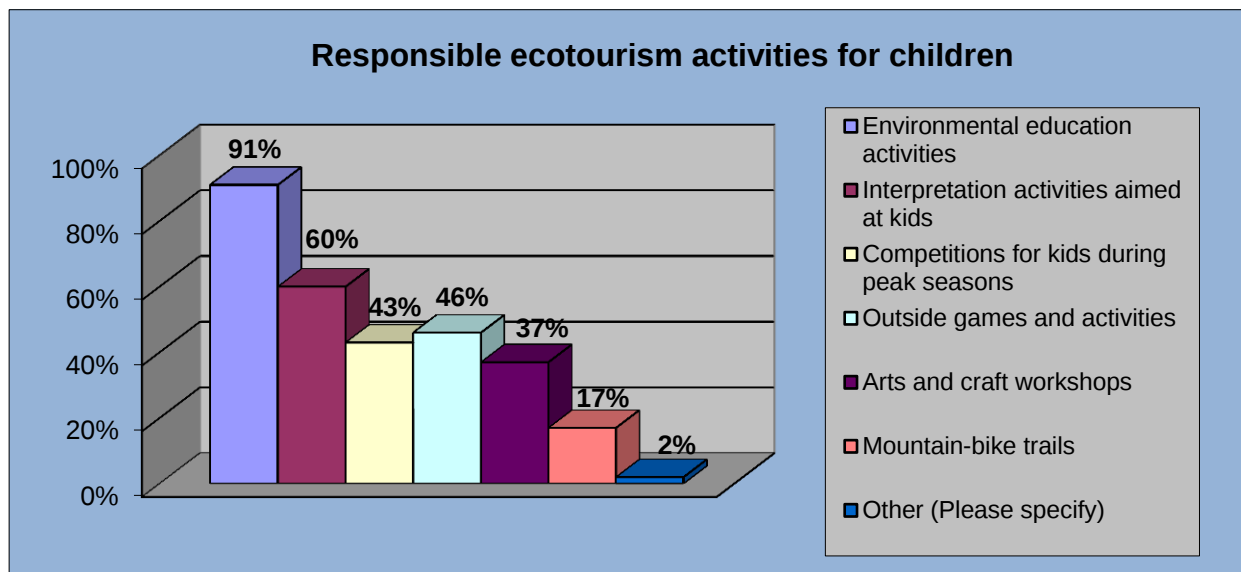


Figure 5.1: Responsible ecotourism activities for children

5.2.2.3 Congestion on roads

Respondents were asked to indicate what they perceive the maximum congestion on the roads in parks should be. This was to be measured in terms of one vehicle per one kilometre to a maximum of one vehicle per seven kilometres.

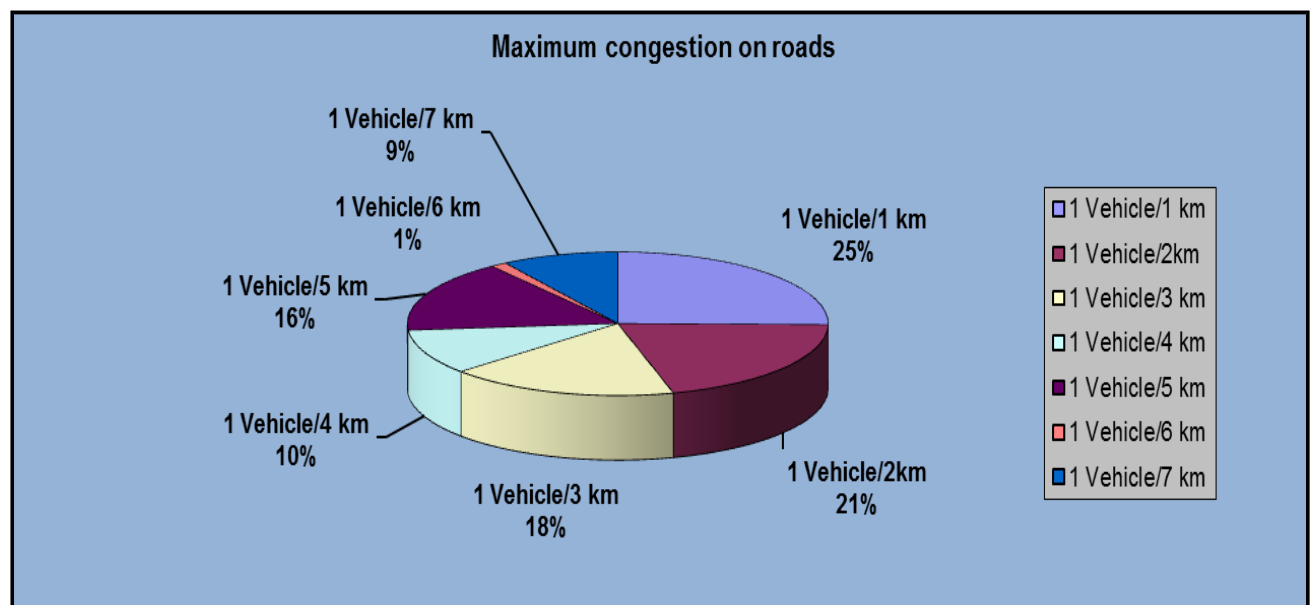


Figure 5.2: Maximum congestion on roads

According to Figure 5.2, the highest percentage (25%) of respondents felt that one vehicle per kilometre is sufficient in terms of not over-congesting the roads and 21% percent felt two

vehicles p/km is good. It is important to note that 64% feels that 1-3 km per vehicle is a good standard for providing an ecotourism experience. Congestion on roads can affect negatively on visitor enjoyment and contribute to air and noise pollution (Fritsch & Johannsen, 2004:141). It was also commented that there should be fewer vehicles on the roads in the parks. This will, however, differ from park to park as each national park differs in size, and so each needs to be planned for individually.

5.2.2.4 Responsible transport methods

Ecotourism should focus on minimising negative impacts on the environment (Johansson & Diamantis, 2004:304; Buckley, 2001:379). Negative impacts in terms of transportation in parks include the following: collisions with animals; CO₂ emissions; and disturbance of wildlife due to noise (Buckley, 2004a:83). Figure 5.3 indicates that 75% of respondents felt that SANParks should be exploring more responsible methods of transport. A major impact in national parks, according to respondents, is speeding. Respondents commented that heavy fines should be issued for offenders. Another suggestion made by respondents is a “park and ride” system in order to reduce the number of vehicles on the roads. The eco-tourist can play a role in reducing negative impacts through responsible driving behaviour that would include switching off idling engines, use air-conditioning responsibly, increasing transport efficiency through maximising occupancy levels, no loud music and, of course, obeying speed limits. In terms of transport technology, substantial improvement has been made in reducing CO₂ emissions and there are options worth investment, such as fuel-efficient engines and cleaner fuels (Simmons & Becken, 2004:20).

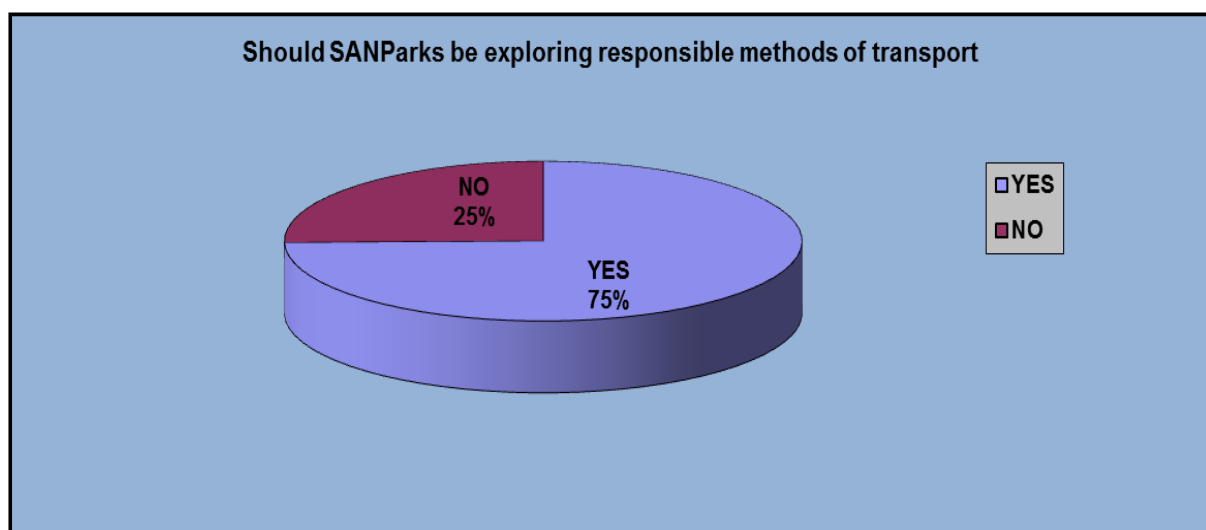


Figure 5.3 Responsible transport methods

5.2.2.5 Alternative interpretation opportunities as an alternative to the current self-drive model.

Figure 5.4 indicates that respondents do not feel that SANParks should be exploring alternative interpretation opportunities, as an alternative to the current self-drive model. Respondents commented that SANParks could look at alternative transport methods, for example, “park and ride”, but they should not be compulsory. The investigation of a possible “park and ride” model for day visitors might be good idea. Respondents believed that the current self-drive model was part of the experience for them and so should not be removed. Studies have shown that eco-tourists often seek peace and quiet, time for self-reflection, satisfying the desire to escape and seeking uncrowded destinations (Chan & Baum, 2007:570; Backman *et al.*, 2001:458; Beh & Bruyere, 2007:1467). The self-drive model can play a role in satisfying those needs as one respondent stated: *“The beauty of a game drive is to explore the tranquillity of the park at our own leisure in our own car”*.

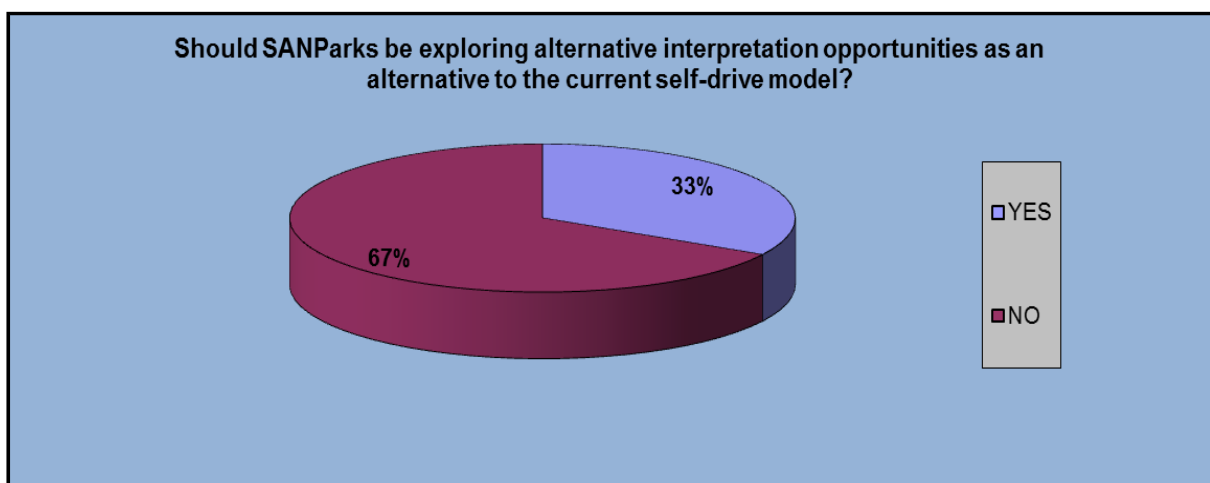


Figure 5.4: Alternative interpretation opportunities as an alternative to the current self-drive model

The following section will reflect the results of the manager’s survey (supply side).

5.3 MANAGER’S SURVEY (SURVEY B: SUPPLY SIDE)

The following section describes the data collected from the manager’s (supply side) survey.

5.3.1 Key responsible ecotourism principles: supply side

The aim of this section is gain a perspective of how the *managers* of SANParks rated the following responsible ecotourism principles (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3: Key responsible ecotourism principles: supply side

5. Extremely important							
4. Very important							
3. Important							
2. Slightly important							
1. Not at all important							
Responsible ecotourism principles	1	2	3	4	5	Mean value	Std. Deviation
	Percentage (%)						
To comply with all relevant national, provincial and local legislation, regulations, licences and permits as may be required.	0	0	0	20	80	4.80	.408
To make the Sustainable/Responsible Tourism strategy publicly accessible within the Park Management Plans.	0	0	25	33	42	4.17	.816
SANParks' tourist facilities must blend in and respect the natural and cultural heritage of the surrounding environment.	0	0	4	20	76	4.72	.542
The use of local and natural building materials for the construction of tourist facilities.	4	12	28	40	16	3.52	1.046
To provide accessible tourism to persons with universally challenged needs (for example, the blind, or those with other physical needs).	0	0	8	28	64	4.56	.651
Facilities must be designed and built to optimise natural heating, cooling and light.	0	0	16	28	56	4.40	.764
SANParks must make use of renewable energy sources where possible.	0	0	4	20	76	4.72	.542
SANParks must make use of water-saving techniques (low-flow or dual-flush toilets and low-flow showerheads).	0	0	8	16	76	4.68	.627
SANParks must make use of energy-saving techniques and devices.	0	0	0	32	68	4.68	.476
Collecting of rainwater for alternative use where feasible.	0	0	8	36	56	4.48	.653
SANParks must implement environmentally friendly purchasing policies.	0	4	16	44	36	4.12	.833
SANParks' tourism offerings must provide tourists with the opportunity to learn and be educated about the local culture and conservation.	0	0	12	36	52	4.40	.707
Tourism offerings should be designed in a manner to allow for an enlightening nature-based experience with the least disturbance.	0	0	8	40	52	4.44	.651

5. Extremely important							
4. Very important							
3. Important							
2. Slightly important							
1. Not at all important							
Responsible ecotourism principles	1	2	3	4	5		
	Percentage (%)					Mean value	Std. Deviation
To take measures to eradicate invasive alien species.	0	0	0	32	68	4.68	.476
All stakeholders including government; tourism product providers; tourists and local communities should recognise their responsibility to achieve sustainable tourism.	0	0	12	36	52	4.40	.707
SANParks must provide a variety of facilities for interpretation.	0	4	28	48	20	3.84	.800
Visitors must be informed regarding environmentally friendly practices, for example, water-saving and recycling techniques.	0	0	8	56	36	4.28	.614
The use of environmentally friendly consumer products such as biodegradable soap, recycled paper and pesticides.	0	0	4	36	60	4.56	.583
Where possible, SANParks must make use of locally produced products.	0	4	36	32	28	3.84	.898
SANParks should arrange with suppliers to minimise the amount of packaging.	0	4	44	24	28	3.76	.926
To implement practices to reduce pollution and litter.	0	0	4	16	80	4.76	.523
To implement practices to reduce negative impacts such as noise, light and erosion.	0	0	4	44	52	4.48	.586
SANParks must implement the reduce, re-use and recycle principle in all operations.	0	0	8	32	60	4.52	.653
To implement a solid waste management plan with quantitative goals to minimise waste.	0	0	8	44	48	4.40	.645
SANparks must involve interested and affected parties, including the local community, in the planning and development of new tourism products.	0	8	52	16	24	3.56	.961
Ecotourism offerings by national parks must stimulate economic activity, provide equitable employment opportunities and empower the local communities adjacent to national parks.	0	0	32	32	36	4.04	.841

5. Extremely important							
4. Very important							
3. Important							
2. Slightly important							
1. Not at all important							
	1	2	3	4	5		
Responsible ecotourism principles	Percentage (%)					Mean value	Std. Deviation
Equitable access to natural, historic and socio-cultural sites of significance located in the parks must be provided to local communities for enjoyment.	0	12	32	28	28	3.72	1.021
SANParks must venture beyond its borders to a broader community in order to grow its constituency of conservation.	0	8	24	20	48	4.08	1.038
SANParks should provide a variety of products and activities within its usage zones.	0	12	36	20	32	3.72	1.061
As far as possible, local and fair trade goods and services must be bought from local suppliers.	0	8	20	44	28	3.92	.909
To provide educational programmes for communities such as environmental education.	0	0	20	36	44	4.24	.779
To provide educational programmes for staff such as literacy skills and HIV awareness.	0	8	20	28	44	4.08	.997
Tourism within SANParks must be in support of conservation.	0	0	0	32	68	4.68	.476
There must be an opportunity to experience traditional cuisine of the area.	0	32	32	16	20	3.24	1.128
Restaurants in SANParks must make use of free range and/or fresh organic foods and beverages where possible.	0	12	36	36	16	3.56	.917
Restaurants should include venison dishes on the menu, and other game products such as biltong should be available for purchase.	13	21	46	8	13	2.88	1.154
The use of low impact promotional mechanisms, for example, the printing of brochures on recycled paper or making use of electronic format.	0	0	32	44	24	3.92	.759
Promotional materials must be accurate and complete and not promise more than can be delivered.	0	0	0	40	60	4.60	.500
To implement and manage actions to reduce greenhouse emissions and other contributors to climate change.	0	0	8	28	64	4.56	.651

5. Extremely important							
4. Very important							
3. Important							
2. Slightly important							
1. Not at all important							
	1	2	3	4	5		
Responsible ecotourism principles	Percentage (%)					Mean value	Std. Deviation
Tourism programmes must increase environmental awareness among tourists and promote positive environmental ethics.	0	0	12	32	56	4.44	.712
To provide guests with information about conservation and/or community projects.	0	0	27	41	32	4.05	.785
Sustainable/Responsible tourism development must be on an appropriate scale and human footprint.	0	8	12	32	48	4.20	.957
Ensure managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the SANParks' policy to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities.	0	0	4	8	88	4.84	.473
Commitment to fair labour practices.	0	0	8	20	72	4.64	.638
To provide staff with appropriate training programmes to improve their skills relevant to tourism in environmentally and culturally sensitive areas.	0	0	4	40	56	4.52	.586
Sustainable/Responsible tourism products must be sustainable in the long term.	0	0	8	20	72	4.64	.638
To invite customer feedback on all tourism experiences and to take corrective steps where appropriate.	0	0	8	40	52	4.44	.651
Stick to the speed limit.	0	0	8	20	72	4.64	.638
Do not talk loudly at a sighting.	0	0	20	28	52	4.32	.802
Remain inside the car (no part of the body may protrude from a window or sunroof) except at designated areas.	0	0	20	8	68	4.40	.957
Do not feed the animals.	0	0	4	8	88	4.84	.473
Visitors should not drive "off-road", or on roads with a "no entry" sign.	0	0	8	8	84	4.76	.597

Specimens should not be collected and taken out of the park.	0	0	4	16	80	4.76	.523
Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to maintain a litter-free environment.	0	0	4	12	84	4.80	.500
Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to save water and electricity.	0	0	4	20	76	4.72	.542

The principles in Table 5.3 that received the highest mean values from management were to ensure managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the SANParks' policy to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities. This responsibility was co-rated with do not feed animals, both with a mean value of (4.84). The aspect that had the lowest mean value but was still seen as important (2.88) was restaurants should include venison dishes on the menu, and other game products such as biltong should be available for purchase. This aspect, which relates to the provision of venison dishes and game products, was also rated with the second lowest mean value by visitors.

The top ten principles, which were rated **as very important to extremely important** by managers, were the following:

- To comply with the relevant national, provincial and local legislation; regulations; licences; and permits as may be required (100%);
- SANParks must make use of energy-saving techniques and devices (100%);
- To take measures to eradicate invasive alien species (100%);
- Tourism within SANParks must be in support of conservation (100%);
- Promotional materials must be accurate and complete and not promise more than can be delivered (100%);
- SANParks' tourist facilities must blend in and respect the natural and cultural heritage of the surrounding environment (96%);
- SANParks must make use of renewable energy sources where possible (96%);
- The use of environmentally friendly consumer products ,such as biodegradable soap, recycled paper and pesticides (96%);
- To implement practices to reduce pollution and litter (96%); and
- To implement practices to reduce negative impacts, such as noise, light and erosion (96%).

The following principles were considered **important to very important** by the managers:

- SANParks must provide a variety of facilities for interpretation (76%);
- The use of low impact promotional mechanisms, for example, the printing of brochures on recycled paper or making use of electronic format (76%);

- Restaurants in SANParks must make use of free range and/or fresh organic foods and beverages, where possible (72%);
- Where possible, SANParks must make use of locally produced products (68%);
- SANParks should make arrangements with suppliers to minimise the amount of packaging (68%);
- SANParks must involve interested and affected parties, including the local community, in the planning and development of new tourism products (68%);
- The use of local and natural building materials for the construction of tourist facilities (68%);
- Visitors must be informed regarding environmentally friendly practices, for example, water-saving and recycling techniques (64%);
- Ecotourism offerings by national parks must stimulate economic activity, provide equitable employment opportunities and empower the local communities adjacent to national parks (64%);
- As far as possible, local and fair trade goods and services must be bought from local suppliers (64%);
- Equitable access to natural, historic and socio-cultural sites of significance located in the parks, must be provided to local communities for enjoyment (60%);
- SANParks must implement environmentally friendly purchasing policies (60%);
- To make the Sustainable/Responsible Tourism strategy publicly accessible within the Park Management Plans (58%);
- SANParks should provide a variety of products and activities within its usage zones (56%);
- To provide educational programmes for communities such as environmental education (56%); and
- Restaurants should include venison dishes on the menu, and other game products such as biltong, should be available for purchase (54%).

Table 5.4 provides a comparison of the principles with the highest mean values as rated by managers (supply) and those of the visitors (demand), respectively:

Table 5.4: Comparison between the highest mean values of the two respondent groups (visitors and managers)

MANAGERS	Mean value	VISITORS	Mean Value
Ensure managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the SANParks' policy to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities	4.84	Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to maintain a litter-free environment.	4.86

Do not feed animals	4.84	Do not feed the animals.	4.86
To comply with all relevant national, provincial and local legislation, regulations, licences and permits as may be required.	4.80	Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to save water and electricity.	4.79
Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to maintain a litter-free environment.	4.80	Specimens should not be collected and taken out of the park.	4.75
Specimens should not be collected and taken out of the park.	4.76	Visitors should not drive "off-road", or on roads with a "no entry" sign.	4.70
Visitors should not drive "off-road", or on roads with a "no entry" sign.	4.76	Stick to the speed limit.	4.70
To implement practices to reduce pollution and litter.	4.76	Tourism within SANParks must be in support of conservation.	4.66
SANParks' tourist facilities must blend in and respect the natural and cultural heritage of the surrounding environment.	4.72	Do not talk loudly at a sighting.	4.63
SANParks must make use of renewable energy sources where possible.	4.72	Ensure managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the SANParks' policy to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities.	4.62
Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to save water and electricity.	4.72	To implement practices to reduce negative impacts such as noise, light and erosion.	4.60

From Table 5.4 it is clear that both managers and visitors largely rated the same principles as being *very important to extremely important*. However, there were differences found. For example, *“to implement practices to reduce pollution and litter”*, as well as *“facilities should blend in with the natural and cultural surroundings”* were seen as more important by managers than they were by tourists. Tourist on the other hand indicated that, *“not talking loudly at a sighting”* and *“SANParks must be in support of conservation”* are principles perceived as being more important.

5.3.2 Managers' (supply side) view of specific responsible ecotourism issues

The aim of this section was to gain an insight of how managers view specific responsible ecotourism issues pertaining to South African National Parks.

5.3.2.1 Responsible ecotourism activities: supply side

According to Table 5.5, the activities with the highest ratings include hiking trails (76%), guided game drives (64%), guided nature walks (64%) and bird-watching (56%). In the visitors' survey, guided games drives (73%), bird-watching (62%) and hiking trails (52%) were amongst the highest rated activities, whereas guided nature walks (9%) were rated poorly by visitors when compared with the managers' survey. Guided nature photography was rated relatively low (12%) by managers in comparison with the rating in the visitors' survey (48%). These differences indicate that tourists have a quite different perception of what constitute responsible ecotourism activities than do the park managers.

Table 5.5: Responsible ecotourism activities: supply side

ACTIVITIES	%	ACTIVITIES	%
Hiking trails	76	Mountain-biking	16
Guided game drives	68	River-rafting	16
Guided nature walks	64	Guided Nature photography	12
Bird-watching	56	Fishing	12
Interpretation facilities	48	4 X 4 trails	8
Picnic sites	32	Horse-riding	8
Back-pack trails	28	Hot-air balloon rides	4
Swimming pool	24	Abseiling	4
Guided Stargazing	24	Hotel accommodation	4
Canoeing	20	Other (please specify)	4
Conference facilities	20	Motorcycling	0

5.3.2.2 Responsible ecotourism activities for children

According to Figure 5.5, 92% of the managers indicated that SANParks should offer environmental education activities for children. This was also the activity that scored the highest with the responding visitors (91%). It was commented that educational activities should include teaching children about South African National Parks' diverse culture and heritage. Eighty-four (84) per cent of the respondents indicated that interpretation activities aimed at children should be offered, and 60% indicated that outdoor games and activities should be offered.

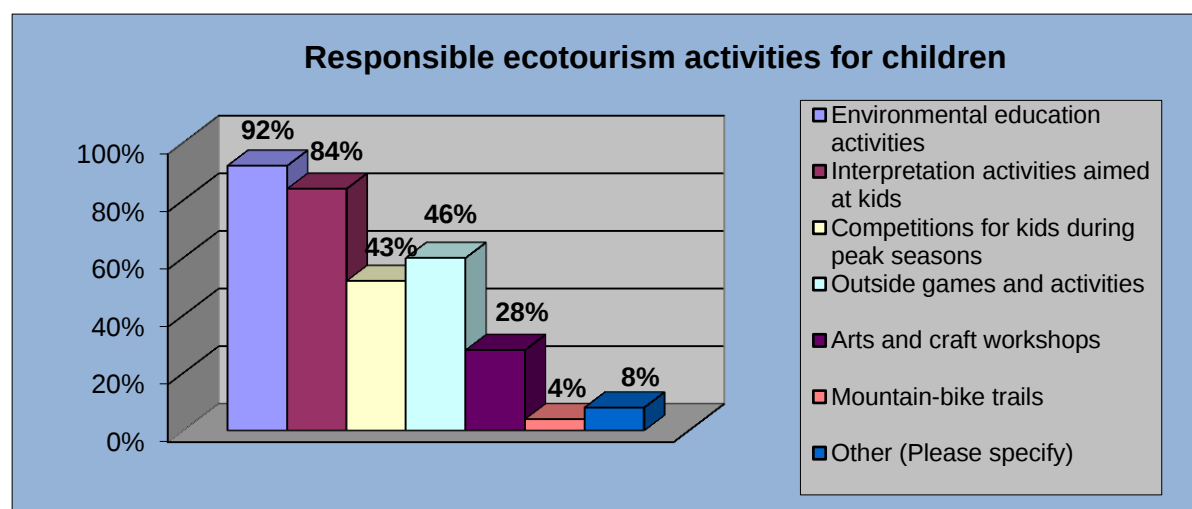


Figure 5.5: Responsible ecotourism activities for children

5.3.2.3 Congestion on roads

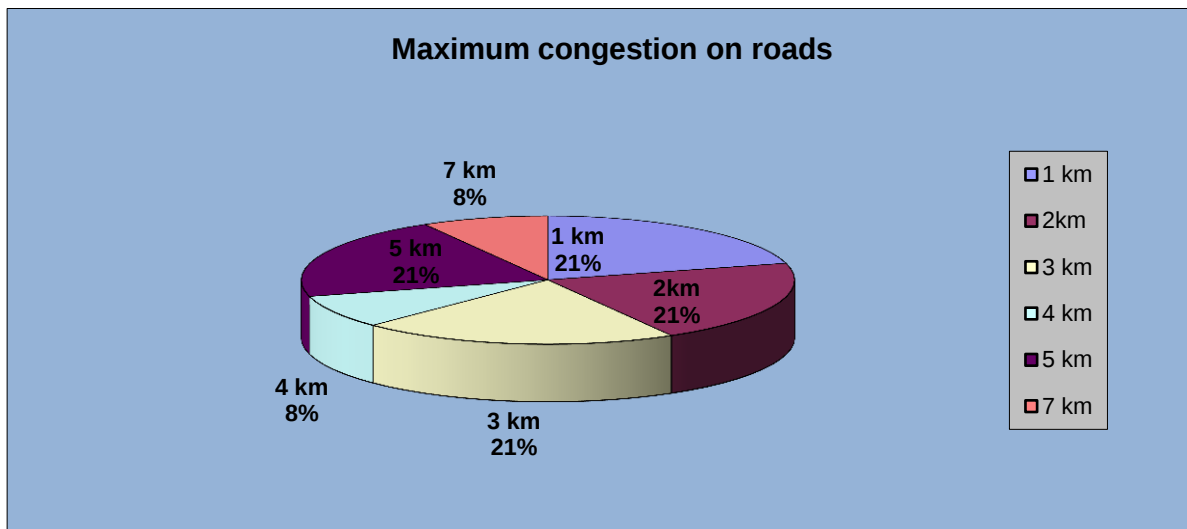


Figure 5.6: Maximum congestion on roads

According to Figure 5.6, the perception of what the maximum congestion on the roads in parks should be is as follows: 21% indicated that a density of 1 vehicle per kilometre is sufficient; 21% indicated 1 vehicle per 2 kilometres and 21% indicated 1 vehicle per 3 kilometres would be acceptable. Sixty-three (63) per cent of the managers feel that 1:3 km is a good standard for not overly congesting the roads. This corresponds well with the visitor's survey. One manager, however, responded that the vehicle per kilometre guideline for congestion that SANParks is currently using needs to be reviewed as it does not take into account that vehicles are not necessarily spread uniformly in a given area. The size (in hectares) of each national park also plays a role in this regard. Literature confirms that traffic congestion in parks can cause unpleasantness to visitors and cause disturbance to wildlife due to noise pollution (Page & Connell, 2009: 424; Fritsch & Johannsen, 2004:141).

5.3.2.4. Responsible transport methods

It is clear from Figure 5.7 that the majority of management at SANParks (92%) agreed that SANParks should be exploring responsible methods of transport such as electrical vehicles. The majority (75%) of visitor respondents also indicated that SANParks should be exploring responsible methods of transport to minimise negative impacts, such as CO₂ emissions; collisions with animals; and disturbance of wildlife.

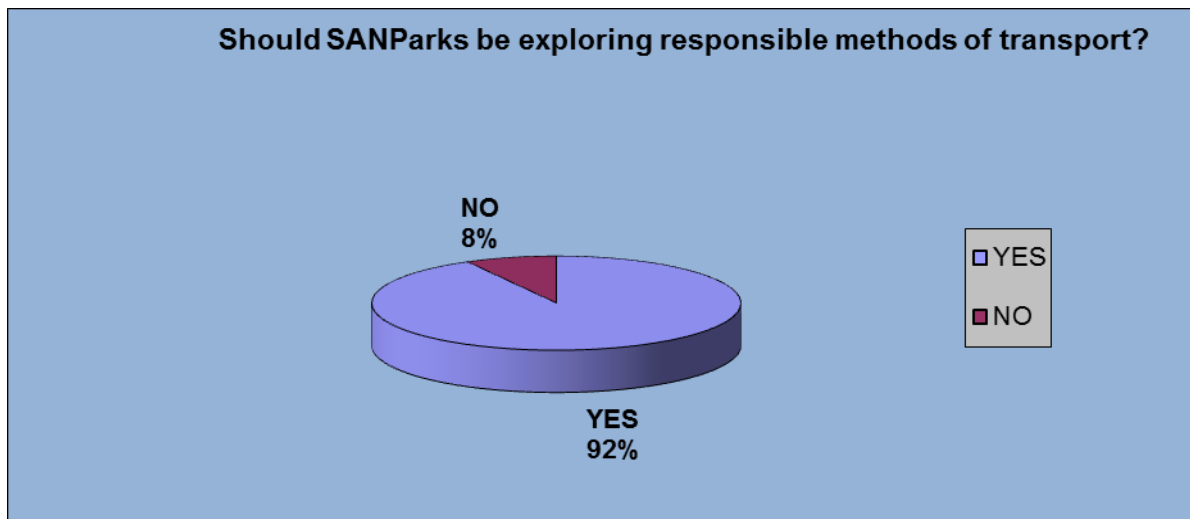


Figure 5.7: Responsible transport methods

5.3.2.5 Alternative interpretation opportunities as an alternative to the current self-drive model.

As shown in Figure 5.8, 80% of managers answered “yes” to the question whether SANParks should be exploring alternatives to the current self-drive model. The majority of visitor respondents indicated “no”; the reason being that the visitors see the self-drive model as a highly-desirable part of the visitor experience. This indicates a significant difference between the supply side and demand side concerning the current self-drive model. The needs of visitors should be taken into consideration by the supply side (SANParks) in the development and management of ecotourism in national parks.

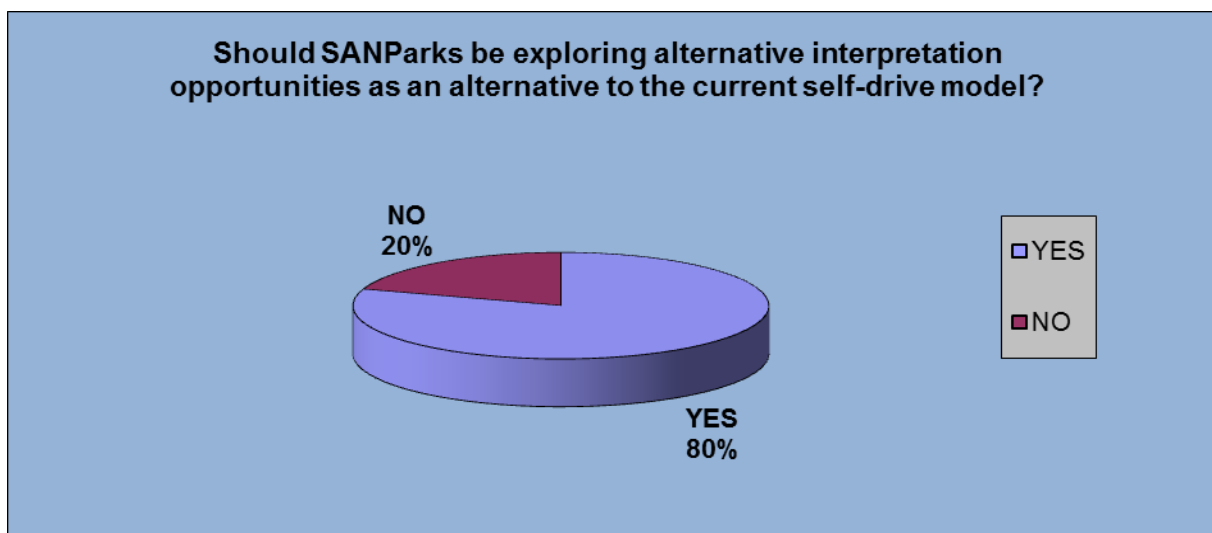


Figure: 5.8: Alternative interpretation opportunities as an alternative to the current self-drive model

The next section will focus on the factor analysis conducted on the recorded results.

5.4 FACTOR ANALYSIS

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted. A pattern matrix with the principal axis factoring extraction method and Oblimin rotation method was used in which six factors were extracted by Kaiser's criterion explaining the 61.95 % of the total variance This is seen as good for more than 50% of the variance is thus explained (SPSS, Inc., 2009). A Cronbach Alpha (1 = very reliable) and inter-item correlation reliability tests were conducted. Here, all the factors proved to be reliable. All variables were grouped under the following factors: product development, local community involvement and benefits, environmentally friendly practices, ethics, food and activities, and policies.

5.4.1 PATTERN MATRIX FACTOR ANALYSIS

From the factor analysis, 6 factors were extracted. These were: product development, local community involvement, environmentally friendly practices, ethics, food and activities and policies. This section will discuss the above-mentioned factors (Table 5.6).

Table 5.6: Pattern matrix factor analysis

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5	FACTOR 6
Constructs	Product development	Local community involvement	Environmentally friendly practices	Ethics	Food and activities	Policies
Mean Values	4.46	3.98	4.37	4.71	3.46	4.48
Cronbach Alpha	0.91	0.92	0.94	0.93	0.79	0.81
Tourism programmes must increase environmental awareness among tourists and promote positive environmental ethics.	0.545 0.449 0.446 0.320 0.319 0.305 0.290 0.226					
Sustainable/Responsible tourism development must be on an appropriate scale and human footprint.						
To implement and manage actions to reduce greenhouse emissions and other contributors to climate change.						
To provide staff with appropriate training programmes to improve their skills relevant to tourism in environmentally and culturally sensitive areas.						
Sustainable/Responsible tourism products must be sustainable in the long term						
To invite customer feedback on all tourism experiences and to take corrective steps where appropriate.						
Tourism within SANParks must be in support of conservation.						
To implement practices to reduce pollution and litter.						
Ecotourism offerings by national parks must stimulate economic activity, provide equitable employment opportunities and empower the local communities adjacent to national parks.		0.884				
Equitable access to natural, historic and socio-cultural sites of significance located in the parks must be provided to local communities for enjoyment.		0.741				
SANparks must involve interested and affected parties, including the local community, in the planning and development of new tourism products.		0.715				

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5	FACTOR 6
Constructs	Product development	Local community involvement	Environmentally friendly practices	Ethics	Food and activities	Policies
As far as possible, local and fair trade goods and services must be bought from local suppliers.		0.640				
To provide educational programmes for communities such as environmental education.		0.639				
To provide educational programmes for staff such as literacy skills and HIV awareness.		0.610				
SANParks must venture beyond its borders to a broader community in order to grow its constituency of conservation.		0.570				
SANParks' tourism offerings must provide tourists with the opportunity to learn and be educated about the local culture and conservation.		0.491				
Where possible, SANParks must make use of locally produced products.		0.439				
To provide guests with information about conservation and/or community projects.		0.416				
Commitment to fair labour practices.		0.311				
To provide accessible tourism to persons with universally challenged needs (for example, for the blind, or for those with other physical needs).		0.213				
SANParks must make use of energy-saving techniques and devices.			0.884			
SANParks must make use of renewable energy sources where possible.			0.835			
SANParks must make use of water-saving techniques (low-flow or dual-flush toilets and low-flow showerheads).			0.795			
Facilities must be designed and built to optimise natural heating, cooling and light.			0.749			

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5	FACTOR 6
Constructs	Product development	Local community involvement	Environmentally friendly practices	Ethics	Food and activities	Policies
Collecting of rainwater for alternative use where feasible.			0.733			
SANParks must implement environmentally friendly purchasing policies.			0.664			
SANParks must implement the reduce, re-use and recycle principle in all operations.			0.645			
The use of environmentally friendly consumer products such as biodegradable soap, recycled paper and pesticides.			0.620			
SANParks should make arrangements with suppliers to minimise the amount of packaging.			0.555			
To implement a solid waste management plan with quantitative goals to minimise waste.			0.522			
The use of local and natural building materials for the construction of tourist facilities.			0.383			
Visitors must be informed regarding environmentally friendly practices, for example, water-saving and recycling techniques.			0.354			
The use of low impact promotional mechanisms, for example, the printing of brochures on recycled paper or making use of electronic format.			0.327			
Tourism offerings should be designed in a manner to allow for an enlightening nature-based experience with the least disturbance.			0.292			
To take measures to eradicate invasive alien species.			0.259			
SANParks' tourist facilities must blend in and respect the natural and cultural heritage of the surrounding environment.			0.201			

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5	FACTOR 6
Constructs	Product development	Local community involvement	Environmentally friendly practices	Ethics	Food and activities	Policies
Do not feed the animals.				0.797		
Remain inside the car (no part of the body may protrude from a window or sunroof) except at designated areas.				0.789		
Do not talk loudly at a sighting.				0.777		
Stick to the speed limit.				0.771		
Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to maintain a litter-free environment.				0.756		
Specimens should not be collected and taken out of the park.				0.714		
Visitors should not drive "off-road", or on roads with a "no entry" sign.				0.676		
Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to save water and electricity.				0.65		
To implement practices to reduce negative impacts such as noise, light and erosion.				0.364		
Restaurants should include venison dishes on the menu, and other game products such as biltong should be available for purchase.					0.721	
There must be an opportunity to experience traditional cuisine of the area.					0.548	
SANParks should provide a variety of products and activities within its usage zones.					0.462	
Restaurants in SANParks must make use of free range and/or fresh organic foods and beverages where possible.					0.451	
SANParks must provide a variety of facilities for interpretation.					0.363	

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5	FACTOR 6
Constructs	Product development	Local community involvement	Environmentally friendly practices	Ethics	Food and activities	Policies
To make the Sustainable/Responsible Tourism strategy publicly accessible within the Park Management Plans.						0.605
To comply with all relevant national, provincial and local legislation, regulations, licences and permits as may be required.						0.503
All stakeholders including government; tourism product providers; tourists and local communities should recognise their responsibility to achieve sustainable tourism.						0.387
Promotional materials must be accurate and complete and not promise more than can be delivered.						0.336
Ensure managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the SANParks' policy to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities.						0.221

Factor 1: Product development

Factor 1 had a mean value of 4.46 which ranked third out of the six factors with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.91. This factor (Table 5.6) consists of the following constructs: create awareness to promote environmental awareness and ethics, development should take place at an appropriate scale, actions must be implemented to reduce carbon footprint, staff should be trained, tourism products must be sustainable, it is important to get feedback from customers, conservation and to implement practices to reduce pollution and litter. These aspects are supported by the principles of ecotourism (Geldenhuys, 2009:5; Fennell, 2008:23; Reid 1999:33; Blamey, 2001:12). If planned and developed in a responsible way, ecotourism can add value to the local area by achieving local economic benefits, increased quality of life, and an improved quality of the environment (Edgell, 2006:122; Keyser, 2009:34; Saarinen, 2009: 275).

Factor 2: Local community involvement

Factor 2 had a mean value of 3.98 and ranked fifth of the six factors with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.92. This factor (Table 5.6) includes the following constructs: empowerment of communities and economic benefits, equitable access to parks for communities and people with universally challenged needs, involvement of community in planning, support local suppliers, fair labour practices, educational and awareness programmes such as HIV awareness and environmental education and provide information concerning community and conservation projects. The local community is an important role player in the successful development of responsible ecotourism and the aspects listed are essential to create a sustainable situation (Van der Merwe, 2004:29; Cole, 2006:630; Wight, 2003:51; Hall & Richards, 2003:1).

Factor 3: Environmentally friendly practices

Factor 3, had a mean value of 4.37 and ranked fourth of the six factors with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.94. This factor (Table 5.6) includes the following constructs: responsible use of resources such as water and energy, waste management, the use of environmentally friendly products, environmentally friendly purchasing policies and the use of natural building materials for facilities. Environmentally friendly practices are becoming increasingly important in the tourism industry due to environmental problems such as global warming (Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131 & DEAT, 2003:19). Ecotourism must maximise positive impacts and minimise negative impacts on the environment. By implementing environmentally friendly practices, it can contribute greatly to the latter being achieved (Page & Dowling, 2002:1; George, 2008:306; Holden, 2008:18; Diamantis, 2004:15; 2003:386; Hudman & Jackson, 2003:39).

Factor 4: Ethics

Factor 4, Ethics, is the factor with the highest mean value of 4.71 and has a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.93. This factor (Table 5.6) includes the following constructs: the tourists and staff

should behave in an ethical manner and adhere to the rules of the park such as no feeding of animals, remaining inside the car, not talking loudly at sightings, using resources such as water and electricity responsibly, not littering, obeying road signs and rules and not collecting specimens. Not only are these principles important to minimise negative impacts on the environment, but also to enhance the quality of experience for the visitor, as found in a study done by Du Plessis (2010:41).

Factor 5: Food and activities

Factor 5 had a mean value of 3.46 and ranked last with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.93. This factor (Table 5.6) includes the following: restaurants should include venison dishes on the menu, make use of free range and/or fresh organic foods where possible, provide facilities for interpretation, and provide a variety of activities within usage zones. The eco-tourist has become more sophisticated nowadays and is interested in more than merely viewing game. Part of the ecotourism experience is that it should include authentic experiences, such as opportunities to experience and learn about the local culture (Chan & Baum, 2007:570; Backman *et al.*, 2001:458; Beh & Bruyere, 2007:1467).

Factor 6: Policies

Factor 6, policies, had a mean value of 4.48 and ranked the second highest of the six factors with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.81. This factor (Table 5.6) includes the following constructs that should be considered in policy development for ecotourism: transparency and accessibility by all stakeholders, compliance with legislation, credibility, the involvement of stakeholders and adherence to policies. It is important that ecotourism policy does not occur in a vacuum, but should be the outcome of all stakeholders' interests and values that influence the development and management processes of ecotourism (Hall, 2003:21). South African National Parks is governed by national legislation and policies as well as by international agreements that were signed by the South African government (SANParks, 2006:5). SANParks' coordinated policy framework is available on their website for all stakeholders to view.

The following section will examine whether there are any significant correlations between the factors.

5.4.2 FACTOR CORRELATION MATRIX

A correlation matrix gives the correlation coefficient between a specific factor and all the other factors (Tustin *et al.*, 2005:669). The following factor correlation matrix (Table 5.7) gives an indication of the correlations that exist between the six factors. Table 5.8 indicates that factor three (environmentally friendly practices) has a visible to significant correlation with all the

factors. Significant correlations exist between environmentally friendly practices and factor two (local community involvement); factor four (ethics); and factor six (policies).

Table 5.7: Factor correlation matrix

FACTORS	1	2	3	4	5	6
Product development.	1.000	.259	.434	.426	.171	.352
Local community involvement.	.259	1.000	.517	.285	.490	.396
Environmentally friendly practices.	.434	.517	1.000	.569	.284	.507
Ethics.	.426	.285	.569	1.000	.101	.543
Food and activities.	.171	.490	.284	.101	1.000	.180
Policies.	.352	.396	.507	.543	.180	1.000

Scale: ≤0.5 indicates significant correlations; 0.3 indicates visible correlations; 0.1 indicates small correlations.

Significant correlations exist between the following factors:

- ***Environmentally friendly practices and local community involvement:***

The correlation exists because the tourist has such crucial role to play in taking care of the environment on which the local community and ecotourism depends. It is important that tourists are made aware of environment-friendly practices using environmental education/awareness programmes (Powell & Ham, 2008:468; Littlefair, 2004:297). Further, it is important that the community benefit from ecotourism, as they will then be more inclined to take care of the environment (Neth, 2008:30; Hall & Richards, 2003:1 & Cole, 2006:630).

- ***Environmentally friendly practices and ethics:***

The correlation is because, in each case, it is about respect for the environment and reducing the negative impacts that ecotourism may have on the environment. In order for ecotourism to play a part in the long-term health of the earth's natural resources and minimise negative ecological impacts; it is essential that tourism operations adopt environmentally friendly practices (Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131; DEAT, 2003:19). Nevertheless, and at the same time, other stakeholders such as visitors, local community and staff should realise their responsibility to behave in an environmentally and culturally ethical manner (Du Plessis, 2010:48; Saayman, 2009:71; Swarbrooke, 1999:142; Keyser, 162; Iyyer, 2009:51; Tassiopoulos, 2008:310).

- ***Environmentally friendly practices and policies:***

Because environmental problems are of global concern, ecotourism policies stipulate how development should take place locally to prevent further environmental degradation and exploitation of the earth's resources. Environmentally friendly practices are implemented for the same reason (Fennell & Dowling, 2003:10; Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131; DEAT, 2003:19).

- ***Ethics and policies:***

Policies and the ethical behaviour of stakeholders both play a role in the minimisation of negative impacts on environmental resources (Saayman, 2009:75; Swarbrooke, 1999:142; Keyser, 2009:162; Wearing & Neil, 2009:37; Fennell & Dowling, 2003:7).

Furthermore, visible correlations exist between the following factors.

- ***Product development and environmentally friendly practices:***

Because ecotourism involves tourism development in natural areas, care must be taken to minimise the negative impacts on the natural environment (Page & Dowling, 2002:1; George, 2008:306; Holden, 2008:18; Diamantis, 2004:1; Hudman & Jackson, 2003:39). Therefore, the sensible use of resources, thus implementing environmentally friendly practices, is extremely important in order to for natural resources to remain adequate for current and future generations (Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131 & DEAT, 2003:19)

- ***Development and ethics:***

Proper planning and management are essential for the development of ecotourism products that are sustainable and respect the natural and cultural environment (Page & Dowling, 2002:18).

- ***Product development and policies:***

Planning and policy goes hand-in-hand as policies provide guidelines of how ecotourism product development should take place (Saayman & Swart, 2004:16 & Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:138).

- ***Local community involvement and food and activities:***

As local communities frequently form part of the ecotourism product, it is essential that these communities become involved and help contribute to an authentic experience for the tourist (Cole, 2006:630; Singh, 2008:64; Keyser, 2009:160).

- ***Policies and local community involvement:***

Policies should provide guidelines to ensure that the local community is involved and benefits from ecotourism development (Saayman & Swart, 2004:16; Honey, 2008:31; George, 2007:306; Diamantis, 2004:11).

From the above, it is clear that factor 3, environmentally friendly practices, have the most significant correlations with the other factors. Factor 5, “food and activities”, on the other hand

have small correlations with most of the other factors except for a visible correlation with factor 2 (local community involvement). This is likely to be because local communities can provide traditional cuisine and local food produce to tourists at national parks. Thus, this requires that the local community becomes involved in the provision of tourism support services to enrich the experience for visitors.

The next section will analyse whether there was a significant difference of how the visitors (demand side) and managers (supply side) rated the six factors identified.

5.4.3 GROUP STATISTICS

A t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a significant difference between the means of the factors identified for visitors and for managers. A p-value of less than 0.05 is an indication that there is a significant difference between the mean values of the two groups (Ruben, 2009:16). The significant 2-tailed (P-value) in Table 5.8 indicates that the differences between the means are not statistically significant as the values are higher than 0.05. Therefore, it can be said that managers and visitors largely concurred on the importance of the six factors identified.

Table 5.8: Group statistics – t-test

FACTOR	GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. 2- tailed
f1	MANAGER	25	4.5300	.44820	.440
	TOURIST	993	4.4580	.62110	
f2	MANAGER	25	4.101	.5754	.297
	TOURIST	993	3.976	.7291	
f3	MANAGER	25	4.3675	.33576	.980
	TOURIST	993	4.3658	.61551	
f4	MANAGER	25	4.6356	.50666	.461
	TOURIST	993	4.7127	.58046	
f5	MANAGER	25	3.4540	.67853	.987
	TOURIST	993	3.4562	.81619	
f6	MANAGER	25	4.5680	.39021	.302
	TOURIST	993	4.4835	.60197	

5.5 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to reflect the results of the empirical results that sought to determine how responsible ecotourism is perceived both from a demand-, and a supply-, side. Firstly, descriptive statistical methods, such as frequency tables, were used to reflect the results

of the visitors (demand side) and managers (supply side). The questionnaire used in the survey consisted of two sections:

- *Section A* (Section 5.2) determined the importance of specific responsible ecotourism principles (measured on a five-point Likert scale); and
- *Section B* (Section 5.3) determined the perceptions of respondents about specific responsible ecotourism issues in South African National Parks.

It was found that a significant degree of concurrence from the supply side and the demand side existed concerning the importance of responsible ecotourism principles (Section A).

The principles that were rated with the highest mean values by the managers included: to ensure managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the SANParks' policy to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities (4.84), do not feed the animals (4.84); and to comply with such relevant national, provincial and local legislation, regulations, licences and permits as may be required (4.80). The principles that were rated with the highest mean values by visitors included: everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to maintain a litter-free environment (4.86), do not feed the animals (4.86) and everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to save water and electricity (4.79).

Section B aimed to gain an insight of how managers and visitors view specific responsible ecotourism issues pertaining to South African National Parks. Firstly, in terms of responsible ecotourism activities, it was found that guided games drives, bird-watching and hiking trails were amongst the activities that rated the highest. Both visitor and managers indicated that educational activities should form part of the ecotourism product. However, differences between the perceptions of the visitors and the managers were identified regarding certain activities that rated high in the visitors' survey and low in the managers' survey. Nature photography rated high in the visitors' survey and low in the managers' survey while guided nature walks rated high in the managers' survey and low in the visitors' survey. Another significant difference between the managers and visitors existed in terms of the current self-drive model, where the majority of the managers indicated alternative interpretation opportunities should be explored as an alternative to the self-drive model and visitors indicated the exact opposite.

A factor analysis was conducted and the following six factors were identified, *Factor 1: Product development* includes constructs such as create awareness to promote environmental awareness and ethics, development should take place at an appropriate scale, actions must be implemented to reduce carbon footprint, and staff should be trained. *Factor 2: Local community involvement* includes constructs such as the empowerment of communities and economic benefits, equitable access to parks for communities and people with universally challenged needs, involvement of community in planning, support local suppliers, fair labour practices,

educational and awareness programmes. *Factor 3: Environmentally friendly practices* includes constructs such as responsible use of resources such as water and energy, waste management, the use of environmentally friendly products, environmentally friendly purchasing policies and the use of natural building materials for facilities. *Factor 4: Ethics* includes constructs such as the tourists and staff should behave in an ethical manner and adhere to the rules of the park such as no feeding of animals, remaining inside the car, not talking loudly at sightings, using resources such as water and electricity responsibly, not littering, obeying road signs and rules and not collecting specimens. *Factor 5: Food and activities* includes constructs such as restaurants should include venison dishes on the menu, make use of free range and/or fresh organic foods where possible, provide facilities for interpretation, and provide a variety of activities within usage zones. *Factor 6: Policies* includes transparency and accessibility by all stakeholders, compliance with legislation, credibility, the involvement of stakeholders and adherence to policies. Factor 4 (Ethics) had the highest ranking in terms of importance and second to this was Factor 6 (Policies).

A factor correlation matrix was discussed. Correlations were categorised into significant correlations, visible correlations and small correlations. It was found that factor 3, (environmentally friendly practices), has the most significant correlations with the other factors which include factor 2 (local community involvement), factor 4 (ethics) and factor 6 (policies). Factor 5, (food and activities), has the smallest correlations with the other factors, but has a visible correlation with factor 2 (local community involvement). Finally, in order to determine whether there was a significant difference between the visitors' and managers' perception regarding the importance of the factors, a t-test was conducted. The t-test revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the mean values of the visitors and those of the managers for each of the factors.

6

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if mankind is to survive."

~Albert Einstein~

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this Chapter is to draw conclusions, make recommendations and to state the contribution this study has made to the tourism field. The primary objective of the study was to develop an ecotourism model for South Africa National Parks.

In achieving this goal, the following secondary objectives were met:

- **Objective 1:** To undertake a literature analysis regarding sustainable- and responsible tourism.

This objective was achieved in Chapter 2, where the chronological development of sustainable tourism was outlined and sustainable tourism was analysed with specific attention being given to the triple bottom line aspects (which include economic efficiency, socio-cultural justice, and environmental integrity) as well as the challenges pertaining to the implementation of sustainable tourism. The chapter also focused on the emergence of responsible tourism, important role players and the relationship between sustainable and responsible tourism. Finally, the chapter concluded with a discussion of the future of responsible tourism.

- **Objective 2:** To determine key aspects/pillars and the principles of ecotourism.

This objective was achieved in Chapter 3. An analysis of ecotourism definitions was conducted in order to identify key principles of ecotourism, whereafter a discussion of the

pillars (natural and cultural attractions, educational opportunities; sustainable management and tourist experience) on which ecotourism is based followed. The positive and negative impacts that ecotourism can make on the economy, communities and the environment are highlighted. Thereafter, the development and management aspects of ecotourism such as facilities design; site and visitor management techniques; eco-efficient practices were discussed.

- **Objective 3:** To investigate current international and national ecotourism policies.

This objective was achieved in Chapter 4. The role and formulation of policies in tourism development were discussed, followed by an analysis of international and national organisations and policies that have an impact on tourism policies. Lastly, current policies regarding ecotourism in South Africa and in South African National Parks were discussed.

- **Objective 4:** To conduct a factor analysis on responsible and ecotourism principles.

This objective was achieved in Chapter 5. The empirical research was twofold: firstly to gain an understanding of the perceptions from a demand side (visitors to South African National Parks) and secondly from a supply side (management of South African National Parks), regarding key responsible ecotourism principles. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted from which 6 factors were extracted.

- **Objective 5:** To draw conclusions and make recommendations with regard to development aspects of ecotourism for national parks in South Africa.

The final objective will be met in this Chapter where the main conclusions and recommendations of the study are provided for future research as well as the contribution of the research to the field of ecotourism in the form of an ecotourism model for South African National Parks.

The aim of this Chapter is to draw conclusion and make recommendation with regard to this study. The chapter will therefore address the following. Firstly, the contributions of this study will be stated. Secondly, conclusions will be drawn from the literature study and the empirical research. Finally, the recommendations will be made based on this study as well as those for future research direction.

6.2 MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The study made the following contributions to the field of ecotourism:

- This research presents the first ecotourism model for South African National Parks which can assist park management in creating ecotourism products that provide a

sustainable ecotourism experience and secure the future of ecotourism in national parks.

- It was the first time that the perception of ecotourism was determined from both a demand and supply side in South Africa National Parks, which assisted in identifying the key factors for ecotourism products.
- The results of this research paved the way for SANParks in the development of an ecotourism policy for South African National Parks.
- The results further made a contribution to the future development of a national ecotourism policy for South Africa (which currently does not exist). Such a policy can then be applied to provincial parks, private game reserves and game farms in South Africa.
- The research contributed to the development of a sustainable ecotourism rating criteria for South African National Parks to allow them to grow closer to an ideal managed system that is in line with sustainable / responsible management aspects.
- The results were presented at the First International Conference on Tourism and Management Studies in the Algarve, Portugal on the 27th October 2011.
- A contribution was also made to the literature on ecotourism in terms of clarification of what is expected by the users (tourists) of ecotourism products and what SANParks' managers view as important aspects of ecotourism and how ecotourism should be developed and managed.
- Finally, this study contributed to the research concerning national parks in terms of ecotourism development and management.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions regarding the following will now be made. Firstly, conclusions will be drawn from the literature chapters (sustainable-, responsible-; ecotourism and tourism policies pertaining to responsible ecotourism) and secondly, conclusions will be drawn from the empirical results.

6.3.1 Conclusions with regard to the literature study

The conclusions regarding the literature study are based on the following key areas: firstly, sustainable and responsible tourism, secondly, ecotourism development and management aspects and finally, ecotourism policies.

6.3.1.1 Conclusions with regard to sustainable and responsible tourism literature analysis

- Sustainable tourism is a means of contributing to sustainable development. This is because tourism produces economic gains and is consequently an important contributor to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP); it stimulates investment in infrastructure; and helps to improve the living conditions of local people. Sustainable tourism's goal is to minimise negative social, environmental and economic impacts, while maximising the positive effect that tourism offers (cf. 2.2).
- Major events that have contributed to the emergence and shaping of sustainable tourism include:
 - The publishing of the Brundtland report – also known as “Our common future”.
 - The Rio Earth Summit and launch of Agenda 21 in 1992.
 - The launch of Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry in 1996.
 - The second Earth Summit in 1997, held in New York.
 - The Summit on Sustainable Development which was held in Johannesburg, in 2002.
 - The launch of the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria at the World Conservation Congress in 1998 (cf. 2.2).
- Sustainable-; responsible-; nature-based- and ecotourism all have the goal of minimising the negative impacts of tourism and maximising the positive impacts. However, these terms cannot be used interchangeably (cf. 2.2.1).
- Tourism plays an important role in the quest to alleviate poverty, by creating jobs and (invisible) exports. Even so, economic growth that harms the environment is not sustainable (cf. 2.3).
- A healthy economy enables a destination to improve the environment by providing incentives that encourage preservation and enhance the quality of life for the local community. Sustainable tourism, therefore, implies a balanced approach in developing and managing ecotourism (cf. 2.3).
- The principles of sustainable tourism include:
 - The responsible use of natural resources; minimisation of waste;
 - Preservation of essential ecological processes;
 - Respect for the socio-cultural environment;
 - Equitable social and-economic benefits to the local community;
 - Training of staff; building partnerships; responsible marketing; and
 - Long-term economic viability (cf. 2.3).
- The implementation of sustainable tourism principles has proven to be a difficult task due in part to the lack of a universal understanding what sustainable tourism is. A major

breakthrough concerning this challenge came with the launch of the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the United Nations Foundation and the Rainforest Alliance in 2008. The principles so launched now serve as a universal guideline for sustainable tourism development (cf. 2.4).

- The criteria are divided into four categories. These are effective sustainability planning, maximising social and economic benefits for the local community, enhancing cultural heritage and reducing negative impacts to the environment (cf. 2.4).
- These criteria can be used by the tourism industry, in conjunction with indicators such as the baseline indicators of the World Tourism Organisation, in order to track the progress towards sustainability (cf. 2.4).
- The indicators can be used to determine the effect that tourism has on host communities, the level of customer satisfaction, economic benefits gained, the management of energy; water and waste and the intensity of use (cf. 2.4).
- Responsible tourism should be seen as a pathway in achieving sustainable tourism and not as a substitute for it (cf. 2.5).
- Responsible tourism and sustainable tourism have the same goals of economic efficiency, socio-cultural justice and environmental integrity. However, responsible tourism emphasises the need for all stakeholders (the public sector, private sector, the local community, tourists and non-government organisations) to take responsibility for their actions in ensuring a sustainable tourism industry (cf. 2.5).
- Principles of responsible tourism include the following:
 - Minimisation of negative impacts;
 - Improved quality life and working environment as well as economic benefits must accrue to the local community;
 - Local community involvement in decision-making;
 - Conservation of cultural and natural heritage;
 - Accessibility for universally challenged people;
 - Culturally sensitive; and
 - Enjoyable and meaningful experiences for tourists (cf. 2.5).
- Responsible tourism management holds the following benefits for tourism businesses:
 - Increased community support;
 - Stronger branding position;
 - Enhanced corporate image and reputation;
 - Employee morale;
 - Price premiums;
 - Industry awards and recognition; and
 - Diversification of the tourism product (cf. 2.5).

- Key role players identified in responsible tourism were the public sector, private sector; the local community, tourists and non-government organisations (cf. 2.6).
 - Public sector's role in tourism industry includes the *regulation and protection* of the country's natural and cultural heritage, *planning and transformation*, *coordination* of the tourism industry vertically (between different levels such as local, provincial and national) as well as horizontally (between other government agencies), *marketing* and investment in *research* projects (cf. 2.6.1).
 - The role of the private sector includes stimulating economic development and enhancing the quality of life of the community, providing quality tourism products and services, working in partnership with the community and the public sector and to be environmentally responsible (cf. 2.6.2).
 - The tourists' role in sustaining the tourism industry include respect for the local community, their culture, the environment and laws and regulations of the destination, supporting local businesses, conserving local resources and supporting environmentally conscious businesses (cf. 2.6.3).
 - The roles of the local communities' include acting as guardians of the destinations natural and cultural heritage, acting as hosts, providing complimentary products for the tourism industry and building partnerships with public and private sector (cf. 2.6.4).
 - Non-government organisations' roles includes the facilitation of interaction between stakeholders, advocacy, providing programmes to minimise negative impacts, cooperation and consultation with stakeholders, fundraising for conservation and fostering respect for the laws and regulations of the destination (cf. 2.6.5).
- Tourists are increasingly becoming aware of environmental threats such as climate change, water scarcity, deforestation etc. and are therefore demanding more environmentally and culturally ethical tourism products. A holistic planning and management approach is necessary for sustainable/responsible tourism to play a valuable role in achieving local economic benefits, increase quality of life, and improve the quality of the environment (cf. 2.6.5).

6.3.1.2 Conclusions with regards to ecotourism literature analysis

- Ecotourism is a responsible, non-consumptive form of nature-based tourism, which also forms part of the larger sustainable tourism paradigm (cf. 3.2).
- Ecotourism is based on four main pillars. The four are promotion and enhancement of the natural and cultural environment, to provide environmental education opportunities,

to ensure sustainable planning and management and to facilitate tourist satisfaction (cf. 3.2).

- The principles of ecotourism include the following:
 - Ecotourism must occur in a natural setting;
 - Ecotourism is a non-consumptive form of tourism;
 - Tourists and local communities should be made aware of environmental impacts through education and interpretation;
 - Ecotourism must provide the tourist with an enlightening (enriching/educational /informative) experience of nature and the local culture;
 - The local community should be involved in the planning and management of ecotourism at a destination;
 - Long-term economic benefits must accrue to the local community; a balance must be kept between economic advancement and the ecology; and
 - Negative environmental, social, and economic impacts must be minimised and positive impacts must be maximised (cf. 3.2).
- The success of ecotourism is dependent on natural and cultural attractions and therefore is crucial for the enhancement and sustainment of the natural and cultural environments (cf. 3.2.1).
- Environmental education and interpretation are essential components of ecotourism as they serve two main purposes, enhancing the experience for tourists and influencing tourist and community behaviour (cf. 3.2.2).
- Environmental education can be used as a tool to minimise negative socio-cultural and environmental impacts (cf. 3.2.2).
- Ecotourism must comply with the principles of sustainable tourism which imply balancing economic, social and environmental objectives (cf. 3.2.3).
- It is important to create experiences that will satisfy the needs and wants of eco-tourists in order to ensure the viability of ecotourism. It is therefore vital to understand eco-tourists' perceptions and motivations (cf. 3.2.4).
- Various models have been developed to minimise the negative impacts of tourism in natural areas such as:
 - The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS), which presents various categories of land use management, from primitive to urban. It also identifies site characteristics that influence opportunities for recreation.
 - The Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) model which is used to determine the acceptable conditions of an area by incorporating social, economic and environmental dimensions.
 - The Tourism Opportunity Spectrum (TOS), a modification of ROS, that considers a variety of tourism opportunities.

- The Ecotourism Opportunity Spectrum (ECOS) is based on the existing models of ROS and TOS and concentrates specifically on opportunities for ecotourism at destinations (cf. 3.3).
- Ecotourism will stimulate the development of other amenities such as shopping facilities, filling stations, art and craft shops and restaurants. These, in turn, will lead to further job opportunities being created (cf. 3.4.1).
- The local community should benefit from tourist spending in an area and economic leakages must be minimised (cf. 3.4.1).
- Ecotourism can result in positive socio-cultural impacts such as improved infrastructures, increased cultural awareness, preservation of heritage, on the social stability of communities and in community cohesion (cf. 3.4.2).
- Involving communities in the development and management of ecotourism, and empowering them, is necessary to ensure the long-term social-cultural benefits.
- Negative socio-cultural impacts could include the following: antagonism, staged authenticity, health issues; and co-modification of culture (cf. 3.4.2).
- Natural resources are under constant pressure due to various demands. Positive contributions of ecotourism to the environment include that it makes financial contributions for restoration and conservation; it increases public awareness of environmental issues; it motivates greater eco-efficiency and mandates conservation (cf. 3.4.3).
- Negative impacts of ecotourism on the environment also need to be managed and could include the pressure placed on natural resource supplies, increased pollution, unnecessary disturbance of wildlife, vegetation trampling and an unwanted contribution to climate change (cf. 3.4.3).
- Some of the challenges for ecotourism include ensuring that the tourism demand does not exceed the resources available for its development, facilities design and appropriateness of type and/or size of the development area, site and visitor management, eco-efficient practices. Marketing and internal marketing are some of the most important aspects that should be taken into consideration when developing an ecotourism product (cf. 3.5).
- Landscaping and facilities design must be completed in an environmentally sensitive manner in order to maintain the ambience of the environment and to ensure an authentic experience for the visitor.
- Low impact construction not only plays a role in the reducing negative environmental impacts, but also reduces operational costs in the long term (cf. 3.5.1).
- Site and visitor management strategies must be used to minimise the negative impacts, such as vegetation trampling, trail erosion and visitor crowding, in a given area. Site management is necessary to control the way in which an area will be used by visitors

and include the strategies of control of visitor movement, infrastructure design and zoning (cf. 3.5.2).

- Visitor management is important in order to influence the behaviour of visitors and the amount of use permitted. Strategies here include managing visitor numbers, placing limitations on usage permitted and education and interpretation (cf. 3.5.2).
- It is important for ecotourism operators to implement eco-efficient practices in order to contribute to the long-term well-being of the environment. Key areas of eco-efficiency include energy efficiency, water management and waste management (cf. 3.5.3).
- Energy efficiency practices include using energy saving equipment, making use of natural ventilation, insulate roofs and heating pipes and making use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind energy (cf. 3.5.3.1).
- Waste management is based on the three “R’s”, reduce, reuse and recycle. These principles, together with choosing biodegradable products, contribute to the maintenance of a litter-free environment and help avoid environmentally hazardous substances (cf. 3.5.3.2).
- Water management practices include the installation of rainwater tanks, repairing leaks promptly; using grey water for irrigation and landscaping, opting for low or dual flush toilets and making use of water-efficient washing and dishwashing machines (cf. 3.5.3.3).
- Marketing should be seen as an integral part of the planning and management of ecotourism products. For as the ecotourism industry is reliant on eco-tourist spending, it is important to understand and so satisfy their needs and wants (cf. 3.5.4).
- Aspects that are important to eco-tourists include environmental responsibility, closeness to nature, un-crowded areas, learning experiences and aestheticism (cf. 3.5.4).
- Employees form an integral part of the ecotourism product and it is for this reason that internal marketing is an important aspect of ecotourism. It is therefore important, in term of internal marketing, to establish a service-orientated culture, to recruit and train appropriately committed staff, to maintain and foster effective internal communication; and to recognise service excellence (cf. 3.5.4).

6.3.1.3 Conclusions concerning the comparison of sustainable tourism, responsible tourism and ecotourism

- Although the terms sustainable-; responsible-; and ecotourism have overlapping goals and principles, these terms should not be used interchangeably (cf. 2.2.1.). The focus points of each of these is given below:

- *Sustainable tourism* has the following focus points: ensuring the sustainable use of resources for present and future generations; maintaining a balance between economic, social, and environmental aspects of tourism; and improving quality of life (cf. 2.2.1 & 2.3).
- *Responsible tourism* emphasises the need for establishing meaningful partnerships; developing a competitive advantage; promoting the sustainable use of local resources; encouraging natural, cultural, social and economic diversity; ensuring equitable access to resources and attractions; and fostering transparency (cf. 2.2.1. & 2.5).
- *Ecotourism* occurs in a natural setting; provides an enlightening nature experience; should be non-consumptive; should promote conservation; offer a learning experience; involve community participation and encourage responsible travel (cf. 2.2.1& 3.2)

6.3.1.4 Conclusions with regard to ecotourism policies

Based on the literature study of policies pertaining to ecotourism, the following can be concluded:

- Policies are important in tourism as they provide the framework of how development should take place in order to be ethical and beneficial to the social and ecological spheres (cf.4.2).
- Developing an ecotourism policy is a complex process. When developing an ecotourism policy the following fundamental aspects need to be considered:
 - the role-players who should be involved in policy formulation;
 - the principles on which ecotourism is based;
 - reasons for individuals and organisations to get involved in ecotourism ventures;
 - suitability of an area for ecotourism development;
 - activities to be offered; and
 - whether the development of ecotourism in a given area is sustainable (cf. 4.2).
- Ecotourism policies are influenced by a number of national and international organisations (cf. 4.3).
 - On an international level, policies are influenced by organisations such as:
 - The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO);
 - The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC);
 - The World Wide Fund (WWF); and

- The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) ensure that tourism activities are planned, developed and managed according to globally accepted criteria (cf. 4.3.1).
 - South Africa's government operates on three levels: national, provincial and local. (cf. 4.3.2).
 - On an national level, the following organisations and policies play a role:
 - The Department of Tourism is responsible for tourism policy and the regulation, development and promotion of tourism in South Africa.
 - The national policy for tourism in South Africa is the 1996 White Paper for the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa. The White Paper recognises the economic value of tourism for the country, and requires that in order to achieve its potential, it must be developed in such a way that it would advance other sectors of the economy, create entrepreneurial opportunities, be kind to the environment and bring peace, prosperity and enjoyment to all South Africans (cf. 4.3.2.1).
 - The tourism industry should make an effort to implement the guidelines provided in "The Responsible Tourism Handbook" which was published by DEAT (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism) in 2003. It provides practical examples for tourism businesses on how to grow their business, whilst providing social and economic benefits to communities and respecting the environment (cf. 4.3.2.1).
 - At provincial level, there are nine provincial tourism authorities. Their roles include:
 - The development and promotion of sustainable tourism to international and domestic tourists;
 - Encouraging a more noticeable role for provincial government than for national government; and
 - Accepting responsibility for tourism policy applicable to their areas (cf. 4.3.2.2).
 - Local government is responsible for the
 - Provision of core utilities and infrastructure on which the tourism industry depends.
 - The management of the environment which will inevitably have an impact on tourism products (cf. 4.3.2.3).
- The management operations in South African National Parks' are governed by international conventions as well as national legislation and policies (cf. 4.4).

- International conventions which were signed by the South African government consequently have an impact on the management operations of South African National Parks include:
 - Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (“World Heritage Convention”) 1972, where nations agreed to take necessary measures in order to conserve the World Heritage sites situated on their territory as well as the national heritage of the country.
 - Convention on Biological Diversity 1992, whereby nations displayed commitment to the conservation of biological diversity and to the sustainable use of its components.
 - Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, 1973. The objectives of this convention were the protection of endangered species renowned in international trade, through appropriate trade regulating measures and by monitoring the status of such species (cf. 4.4).

- South African National Parks is also governed by the following national legislation and policies:
 - The White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa’s Biological Diversity of 1997 that documents South Africa’s intent to secure at least 10% of each habitat and ecosystem within the seven biomes under formal protection.
 - The Bioregional Approach to South Africa’s Protected Areas, 2001/2002, in which a proposed strategy to increase the areas under protection from 6% to 8% for terrestrial environments, and from 5% to 20% for marine and coastal environments, is documented.
 - Community Based Natural Resource Management Guidelines, 2003, the aim of which is to achieve the wise use and conservation of natural resources and ecosystems, and to improve the quality of life of local people.
 - National environmental management principles set out in section 2 of the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 that provides principles for cooperative environmental governance.
 - Relevant norms and standards set by the Minister in terms of NEM: PAA (National Environment Management: Protected Areas, Act 57 of 2003) to provide protection and conservation of ecologically viable areas representative of South Africa’s biological diversity.
 - NEM: BA (National Environmental Management: Biodiversity, Act 10 of 2004). To guide the management and conservation of South Africa’s biodiversity within the framework of the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998(cf. 4.4).

- For the proper management, planning and monitoring of responsible ecotourism, SANParks need a model that will explain how existing principles fit together and in particular, will set forth specific conditions under which tourism (ecotourism) should proceed (cf. 4.5).

In the next section, conclusions are drawn from the empirical results.

6.3.2 Conclusions with regard to empirical results

The conclusions of the empirical results are divided into three sections. In the first section, conclusions based on the survey conducted from a supply side are listed. The second section draws conclusions from the survey conducted on the demand side. Finally, the factor analysis is discussed.

6.3.2.1 Conclusions regarding responsible ecotourism from a demand side (visitors)

The following conclusions were made regarding responsible ecotourism as perceived from a demand side. The survey aimed to determine what the perceptions are, regarding responsible ecotourism, of visitors to South Africa National Parks. Visitors rated the 55 constructs on a scale from “*not at all important*” to “*extremely important*”. The aspects which visitors considered to be “*important*” to “*extremely important*” will be categorised under the following: the natural and cultural environment; responsible ecotourism practices; education; local community upliftment; and tourist satisfaction.

The natural and cultural environment:

- Tourism within South African National Parks must support conservation; and
- Equitable access to natural, historic and socio-cultural sites of significance located in the parks must be provided for the enjoyment of local communities (cf. 5.2.1).

Responsible ecotourism practices:

- Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to maintain a litter-free environment;
- The animals should not be fed by anybody at any time;
- Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to save water and electricity;
- Specimens should not be collected and taken out of the park;
- Visitors should not drive “off-road”, or on roads with a “no entry” sign;
- Everyone must stick to the speed limit in order to prevent negative impacts such as collisions with animals;

- Ensure managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the policies of South African National Parks to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities;
- All stakeholders including government, tourism product providers, tourists and local communities should recognise their responsibility to achieve sustainable tourism; and
- It is important to implement practices to reduce pollution and litter (cf. 5.2.1).

Education:

- SANParks must provide a variety of facilities for interpretation to tourists visiting national parks; and
- SANParks' tourism offerings must make provide tourists with the opportunity to learn and to be educated about the local culture and conservation (cf. 5.2.1).

Local community upliftment:

- As far as possible, local and fair trade goods and services must be bought from local suppliers;
- Ecotourism offerings by national parks must stimulate economic activity, provide equitable employment opportunities and empower the local communities adjacent to national parks;
- SANParks must involve interested and affected parties, including the local community, in the planning and development of new tourism products; and
- SANParks must venture beyond its borders to the broader community in order to grow its constituency of conservation (cf. 5.2.1).

Tourist satisfaction:

- SANParks should provide a variety of products and activities within its usage zones;
- Restaurants in SANParks must make use of free range and/or fresh organic foods and beverages where possible; and
- There must be an opportunity to experience the traditional cuisine of the area (cf. 5.2.1).

Visitors were asked questions relating specifically to South African National Parks. They were asked to indicate what they saw as responsible ecotourism activities, what activities should be offered by SANParks for children; what the maximum permitted road traffic loading should be; whether SANParks should be exploring more responsible transport methods; and whether SANParks should be exploring other means of travel; as an alternative to the current self-drive model. The following conclusions were made regarding responsible ecotourism issues in South African National Parks from a demand side:

- The most popular responsible ecotourism activities according to the visitors include guided game drives, hiking trails, educational programmes, picnic sites, bird-watching; and guided nature photography (cf. 5.2.2.1);
- The most popular choice of ecotourism activities for children was environmental education activities. Additional suggestions were made such as internet-based games, special game drives/walks for children, babysitting services, adventure and survival camps and interactive, fauna and flora identification workshops (cf. 5.2.2.2);
- In terms of congestion on roads, 1-3 km per vehicle was considered a good standard for providing an ecotourism experience (cf. 5.2.2.3);
- It was indicated that more responsible transport methods should be explored. Fuel efficient engines and using air-conditioning responsibly can minimise negative impacts on the environment. It was also suggested that a park-and-ride system should be considered that would not only reduce CO₂ emissions, but also the congestion on the roads (cf. 5.2.2.4); and
- Visitors felt that SANParks should be not exploring alternative interpretation opportunities as an alternative to the current self-drive model for the self-drive model is seen as part of the ecotourism experience (cf. 5.2.2.5).

6.3.2.2 Conclusions regarding responsible ecotourism from a supply-side (managers).

The following conclusions were made regarding responsible ecotourism from a supply-side. The survey aimed to determine what the management of South Africa National Parks perceptions are regarding responsible ecotourism. Managers rated the 55 constructs on a scale from “*not at all important*” to “*extremely important*”. The aspects which managers considered to be “*important*” to “*extremely important*” will be outlined under the following headings to indicate the link between managers’ views of responsible ecotourism and literature: the natural environment; responsible ecotourism practices; education; local community upliftment and tourist satisfaction;

Managers of South African National Parks (supply-side) considered the following as the most important responsible ecotourism principles:

The natural and cultural environment:

- Tourism within SANParks must be in support of conservation;
- Measures should be taken to eradicate invasive alien species;
- SANParks' tourist facilities must blend in and respect the natural and cultural heritage of the surrounding environment; and
- Equitable access to natural, historic and socio-cultural sites of significance located in the parks must be provided to local communities for their enjoyment (cf. 5.3.1).

Responsible ecotourism practices:

- To comply with all relevant national, provincial and local legislation, regulations, licences and permits as may be required;
- SANParks must make use of energy-saving techniques and devices;
- SANParks must make use of renewable energy sources where possible;
- The use of environmentally friendly consumer products, such as biodegradable soap, recycled paper and pesticides;
- It is important to implement practices to reduce negative impacts such as pollution and litter;
- To implement practices to reduce negative impacts such as noise, light, and erosion;
- The use of low impact promotional mechanisms, for example, printing of brochures on recycled paper or using an electronic format;
- SANParks should make arrangements with suppliers to minimise the amount of packaging;
- SANParks must implement environmentally friendly purchasing policies; and
- To make the Sustainable/Responsible Tourism strategy publicly accessible within the Park Management Plans (cf. 5.3.1).

Education:

- SANParks must provide a variety of facilities for interpretation;
- Visitors must be informed regarding environmentally friendly practices, for example, water-saving and recycling techniques; and
- To provide educational programmes for communities, such as environmental education (cf. 5.3.1).

Local community upliftment:

- Where possible, SANParks must make use of locally produced products;
- SANParks must involve interested and affected parties, including the local community, in the planning and development of new tourism products;
- The use of local and natural building materials for the construction of tourist facilities;
- Ecotourism offerings by national parks must stimulate economic activity, provide equitable employment opportunities and empower the local communities adjacent to national parks; and
- As far as possible, local and fair trade goods and services must be bought from local suppliers.

Tourist satisfaction:

- Promotional materials must be accurate and complete and not promise more than can be delivered;
- Restaurants in SANParks must make use of free range and/or fresh organic foods and beverages where possible;
- SANParks should provide a variety of products and activities within its usage zones; and
- Restaurants should include venison dishes on the menu, and other game products such as biltong should be available for purchase (cf. 5.3.1).

Management (supply-side) were asked the same questions as the visitors in terms of issues relating specifically to South African National Parks. These included the following: what activities should be offered by SANParks for children; what the maximum congestion on the roads should be; whether SANParks should be exploring more responsible transport methods; and whether SANParks should be exploring alternative interpretation opportunities as an alternative to the current self-drive model. The following conclusions were made:

- The most popular responsible ecotourism activities according to the managers are seen as hiking trails, guided game drives, guided nature walks and bird-watching (cf. 5.3.2.1).
- The most popular choice of ecotourism activities for children is environmental education activities (cf. 5.3.2.2).
- As with the visitor survey, management also indicated that 1-3 km per vehicle is considered to be a good standard in terms of congestion on roads in order to provide an ecotourism experience (cf. 5.3.2.3).
- The management of South African National Parks indicated that SANParks should be exploring responsible methods of transport (cf. 5.3.2.4).
- Managers indicated that alternative interpretation opportunities should be explored as an alternative to the current self-drive model (cf. 5.3.2.5).

6.3.2.3 Differences between the supply- and demand side regarding perceptions of responsible ecotourism

The following differences were found in the research between the supply- and demand-side's perceptions of responsible ecotourism:

- A difference was identified between perceptions of managers and visitors in terms of nature photography. This rated highly in the visitors' survey but low in the managers' survey. Guided nature walks rated highly in the managers' survey but low in the visitors' survey (cf. 5.3.2.1).

- A difference exists between the supply side and demand side in terms of the self-drive model. The majority of managers indicated that alternative interpretation opportunities should be explored as an alternative to the current self-drive model while the majority of visitors indicated the exact opposite (cf. 5.3.2.5).

6.3.2.4 Conclusions regarding the exploratory factor analysis

An exploratory factor analysis were conducted from which six factors were extracted, These factors are:

- product development;
- local community involvement;
- environmentally friendly practices;
- ethics;
- food and activities; and
- policies.

The following conclusions were made with regarding the factor analysis:

- **Factor 1: Product development:** This factor ranked third of the six factors in terms of importance. Important responsible ecotourism development aspects are the following: the implementation of practices to reduce litter and pollution, tourism in national parks must support conservation, actions must be implemented to reduce carbon footprint, staff should be trained, create awareness to promote environmental awareness and ethics; and responsible ecotourism product must be sustainable in the long run.
- **Factor 2: Local community involvement:** This factor ranked fifth of the six factors in terms of importance. Community involvement and benefits are considered to be an important factor of responsible ecotourism and include equitable access to natural, historic and socio-cultural sites of significance located in the parks must be provided to local communities for enjoyment, economic benefits should accrue to the local community, commitment to fair labour practices educational programmes and support local suppliers as far as possible.
- **Factor 3: Environmentally friendly practices:** In terms of importance, this factor ranked fourth of the six factors. Environmentally friendly practices should be applied in order to minimise the negative impacts of tourism on the environment and include the responsible use of resources such as water and energy, waste management, the use of environmentally friendly products, environmentally friendly purchasing policies and the use of natural building materials for facilities.

- **Factor 4: Ethics:** This factor had the highest ranking (first) of the six factors in terms of importance. The ethical aspects are considered to be of the most important responsible ecotourism aspects. They include no feeding of animals, remain inside the vehicles, no loud talking at sightings, the wise use of resources such as water and electricity, no littering, obey road signs and rules and no collecting of specimens.
- **Factor 5: Food and activities:** This factor ranked lowest of the six factors in terms of importance. Important aspects regarding food and activities to enhance the responsible ecotourism experience are considered to be facilities for interpretation, a variety of activities in usage zones, and the use of free range and/or fresh organic foods where possible.
- **Factor 6: Policies:** This factor had the second highest ranking of the six factors in terms of importance. Transparency and accessibility by all stakeholders, compliance with legislation, credibility, the involvement of stakeholders, and adherence to policies are all considered important policy aspects (cf. 5.4.1).

6.3.2.5 Conclusions with regards to the factor correlation matrix

A factor correlation matrix indicated the correlation between each factor and is as follows:

- Factor three (environmentally friendly practices) has a visible to significant correlation with all the factors, which points to the fact that environmentally friendly practices must be an important consideration in the development of policies and ecotourism products. Environmentally friendly practices should be exercised and communicated to staff; tourists and local communities, in order to ensure a healthy environment and the long-term viability of the ecotourism industry (cf. 5.4.2).
- A further and significant correlation existed between policies and ethics. Policies and the behaviour of stakeholders both play a role in the minimisation of negative impacts on environmental resources (cf. 5.4.2).
- Food and activities is the factor that has small correlations with the other factors, except for a *visible correlation* with local community involvement. As local communities often form part of the ecotourism product, it is essential that communities become involved and contribute to an authentic experience for the tourist (cf. 5.4.2).
- A t-test indicated that there was no significant difference between the means of the results of either the visitors (demand side) or the managers (supply side) (cf. 5.4.3).

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The recommendations based on this study are divided into three sections: firstly, an ecotourism model for South African National Parks is proposed. Secondly, recommendations are made based on the results of this study. Finally, recommendations for further studies are made.

6.4.1 An ecotourism model for South African National Parks

Figure 6.1 provides an illustration of an ecotourism model recommended for South African National Parks.

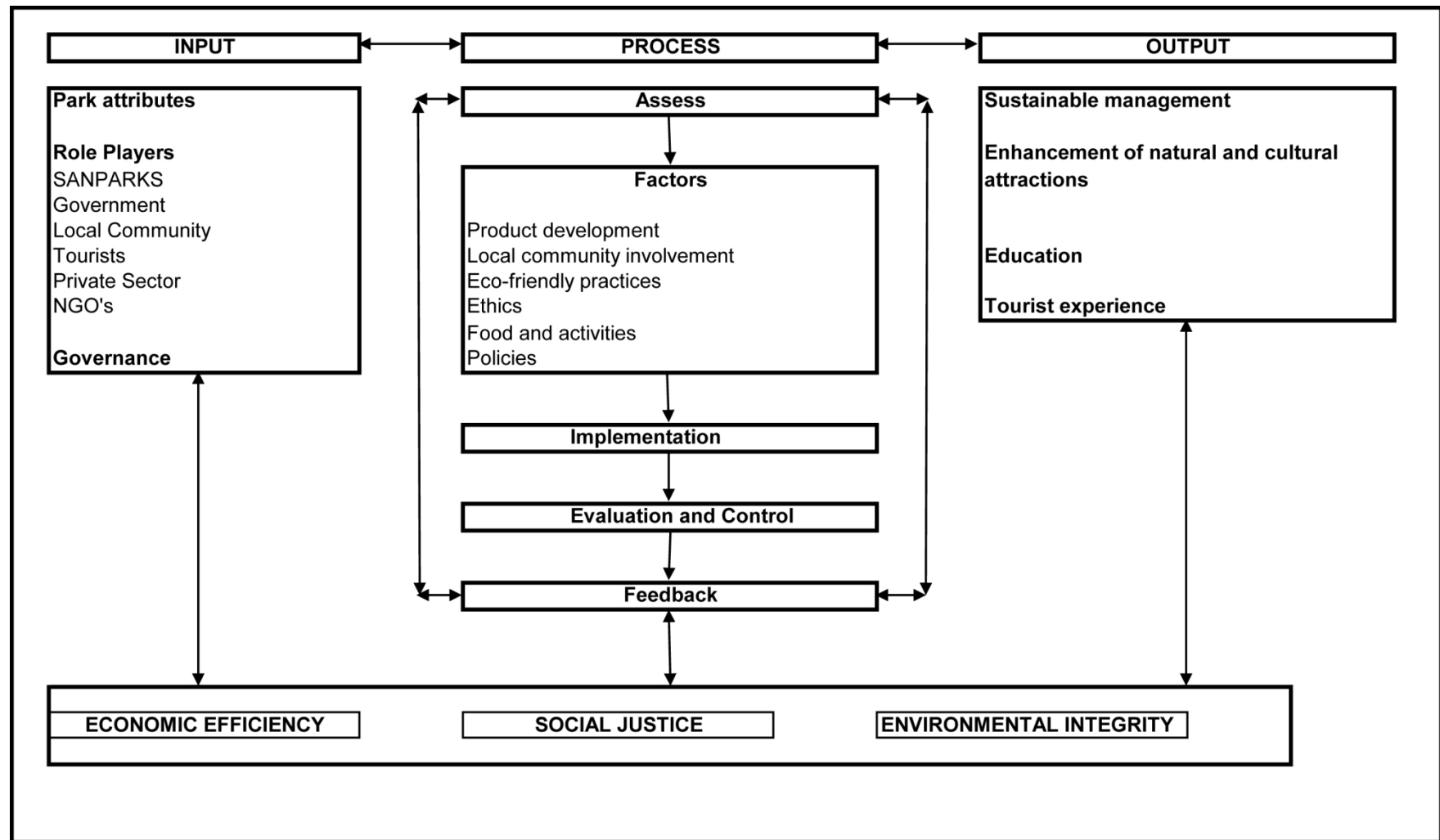


Figure 6.1: An ecotourism model for South African National Parks

The ecotourism model (Figure 6.1) will be discussed below in terms of input, process and output.

Phase 1: Input analysis

An input analysis should be conducted before ecotourism developments commence and must consist of the following:

- ***Park attributes***

In order to provide the visitor with an enlightening experience, ecotourism should take place in an environment with sufficient *natural attractions and unique features* such as topography, fauna and flora, geological features and cultural heritage to sustain the ecotourism operations in the long-term. The *local culture* can also be seen as part of the attraction of ecotourism.

- ***Role players***

The role players in the ecotourism phenomenon include: the *government* who have a role to play in terms of planning and coordination, regulation, policy making, marketing, funding, and investment in research. *SANParks* themselves play a role in terms of managing national parks based on three pillars, those of conservation, of nature-based tourism and of constituency building. The *private sector* and *SANParks* should engage in partnerships concerning the provision of additional and supporting tourism products. The *local community* must be involved by being informed about the local park, taking ownership of the health of the environment, becoming involved in tourism and in the provision of supporting products. *Tourists* are the guests and should be respectful of the environment and local culture, must support local businesses, should be informed about the environment, and respect the laws and regulations of the area. *Non-government organisations (NGOs)* can play a supporting role in terms of the overall economic, social and environmental upliftment of an area and should work in cooperation with relevant stakeholders.

- ***Governance***

Policies (national and international) should govern the process. Different role players such as those mentioned above will be involved in the decision-making.

Phase 2: Process

The second phase of the model refers to the process of ecotourism development and management.

▪ **Assessment**

An assessment should be conducted to determine the current status of ecotourism in each national park.

Aspects to measure, in terms of positive and negative impacts, include:

Economic:

- Does ecotourism provide financial resources to improve degraded environments?
- Does ecotourism provide funding for conservation?
- Does ecotourism stimulate economic activity an area?
- Do financial benefits accrue to the local community?
- What is the impact of ecotourism on the local economy in terms of:
 - Job creation?
 - Economic multipliers?
 - Government revenue?
 - Leakages?
 - Numbers of visitors; their lengths of stay and their spending?

Social:

- Does ecotourism development contribute to the preservation of the local culture's authenticity?
- How do local communities benefit from ecotourism development?
- In what way is the local community involved in the planning and management of ecotourism in national parks?
- Has ecotourism enhanced the quality of life of local communities?
- What is the impact that visitors have on the local community?

Environmental:

- Has ecotourism development lead to improved environmental quality?
- Has ecotourism actively contributed to the conservation of biodiversity?
- What is the impact of ecotourism on local resource supplies, such as water and energy?
- What is the impact of ecotourism on wildlife?
- Has ecotourism lead to greater public awareness of environmentally friendly behaviour?
- What impact does transportation in national parks have on wildlife?

- How does visitor behaviour add to or detract from the environmental quality of national parks?

After the assessment of the current status, park management need to proceed incorporating the following criteria that were identified by the factor analysis. These factors follow.

▪ ***Criteria (factors) for ecotourism development***

Product development:

- Is ecotourism, both current and that development planned for the future in support of conservation?
- Are measures being implemented to reduce the carbon footprint?
- Are facilities designed in such a way that respects the natural environment?
- Are environmental awareness and ethics being promoted by SANParks to visitors and staff alike?
- Are staff adequately trained, rewarded and retained?
- Will newly planned, and previously developed, ecotourism products be sustainable over the long term?

Local community involvement:

- Is accessibility to parks equable for neighbouring communities?
- Do economic benefits accrue to the local community?
- Are local suppliers being supported?
- Are measures taken to educate the local community of the importance of conserving natural and cultural heritage?

Eco-friendly practices:

- Are practices being implemented for the wise use of resources such as energy- and water-saving techniques?
- Is a waste management programme in place?
- Are there environmentally-friendly, purchasing policies in place for all stakeholders?
- Are the products used by SANParks, visitors and concessionaires environmentally friendly?
- Is the reduce, reuse and recycle principle being implemented in all operations?

Ethics:

- Are measures being implemented to ensure that everyone (staff, tourists and concessionaires) obey the park rules and regulations?

- Are measures being implemented to reduce negative impacts, such as noise, erosion and light?
- Are the tourists and staff made aware of how they can contribute to maintain a high ethical standard?

Food and activities:

- Is there a variety of activities available for tourists in the different usage zones and parks?
- Do the restaurants include traditional cuisine in the menus?
- Are there measures in place to ensure that facilities for interpretation are maintained and/or improved?
- Do restaurants make use of organic and local produce where possible?

Policies:

- Do policies comply with all the relevant international, national, provincial and local legislation?
- Are policies publicly accessible?
- Are there measures in place to ensure that all managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the SANParks' policy to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities?

▪ ***Implementation***

This step involves the implementation of the above principles by SANParks.

▪ ***Evaluation and control***

Continuous evaluation and control methods must be in place to ensure that ecotourism products are developed and managed, in an appropriate manner, such that the implementation progress and status may be determined.

▪ ***Feedback***

Information gathered in the evaluation and control stage, regarding the implementation status, needs to be given to management for use in further planning and decision-making.

Phase 3: Output phase

Finally, the output phase refers to the achievement of providing a tourism product that is based on the four pillars of ecotourism namely, conservation and enhancement of natural and cultural

attraction, environmental education, sustainable management and to provide an enlightening tourist experience.

6.4.2 Recommendations from this study

The following recommendations are made regarding this research study:

- SANParks should develop and implement an ecotourism policy based on the research of this study;
- Employees of South African National Parks should be adequately trained and made aware of their impacts on the environment and of the role that they play in terms of providing tourists with a memorable ecotourism experience;
- Education and interpretation should form part of ecotourism product development and so enhance the experience for the visitor, as well as influencing a positive attitude towards the environment and local community. Suggestions to enhance this include:
 - A welcoming and educational briefing on park regulations, ecotourism ethics and tips on how to make the most of their visit, especially for first time visitors. This can be in the form of a video presentation, or a short, five minute briefing or presentation that, perhaps, can be uploaded on mobile phones when booking accommodation.
 - Brochures for foreign tourists in different world languages.
- In order for both visitors and staff to know how they should behave in order to respect the local community and environment, it is important to develop a “code of ethics for visitors to national parks” and a similar “code of ethics for staff”;
- Staff, tourists and the local community alike should be educated about the benefits accruing from environmentally friendly practices;
- Future facilities should be designed in an environmentally appropriate way that should blend in with the natural environment (cf. 3.5.1 & cf. 5.3.1); and
- Measures to ensure that policies are adhered to by all stakeholders and that a high ethical standard is maintained should be implemented (cf. 5.4.1).

6.4.3 Recommendations for further studies

Further research is recommended in to the following areas:

- A determination of the key success factors for designing environmental education programmes as part of the ecotourism product that would add value to the tourist experience and, at the same time, influence attitudes and behaviour;

- It is an important aspect of ecotourism that the design and building style of facilities are environmentally sensitive. Research should therefore be conducted to determine those environment-friendly building styles that are most suitable for national parks;
- Global warming poses a threat to the tourism industry, world-wide. As South Africa's natural resources form the basis of the tourism industry; attracting millions of local and international eco-tourists every year, it is important to investigate the potential future impact of global warming on national parks in South Africa;
- In order for the South African National Parks to determine how successful ecotourism development and management within the different parks is, it is necessary to develop ecotourism rating criteria for national parks; and
- This study has paved the way for the development of ecotourism models in South Africa. Further research should now be conducted to develop similar ecotourism models for provincial and for private game reserves.

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Responsible Tourism is tourism 'that creates better places for people to live in, and better places to visit'. Responsible Tourism's aim is to maintain a balance between economic prosperity, socio-cultural justice and environmental integrity. It recognises the need for all role-players (e.g. government; operators; communities and tourists) to take responsibility to maintain a sustainable tourism industry.						
SECTION A						
According to your view, rate the importance of the following aspects with regards to responsible ecotourism in South African National Parks (SANPARKS).						
e.g.	1	2	3X	4	5	
5 = Extremely important						
4 = Very important						
3 = Important						
2 = Slightly important						
1 = Not at all important						
	Not at all important	Slightly important	Important	Very important	Extremely important	
How important are the following for responsible ecotourism?						
1	To comply with all relevant national, provincial and local legislation, regulations, licences and permits as may be required.	1	2	3	4	5
2	To make the Sustainable/Responsible Tourism strategy publicly accessible within the Park Management Plans.	1	2	3	4	5
3	SANParks' tourist facilities must blend in and respect the natural and cultural heritage of the surrounding environment.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The use of local and natural building materials for the construction of tourist facilities.	1	2	3	4	5
5	To provide accessible tourism to persons with universally challenged needs (e.g. for the blind, or for those with other physical needs).	1	2	3	4	5
6	Facilities must be designed and built to optimise natural heating, cooling and light.	1	2	3	4	5

7	SANParks must make use of renewable energy sources where possible.	1	2	3	4	5
8	SANParks must make use of water-saving techniques (low-flow or dual-flush toilets and low-flow showerheads).	1	2	3	4	5
9	SANParks must make use of energy-saving techniques and devices.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Collecting of rainwater for alternative use where feasible.	1	2	3	4	5
11	SANParks must implement environmentally friendly purchasing policies.	1	2	3	4	5
12	SANParks' tourism offerings must provide tourists with the opportunity to learn and be educated about the local culture and conservation.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Tourism offerings should be designed in a manner to allow for an enlightening nature-based experience with the least disturbance.	1	2	3	4	5
14	To take measures to eradicate invasive alien species.	1	2	3	4	5
15	All stakeholders including government; tourism product providers; tourists and local communities should recognise their responsibility to achieve sustainable tourism.	1	2	3	4	5
16	SANParks must provide a variety of facilities for interpretation.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Visitors must be informed regarding environmentally friendly practices, e.g. water-saving and recycling techniques.	1	2	3	4	5
18	The use of environmentally friendly consumer products such as biodegradable soap, recycled paper and pesticides.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Where possible, SANParks must make use of locally produced products.	1	2	3	4	5
20	SANParks should make arrangements with suppliers to minimise the amount of packaging.	1	2	3	4	5
21	To implement practices to reduce pollution and litter.	1	2	3	4	5
22	To implement practices to reduce negative impacts such as noise, light, and erosion.	1	2	3	4	5
23	SANParks must implement the reduce, re-use and recycle principle in all operations.	1	2	3	4	5
24	To implement a solid waste management plan with quantitative goals to minimise waste.	1	2	3	4	5
25	SANparks must involve interested and affected parties, including the local community, in the planning and development of new tourism products.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Ecotourism offerings by national parks must stimulate economic activity, provide equitable employment opportunities and empower the local communities adjacent to national parks.	1	2	3	4	5
27	Equitable access to natural, historic and socio-cultural sites of significance located in the parks, must be provided to local communities for enjoyment.	1	2	3	4	5
28	SANParks must venture beyond its borders to a broader community in order to grow its constituency of conservation.	1	2	3	4	5

29	SANParks should provide a variety of products and activities within its usage zones.	1	2	3	4	5
30	As far as possible, local and fair trade goods and services must be bought from local suppliers.	1	2	3	4	5
31	To provide educational programmes for communities such as environmental education.	1	2	3	4	5
32	To provide educational programmes for staff such as literacy skills and HIV awareness.	1	2	3	4	5
33	Tourism within SANParks must be in support of conservation.	1	2	3	4	5
34	There must be an opportunity to experience traditional cuisine of the area.	1	2	3	4	5
35	Restaurants in SANParks must make use of free range and/or fresh organic foods and beverages where possible.	1	2	3	4	5
36	Restaurants should include venison dishes on the menu, and other game products such as biltong should be available for purchase.	1	2	3	4	5
37	The use of low impact promotional mechanisms, e.g. the printing of brochures on recycled paper or making use of electronic format.	1	2	3	4	5
38	Promotional materials must be accurate and complete and not promise more than can be delivered.	1	2	3	4	5
39	To implement and manage actions to reduce greenhouse emissions and other contributors to climate change.	1	2	3	4	5
40	Tourism programmes must increase environmental awareness among tourists and promote positive environmental ethics.	1	2	3	4	5
41	To provide guests with information about conservation and/or community projects.	1	2	3	4	5
42	Sustainable/Responsible tourism development must be on an appropriate scale and human footprint.	1	2	3	4	5
43	Ensure managers, staff and contract employees understand and adhere to all aspects of the SANParks' policy to prevent negative impacts on the environment and local communities.	1	2	3	4	5
44	Commitment to fair labour practices.	1	2	3	4	5
45	To provide staff with appropriate training programmes to improve their skills relevant to tourism in environmentally and culturally sensitive areas.	1	2	3	4	5
46	Sustainable/Responsible tourism products must be sustainable in the long run.	1	2	3	4	5
47	To invite customer feedback on all tourism experiences and to take corrective steps where appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
48	Indicate with an 'X' how you would rate the importance of the following sustainable/responsible tourism ethics in parks?					
48.1	Stick to the speed limit.	1	2	3	4	5
48.2	Don't talk loudly at a sighting.	1	2	3	4	5
48.3	Remain inside the car (no part of the body may protrude from a window or sunroof) except at designated areas.	1	2	3	4	5

48.4	Don't feed the animals.	1	2	3	4	5
48.5	Visitors should not drive "off-road", or on roads with a "no entry" sign.	1	2	3	4	5
48.6	Specimens should not be collected and taken out of the park.	1	2	3	4	5
48.7	Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to maintain a litter-free environment.	1	2	3	4	5
48.8	Everyone (staff and visitors) has a responsibility to save water and electricity.	1	2	3	4	5
SECTION B						
Please indicate with an "X" where appropriate						
1	Choose 5 of the following, by indicating with an "X" , which you would consider to be responsible ecotourism activities and products and should be included and offered by SANParks (where applicable)?					
	Swimming pool		1			
	Hiking trails		2			
	Back-pack trails		3			
	Hot-air balloon rides		4			
	Guided nature walks		5			
	Guided game drives		6			
	Mountain-biking		7			
	River-rafting		8			
	Canoeing		9			
	Picnic sites		10			
	4 X 4 trails		11			
	Motorcycling		12			
	Bird-watching		13			
	Interpretation facilities		14			
	Abseiling		15			
	Guided Nature photography		16			
	Guided Stargazing		17			
	Horse-riding		18			
	Fishing		19			
	Hotel accommodation		20			
	Conference facilities		21			
	Other (please specify)		22			

2	What activities should be offered for children?					
	Environmental education activities		1			
	Interpretation activities aimed at children		2			
	Competitions for kids during peak seasons		3			
	Outside games and activities		4			
	Arts and craft workshops		5			
	Mountain-bike trails		6			
	Other (Please specify)		7			
3	In terms of responsible ecotourism; what should be the maximum congestion on roads in the parks?					
	1 car per km		1			
	1 car per 2 kms		2			
	1 car per 3 kms		3			
	1 car per 4 kms		4			
	1 car per 5 kms		5			
	1 car per 6 kms		6			
	1 car per 7kms		7			
4	Indicate with an "X" your answer	YES (1)	NO (2)			
4.1	Should SANParks be exploring responsible transport methods?					
4.2	Should SANParks be exploring alternative interpretation opportunities as an alternative to the current self-drive model?					
5	Do you have any suggestions with regards to responsible ecotourism for SANParks?					

APPENDIX 2: KEY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION

International Conventions

- Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (“World Heritage Convention”) 1972
- Convention on Biological Diversity 1992
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, 1973

National Legislation and Policy

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, No 108 of 1996
- National Parks Act 57 of 1976 (as amended by the National Parks Amendment Act 106 of 1998)
- National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998
- National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act No. 57 of 2003
- National Monuments Act 28 of 1969
- Environmental Conservation Act 73 of 1989
- World Heritage Convention Bill of 1999
- Natural Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999
- National Heritage Council Act 11 of 1999
- Rhodes Will (Groote Schuur Devolution) Act 9 of 1910
- Defense Endowment Property and Account Act 33 of 1922
- National Forests Act 84 of 1998
- National Veld and Forest Fire Act 101 of 1998
- Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act 43 of 1983
- National Water Act 36 of 1998
- Water Services Bill 1997
- Mountain Catchment Areas Act 63 of 1970
- Sea-Shore Act 21 of 1935
- Sea Fishery Act 12 of 1988
- Marine Living Resources Act 18 of 1998
- Sea Birds and Seals Protection Act 46 of 1973
- Expropriation Act 63 of 1975
- Physical Planning Act 125 of 1991

- White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biological Diversity, 1997
- White Paper on Coastal Development, 1999

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