

Chapter 6

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN EKSTEENFONTEIN (RICHTERSVELD), NAMAQUALAND

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this chapter is to describe, analyse and interpret the successes and challenges of an existing sustainable tourism initiative, the Richtersveld/Rooiberg Community Conservancy in the Eksteenfontein (Richtersveld) area of Namaqualand (See Figure 6.1). The chapter will comparatively assess the strengths and weaknesses of the sustainable tourism venture as opposed to the strengths and weaknesses of agricultural development on commonages to ascertain the effectiveness of sustainable tourism in Namaqualand, using the SWOT model outlined in Step 5C of Chapter 4.



Figure 6.1: Map showing Eksteenfontein and the Richtersveld/ Rooiberg Community Conservancy

(Source: "Eksteenfontein," 2004)

The chapter also presents a brief historical overview of the Richtersveld and Eksteenfontein prior to a discussion on sustainable tourism development in the area. The presentation of the empirical evidence gathered from the observations and interviews with the Eksteenfontein community and management team on their conservancy tourism project follows these sections. The empirical evidence will validate the literature results by:

- highlighting the positive impacts of the Rooiberg sustainable tourism venture as raised in Sections 3.2.1, 3.3.2.1, 3.4.1, 3.5.1 and Table 3.1;
- highlighting any negative impacts of the Rooiberg sustainable tourism venture as discussed in Sections 3.2.2, 3.3.2.2, 3.4.2, 3.5.2 and Table 3.1;
- critically analysing the role of the Eksteenfontein community in the project as communities were identified as a strategic resource in the sustainable tourism case studies (Sections 3.6, 3.7 and 3.9) as well as in land redistribution case studies (Sections 2.2 to 2.5); and
- corroborating or refuting the conclusion referring to sustainable tourism as a development option for future commonage development in South Africa (Section 3.10).

6.2 TOURISM IN THE NORTHERN CAPE

Tourism has not been a flourishing sector in the Northern Cape, restricted to through-traffic and a limited number of tourists who visited four main attractions in the Northern Cape: the Augrabies Falls National Park, Namaqualand's flowers, the Big Hole in Kimberley and the Kalahari National Gemsbok Park (Blignaut & Wilson, 2000). Figure 6.2 illustrates that tourism figures in the Northern Cape for 2002, estimated at 254 000 arrivals, were higher than the tourism figures for 2003, estimated at 202 000 arrivals (Northern Cape Tourism Authority, 2004*b*). The National Botanical Institute and DEAT firmly believe that tourism in the Northern Cape is linked to biodiversity (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2004; National Botanical Institute, 2004). The Northern Cape experienced one of its worst droughts in 2003 and 2004, which adversely affected tourism (the spring flower tours in Namaqualand) and livestock farming (See Figure 5.9).

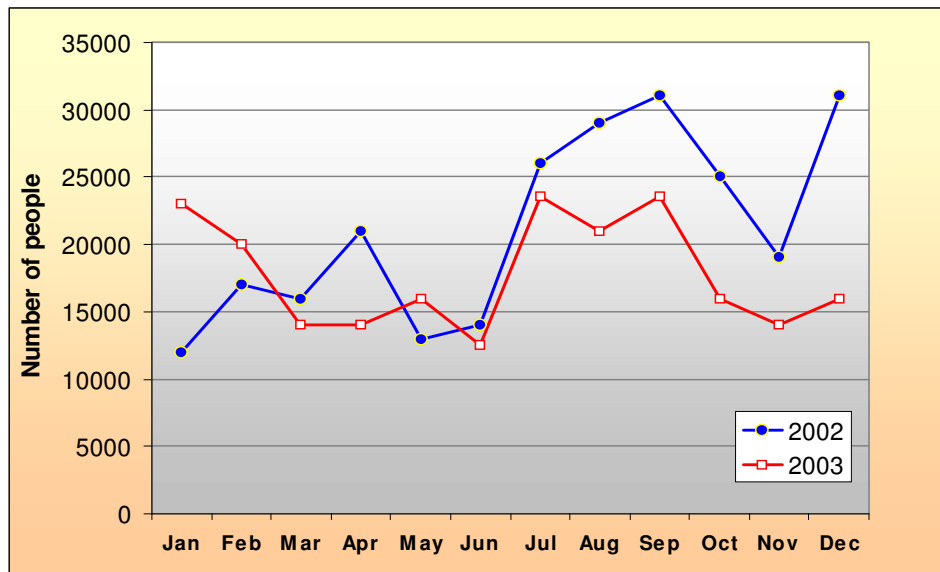


Figure 6.2: Number of domestic and international tourists visiting the Northern Cape, 2002/2003

(Source: Northern Cape Tourism Authority, 2004b)

Foreign tourist arrivals in the province totalled about 86 000 people, excluding African countries (Tourism South Africa, 2004). The graph (See Figure 6.3) outlines the top five international arrivals in the Northern Cape, excluding African countries.

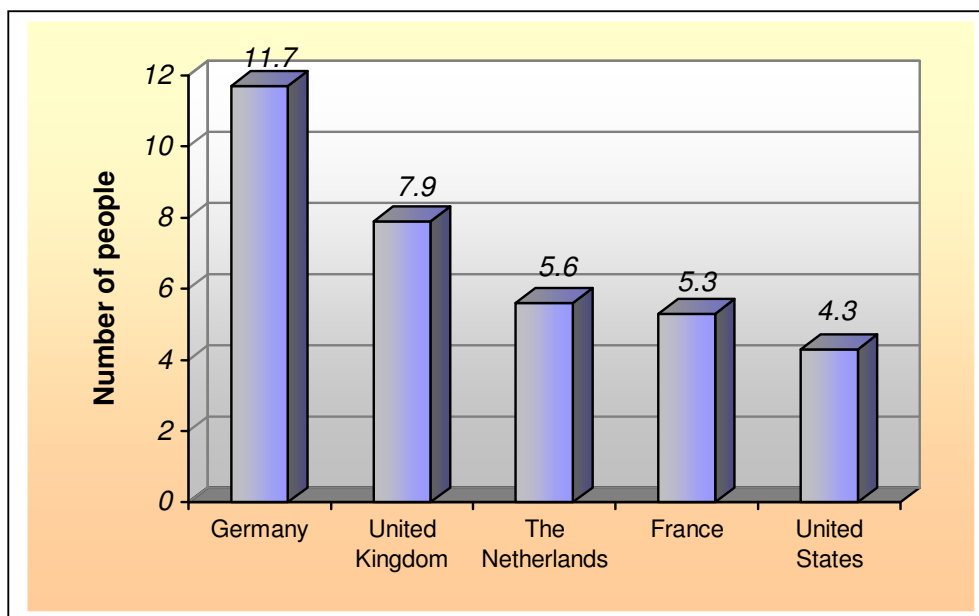


Figure 6.3: International arrivals in the Northern Cape: 2003

(Source: Tourism South Africa, 2004)

The British and Germans stay an average of 14 days in the province while the Dutch (from the Netherlands) stay an average of 12 days and the French and Americans stay between 7 and 13 days (Tourism South Africa, 2004). International tourists spend an average of R1170 per day per tourist while the African tourists' spend an average of R660 (Northern Cape Tourism Authority, 2004a). Most of the domestic tourist market arrivals in the province hail from Gauteng and the Western Cape. The province also receives the smallest percentage (0.8%) of travellers in the domestic tourist trade (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2004). Some of the reasons advanced for this phenomenon are (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2004):

- costly air fares and few flights to the province;
- the long distances of main attractions in the province from other provinces; and
- poor road conditions.

These reasons also emerged as weaknesses highlighted by tourism authorities in the province.

It would appear that the percentage of the areas proclaimed for conservation varies between 1% and 3,7% and yet the province is well-endowed with natural resources (Blignaut & Wilson, 2000; National Botanical Institute, 2004). While tourism is not a prominent sector in the Northern Cape, this has not prevented the wildlife industry in the province from expanding. "Game ranching is replacing conventional livestock farming as a more cost-effective use of renewable natural resources" (Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, Environment and Conservation: Northern Cape, 2003:1).

Registered game ranches in the province have increased by 2003 by about 25%. The trend covers not only local landowners who have converted to game but also foreign investors who have established substantial game ranches for ecotourism and hunting (Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, Environment and Conservation: Northern Cape, 2003). The tourism

authorities who were questioned identified pivotal strengths and weaknesses given in Table 6.1 of tourism development in the Northern Cape.

Table 6.1: Comparison of strengths and weaknesses of Northern Cape tourism

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Airports in Upington and Kimberley to carry international tourists and some landing strips for small aircraft and helicopters in game parks and nature reserves in the area	Limited and expensive flights to the province
National Parks such as the Augrabies and Richtersveld National park (RNP)	Limited packages offered to tourists
Pristine natural environments such as the Richtersveld	Uncoordinated tourism development in the province
Coastal areas such as Alexander Bay and Kleinsee that are linked to mining and that has the potential to be linked to tourism	Limited funds for tourism development
Unique flora and fauna	Improper marketing strategies
Unique cultures such as the Nama, San and Khoi-Khoi	Too few places concentrate on serving food unique to the cultures of the people in the area
4x4 routes	Long distances between districts and towns
	Poor state of the national roads (N7 and N14)

It would appear as if the long distances between districts and the limited and expensive flights to the province have negatively influenced domestic tourism to the province.

Tourism in the Northern Cape was boosted in 2003 with the establishment of the Northern Cape Tourism Authority (NCTA). In 2005, the Member of the Executive Committee (MEC) for Tourism in the Northern Cape, PW Saaiman, revealed that his department had only spent R94 000 from the R10 million poverty relief funding sourced from DEAT (Saaiman, 2005). The gross under-

spending is linked to severe capacity constraints of the NCTA and poor planning related to tourism development in the province.

A tourism master plan, funded by the Development Bank of Southern Africa, was formulated to address the above-mentioned strengths and weaknesses. The main objective of this plan was to ensure that all role players within the industry function within the same strategic framework. A series of consultative meetings with the owners of tourism products and tourism authorities were concluded in 2005 in order to finalise the plan. One criticism of this approach is that the consultative meetings excluded other sector authorities, financial institutions and the users of tourism products. The master plan has ostensibly been finalised in 2005 but has not yet been unveiled or placed on the Northern Cape Provincial Government website for public comment.

6.3 TOURISM IN NAMAQUALAND

Namaqualand is famous for an extraordinary springtime transformation of the lifeless scrubland into a veritable explosion of colours from a multitude of small flowers. Tourists come from all over the world to witness this spectacle, which usually peaks anytime from mid-August to mid-September (Northern Cape Tourism Authority, 2004a). The flora is characterised by a phenomenal variety of daisies, but there are also violets, pelargoniums, mesembryanthemums, gladioli and numerous other species (Springbok Lodge and Restaurant, 1998).

Aloes also puncture the landscape of the Northern Cape and tourists will know when they are in an area of very low rainfall when they start seeing 'Quiver Trees' (Kokerboom - *aloe dicotema*, See Figure 6.4), so named because the San used the fibrous branches as quivers for their arrows (Springbok Lodge and Restaurant, 1998). The Quiver tree is a protected species, endemic to Namaqualand and Namibia (National Botanical Institute, 2004). The trees form part of the natural tourism attractions, especially during late winter and early spring when tourists primarily visit Namaqualand (Northern Cape Tourism Authority, 2004a).



Figure 6.4: Quiver Tree

(Source: "Eksteenfontein", 2004)

Spring flowers carpet the route all the way down the west coast of South Africa almost to Cape Town. Figure 6.2 reveals that tourism activity in the Northern Cape is prolific during July to October (Spring) linked to the flower season, while December (Summer) and April (Autumn) appear to be linked to school holiday periods (Nama Khoi Municipality, 2005). Namaqualand averages temperatures of 35°C with hot and dry conditions in the mid-summer months (January and February) and only 5°C in June and therefore the slump in tourism during the months (Nama Khoi Municipality, 2005).

Any sustainable tourism strategy or guidelines would need to consider appropriate strategies geared towards the peak periods and the off-peak season (January to March, May, June and November). It would be inappropriate to consider long hiking trails during January to March but it may be more appropriate for the targeting of hiking enthusiasts to visit the area between June and October.

Visitor numbers to the Richtersveld in Namaqualand, for example, are already high with the annual number of visitors exceeding the total number of residents (Odendaal, 2002). The types of tourists that are attracted to this area are generally the adventure tourists, the ecotourists and the 'new

tourists'³³. Few local people benefit from tourism at this point. Black people own approximately 23,8% of the accommodation businesses in Namaqualand, one each in Springbok and Steinkopf (Namakwa Tourism, 2004).

While the key feature of Namaqualand is the annual flower spectacle, the area has potential for outdoor and adventure tourism in the form of 4x4 trails through the Richtersveld and Helskloof Nature Reserve. There are also mountain-biking and horse-riding trails through the towns of Springbok Pofadder, Pella and Garies. However, while the sustainable tourism potential exists and is acknowledged in the IDP (Namakhoi Municipality, 2005), this sector is not linked with the other principal sectors (mining and agriculture).

6.4 A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE RICHTERSVELD AND EKSTEENFONTEIN

The Richtersveld³⁴ consists of four towns, Kuboes and Sanddrif in the North and Eksteenfontein and Lekkering in the South. The people of the Richtersveld are amongst the poor³⁵ in South Africa and infrastructure and service provision are poorly developed or non-existent (Eco-Africa, 1999). The Richtersveld forms part of Namaqualand. As stated in Chapter 5, the original inhabitants of the Namaqualand were Khoi-Khoi, but also included some San people. They were present in the area long before the Dutch colonisation of the Cape. Over time, the San and Khoi-Khoi merged, at least in Little Namaqualand, with each other and with white settlers who came to the area (Boonzaaier *et al.*, 1996). The product of this relationship was called the *Basters*.³⁶

During the 19th Century, the missionaries also started showing an interest in the area. The Renisch Mission Society established a mission station under the

³³ Poon (1993) coined the term 'new tourism'. It is the notion that a more flexible form of tourism characterised by quality, innovation and market segmentation is rapidly replacing mass tourism. The move towards new tourism is stimulated by a more quality-conscious and independently minded consumer and by new technologies now being used to maximise yield rather than volume. 'New tourism' may represent an end to the mass tourism era of the 20th Century.

³⁴ The area was named after a teacher at the Renisch Mission Seminary in Germany, the Reverend W Richter (Land Claims Court, 2001).

³⁵ Section 1.9.2 outlined that 36% of Namaqualand's inhabitants live below the Poverty Bread line of R800 per month, even though the HDI is 0,62, indicating medium to high development in the region.

³⁶ Meaning: people of mixed descent. People interviewed in the Eksteenfontein area are proud of being called *Basters* and are in the process of documenting the history of this group in the Richtersveld.

charge of Reverend Hein at Kuboes. At that time, Nama-speaking Khoisan herders occupied mainly the Richtersveld and the more recently arrived *Basters*. Most of the so-called *Basters* settled in Eksteenfontein (Boonzaaier *et al.*, 1996).

After unification and during 1925, the South African government decided to investigate the position of the Richtersveld (Land Claims Court, 2001). In 1925, diamonds were discovered near Port Nolloth. In 1927, a particularly rich deposit was found at the mouth of the Garib River at Alexander Bay. Many people moved into the area (Boonzaaier *et al.*, 1996). Alluvial diggings were proclaimed and the Government awarded these permits because the land was considered unalienated Crown (State) land (Land Claims Court, 2001).

In 1930, the Minister of Lands issued a certificate of reservation in respect of the Richtersveld Reserve land under the Crown Lands Act in favour of the Minister of Native Affairs for the use of the persons residing therein (Land Claims Court, 2001). However, certain pieces of land such as diamond-rich areas were excluded from this certificate of reservation and this exclusion became the subject of the long-running court case between the Richtersveld communities and Alexkor Limited (Boonzaaier *et al.*, 1996). In 1957, a fence was erected along the boundary between the Richtersveld Reserve and the portions of land that was not included in the certificate of reservation. This prevented the Richtersveld people from using those portions of the land for seasonal grazing and the watering of livestock.

In 1998, a land claim for 85 000 hectares of land in the Richtersveld (including the diamond-rich land that belongs to Alexkor) was handed into the Land Claims Court by the four communities that comprise the Richtersveld, namely Kuboes, Lekkersing, Sanddrift and Eksteenfontein (Land Claims Court, 2001). The communities lost the case but they appealed in 2001 to the Constitutional Court. The Court decided that those communities were the legal owners of the land and considered the appeal in terms of the indigenous rights of the communities (Land Claims Court, 2001). The court felt that the erstwhile

apartheid government and Alexkor had unfairly dispossessed the communities of their land rights because of the mineral wealth (Strauss, 2004).

At this stage, the communities have registered the Richtersveld Communal Property Association (CPA) that will take possession of the land once the Minister of Land Affairs finalises the transfer of the property (Strauss, 2004). In the interim, the Richtersveld Municipality are the appointed managers until the due processes with regard to the land claim are settled. The communities are also still awaiting a response in terms of the settlement/compensation package from the government and Alexkor (Strauss, 2004).

The local communities of the Richtersveld in July 1991 entered into a contractual agreement with the then National Parks Board (now South African National Parks/SANParks). This agreement was a milestone for the implementation of new conservation policies and practices in South Africa because the negotiations initially excluded the communities and they had formed a movement called “Parkeweerstandsbeweging”³⁷ to ensure that their voices were heard. The SANParks now leases the land from the communities and the funds are then distributed by a charitable trust, the Richtersveld Community Trust. The trust, which consists of independent board members, dispenses funds for educational and social upliftment programmes in the area. Some of the pivotal elements of the Richtersveld National Park (RNP) contract are given in Table 6.2:

6.5 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE RICHTERSVELD AND EKSTEENFONTEIN

The RNP is the primary tourist attraction in the Richtersveld. The RNP had approximately 5 000 visitors in 1999. Fakir (1996) contends that the RNP is a ‘compensatory mechanism’ where SANParks is the key decision-maker. A 2003 deal with the Namibian government extended the park across the border to link with the Ai-Ais Hot Springs Game Park, which includes the Fish River

³⁷ Meaning: Parks Resistance Movement

Canyon, the world's second largest canyon (Integrated Regional Information Network, 19 April 2005).

Table 6.2: Richtersveld National Park (RNP) contract

CLAUSE	DEFINITION
Management structure	Management Plan Committee with four members from SANParks and five elected from and by the community-one from each of the four villages and one to represent the stock farmers.
Use of park	Utilisation of grazing and other natural resources remains. Stock numbers limited but ceiling on stock numbers to come down as stock enters the 'corridor west' farms (owned by the Park) for grazing.
Payment of lease	Trust formed and community members elect trustees who are outsiders. All lease payments are made to the Trust.
Lease period	24 years + six years' notice period.

(Source: Archer, Turner & Venter, 1996)

Until 2004, the South African side of the park remained almost entirely undeveloped, but an influx of poverty alleviation funding in 2004 and 2005 has been used to upgrade camping facilities and build two wilderness camps, as well as tourist accommodation in each of the neighbouring villages. Despite the increased size of the park and increased spending, the park relies on cross-subsidisation from busier parks and is operating at a loss (Integrated Regional Information Network, 19 April 2005). The joint management arrangement has also brought its own set of problems, with community members accusing SANParks of neglect, and SANParks insisting that the community's go-it-alone approach is unrealistic given the lack of local capacity (Integrated Regional Information Network, 19 April 2005).

While the communities do not influence development in the RNP, the RNP has positively influenced the communities in the form of community tourism initiatives such as the development of guesthouses and campsites in Kuboes and Eksteenfontein, and the development of the SNTR (see Figure 6.1). The primary objective of the SNTR is to link community initiatives along this route from Cape Town to Namibia and the idea is for community-based tourism

enterprises situated along this route to engage in joint marketing exercises (“South-North Tourism Route,” 2004). DEAT, who funded the concept, and the communities along these routes have not developed the concept beyond the website. A comprehensive marketing strategy for this route should also form part of sustainable tourism planning guidelines for Namaqualand. Eksteenfontein is one of the thirteen towns along this route. Table 6.3 notes the researcher’s observations on the accommodation facilities available in Eksteenfontein.

Table 6.3: Tourist accommodation in Eksteenfontein

TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION	NUMBER AVAILABLE	LOCATION	AMENITIES
Guesthouse	2	Eksteenfontein town	3 bedrooms, shower, bath/toilet, lounge, kitchen for self-catering, outside braai and wood-fire oven. Fully electrified. Sleeps up to 8 people
		Rooiberg Conservancy	3 bedrooms, shower, bath/toilet, lounge, kitchen for self-catering, outside braai and wood-fire oven. Not electrified. Sleeps up to 8 people
Campsite	1	Rooiberg Conservancy	4 traditional grass reed Nama huts that can sleep up to four people per hut

6.5.1 The Eksteenfontein Guesthouse

In the centre of town is the *Kom Rus 'n Bietjie*³⁸ guesthouse (See Figure 6.5). After acquiring funding, the local women’s association renovated an old mining shack into this guesthouse. The guesthouse is fully electrified and has the simple comforts of home such as beds, shower, bath and fully fitted kitchen as highlighted in Table 6.3. There is no television, air-conditioning or a fan in the guesthouse and tourists would have to contend with mosquitoes in summer³⁹. The area is, however, malaria-free and safe. While the local tourism officer contends that the bare minimum was necessary for tourists

³⁸ Meaning: Come rest awhile

³⁹ The researcher and her family and one field researcher spent two nights in this guesthouse, 14-16 November 2004.

who wanted to be close to nature as possible, there is a definite need for an upgrade of the guesthouse in terms of tiling, painting and bedding. Management has mentioned that there are plans to upgrade but sourcing funding was problematic. The guestbook comments also revealed that most of the tourists found their stay quite pleasant. The village women, who were also the guesthouse managers, prepared the traditional food served, which is a unique touch.



Figure 6.5: Kom Rus 'n Bietjie Guesthouse, Eksteenfontein
(Source: S Govender-van Wyk, 15 November 2004)

6.5.2 The Rooiberg Conservancy: guesthouse and campsite

The Eksteenfontein community has also initiated a conservancy project in 2002, the Rooiberg Conservancy (See Figure 6.6) project that is about 30 kilometres from the town. The conservancy is called 'Rooiberg' because the mountains exude a reddish hue at sunset.

The vision of the Rooiberg Conservancy Project is “to protect and manage the unique biodiversity and natural landscape to the advantage of the local people and all of humankind” (Richtersveld Community Conservancy, 2004). The conservancy also has a guesthouse and traditional Nama campsites with

matjieshuts or mat huts (See Figure 6.7). These facilities do not have electricity.



Figure 6.6: The reddish hue of the Rooiberg Conservancy

(Source: S Govender-van Wyk, 14 November 2004)



Figure 6.7: Rooiberg Conservancy guesthouse and matjieshuts campsite

(Source: S Govender-van Wyk, 14 November 2004)

The extent of the conservancy stretches from the southern border of the RNP and south to the provincial Helskloof (Nababeep) Nature Reserve. The area is framed by the Orange River to the east and the road from Kuboes to Eksteenfontein to the west. Management is not aware of the extent of the land

(in hectares) and whether Helskloof will be amalgamated with the conservancy at some future date.

In relation to sustainable tourism within the conservancy, the management committee is marketing the place for adventure tourists where activities such as canoeing, mountain biking, rock climbing, paragliding, river rafting, 4x4 routes and camping by the river are permitted in the conservancy. They are also targeting the eco-tourists where there are plans to reintroduce game into the area for wildlife viewing. The Helskloof Nature Reserve will also be isolated for the reintroduction of game and areas that do not have the potential for livestock farming will also be isolated for this activity. At this stage livestock farmers and other community members have not been consulted on this initiative.

There are protected species of fauna and flora in the conservancy such as the *namaquanum pachypodium* or the ‘halfmens’⁴⁰ tree.



Figure 6.8: Halfmens tree

(Source: “Eksteenfontein”, 2004)

⁴⁰ Meaning: half-human tree. The Nama legend pertaining to this tree relates a story of the Nama people that were ousted out of Namibia and into the Richtersveld area and as they gazed forlornly at their land of their birth, God took pity on them and turned them into these tall strange succulents (Springbok Lodge and Restaurant, 1998).

A hiking trail that will extend into the RNP is also planned but given the tourism season and the weather conditions highlighted in Sections 6.2 and 6.3, ideal periods for hiking would be in the winter and spring seasons (June to October). If the transfrontier park concept with Namibia is approved, then there will be more ecotourism in relation to the RNP and the conservancy. The conservancy is also linked to the Nama culture and part of the tourists experience is to sample the culture of the area in terms of the food, music and story telling. Sustainable tourism is a relatively new livelihood approach that the Eksteenfontein community has embarked on. There were no other significant studies done to assess its impacts. The study is therefore the first to analyse the Rooiberg Conservancy venture and its potential impacts for this community and comparatively assess this development for some commonages in Namaqualand.

The next section of this chapter focuses on the analysis of the interviews with the Eksteenfontein community and management in relation to the Rooiberg Conservancy project and sustainable tourism in the area.

6.6 ANALYSIS OF THE ROOIBERG CONSERVANCY PROJECT

6.6.1 Introduction

Approximately 700 people live in Eksteenfontein, 300 of which are the remaining adult members of this community. Some of the adults are employed on the mines and some have left the area to pursue tertiary studies or seek employment in other provinces. The 42 people interviewed (See **Annexure 6**) are beneficiaries of the Rooiberg Conservancy project and were either directly or indirectly involved with the development. Two field researchers resident in the area were used to identify the respondents.

Two interview schedules were used to obtain the information (See **Annexure 7** and **Annexure 8**). The objectives of the questionnaires were to gain knowledge on community tourism through the establishment of a conservancy, to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in

the model and to assess whether this model can create sustainable livelihoods through tourism. The findings will also contribute towards the formulation of the planning guidelines for sustainable tourism on commonages.

Both questionnaires will be analysed under the following sections, as there were overlaps:

- community profile;
- community participation in the Rooiberg Conservancy project;
- skills development;
- conservancy management (this section will also deal with issues such as marketing and financial management);
- improvement in livelihoods; and
- sustainable tourism development (present and future).

6.6.2 Community profile

The majority of the respondents interviewed were youth between the ages of 18 and 35 years old (See Figure 6.9).

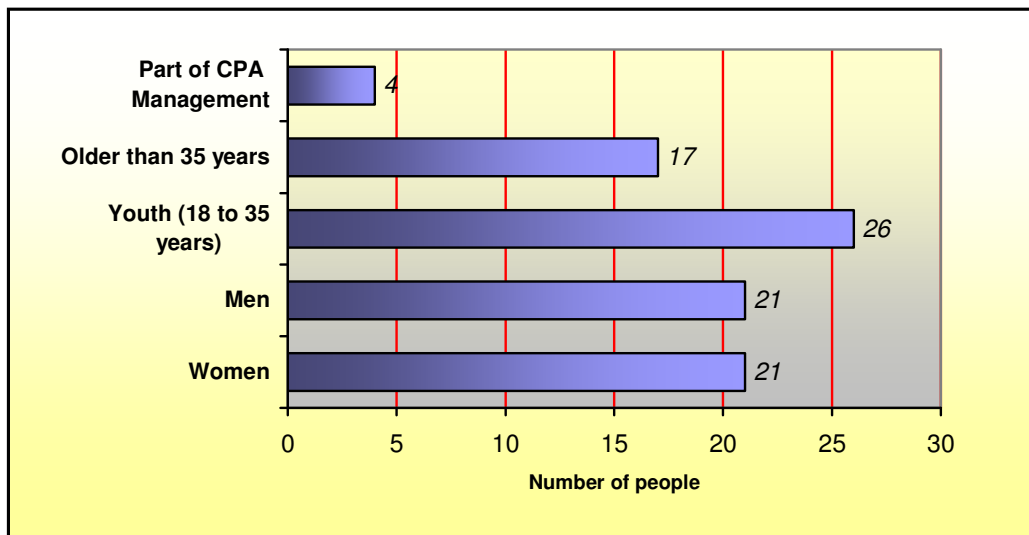


Figure 6.9: Profile of respondents

The reason for this deliberate inclusion of more youth in the sample is because the conservancy management plan (2004) states that the youth are aware of the conservancy but do not know how to make use of it and that training and knowledge around the conservancy should filter to the youth. Table 6.4 outlines the number of people interviewed and their positions in the community. There were equal numbers of female and male respondents even though the majority of the adult male population in Eksteenfontein returned to the mines on Sunday and the interviews had taken place on a Monday and a Tuesday.⁴¹

Table 6.4: Community position profile

POSITION IN COMMUNITY	NUMBER
Youth	10
Community representative	9
Conservancy management	4
Shop assistant	4
Church elder	2
Political organisation member	2
Small business person	2
Textile group member	2
Tourguide/tourism	2
Ward committee member	2
Musician	1
Pensioner	1
Livestock farmer	1
TOTAL	42

Female members of this community seemed to play a much more active role in the sustainable tourism venture than the males and, as indicated in Section 6.5.1, the women’s association developed and manages the guesthouses. There is, however, only one female, Joan Cloete, from the Eksteenfontein community on the CPA management while there are six males. The issues of fair gender representation and management capacity building for selected female members for possible inclusion on the management structure must be taken into consideration.

⁴¹ The interviews were scheduled to take place on these days to coincide with the office hours of the CPA and Rooiberg Conservancy management.

More than 45% of the respondents have lived in Eksteenfontein for thirty years and longer while 33% have lived in the area for between 20 and 30 years. Most of the respondents are therefore familiar with the history of the area, cultural traditions and current developments. The education level of the respondents is as follows (See Figure 6.10):

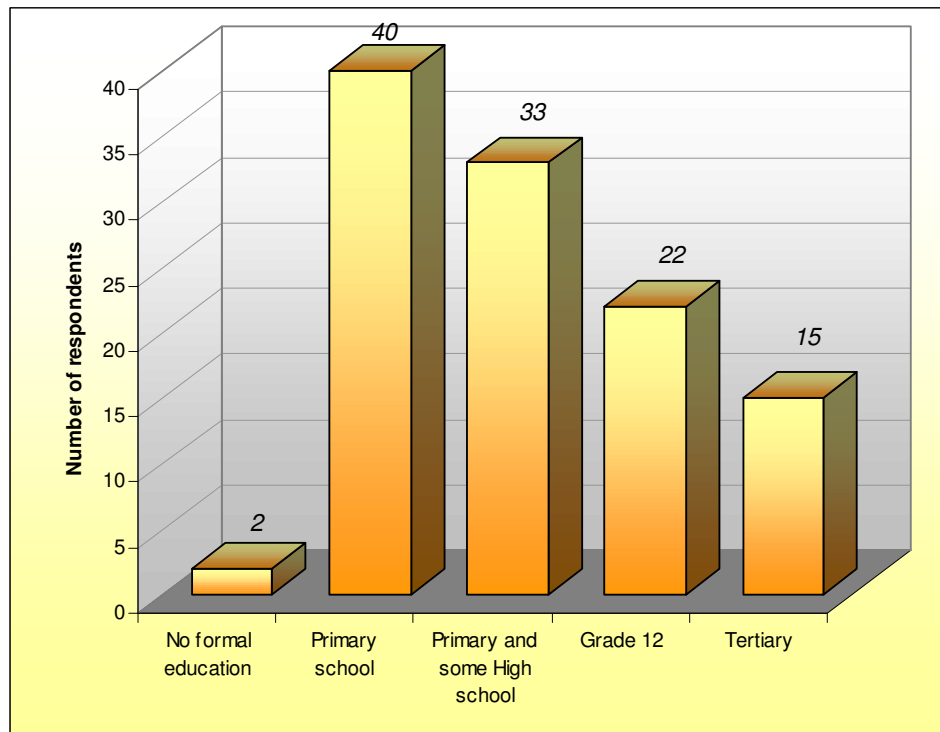


Figure 6.10: Educational profile of respondents

A little more than half of the respondents had completed Grade 12 while only 15 have had some tertiary education.

Respondents provided a list of advantages and disadvantages of living in Eksteenfontein (See Table 6.5).

There appeared to be general dissatisfaction amongst the youth respondents who wanted development to be accelerated so that amenities aimed at the youth such as a community centre, public swimming pool and cinema complex could aid in stemming the tide of migration to the nearest big city.

There also appeared to be dissatisfaction with government service provision in terms of proper roads and bulk infrastructure and the burning issue of the settling of the land claim (Section 6.4). While the advantages and disadvantages are almost the same, there appeared to be a positive feeling that some of the disadvantages would be addressed through future tourism developments in the area and the finalisation of the land claim.

Table 6.5: Advantages and disadvantages of living in Eksteenfontein

ADVANTAGES OF LIVING IN EKSTEENFONTEIN	NO. OF RESPONSES	DISADVANTAGES OF LIVING IN EKSTEENFONTEIN	NO. OF RESPONSES
Crime is low	42	Roads are in poor condition	40
Historical attachments	41	No closer to settlement of the land claim	38
Birthplace and family	41	Development is slow	37
The area is peaceful and quiet	40	Few work opportunities	37
The area provides many tourism opportunities	40	The area is rich in minerals but people are poor	37
People live close to nature	38	Government services are inaccessible	36
Unique natural attractions	38	No recreational facilities such as a swimming pool, cinema complex or youth centre	36
No high buildings to restrict people's views	35	Too far from big cities and transport routes	35
Richtersveld is one of the biggest tourist attractions in South Africa	35	Poor cellular phone reception	34
Familiar with everyone in the towns	35	Alcohol abuse is high	20
No pollution	33	Older folk appear to be development-shy	14
People are friendly	30		
People are happy	30		

6.6.3 Community participation in the Rooiberg Conservancy project

The respondents indicated that participants of the conservancy project were chosen based on their residency in the Richtersveld and their age (must be 18 years and older). Only 13 of the respondents were actually participating in the conservancy project and the levels of participation included management, cartography (mapping of the area), tour guides and cultural guides. The 29 people or 69% of the sample who were not involved in this project voiced the following reasons for their non-involvement:

- little or no information on what is going on with the conservancy and what the future plans are;
- the conservancy is not fully developed therefore not everybody can be involved at this stage;
- full-time employed elsewhere;
- community members are not always in Eksteenfontein;
- only some members of the community are involved in the initiative; and
- there is not enough interest in that type of development even though there are community notices to attend meetings.

Identifying and prioritising the needs of the different interest groups within the community in the planning processes would have resulted in buy-in from the majority of the community members and richer understanding of the issues. This could have resulted in other innovative management strategies for the conservancy's future development. In relation to the IDP concept, the community is an important resource and should be included from the initial stages of the planning processes (See Section 3.11.1). Effective community participation features as one of the ten principles behind sustainable tourism management (See Box 1.1).

6.6.4 Skills development

No skills development strategy is in place for Eksteenfontein. Only eight of the 13 members that are involved in the conservancy project have been trained in conservancy management (2), nature conservation (2), project management

(1) and as tour guides (3). However, the management stated that the other members of the community not directly involved in the conservancy had also been trained. In total, community members have received training in the following areas given in Table 6.6:

Table 6.6: Training received

TYPE OF TRAINING	NUMBER
Tour guides	21
Train the trainers (Environmental Impact Assessments)	5
Cartography	2
Conservancy management	2
Cultural guide	2
Nature conservation	2
Tourism management	2
Mariculture	1
Bookkeeping	1
Environmental engineer	1
Project management	1
Sustainable development in protected areas	1
TOTAL	41

While training is important, people should not be trained unless there were specific roles for them to play within the developments in the area. One community member indicated that while some people were trained to be guides, they did not have the passion for the work. Another person indicated that some of the training has not coincided with implementation and therefore people are skilled but jobless. The proposed museum for the area has also not opened due to a lack of funding and there was one person who was trained, as a cultural guide, to manage the museum. Approximately 50% of the respondents felt that there was a certain amount of nepotism with regard to the selection of certain individuals for training courses. A comprehensive skills development strategy would have aided in addressing the community's aspirations and the issue of nepotism.

The respondents were then questioned on what skills they possessed (See Table 6.7 and the type of skills still needed (See Table 6.8) in relation to the conservancy project.

Table 6.7: Skills possessed

SKILLS	NUMBER
People skills	41
Knowledge and/or experience of bookkeeping/accounting	20
Management of people/employees	10
Knowledge and/or experience of community management	10
Knowledge and/or experience of nature conservation	6
Knowledge and/or experience of working with tourists	9
Knowledge and/or experience of conservancy management	5
Knowledge and/or experience of guesthouse management	5
Knowledge and/or experience of managing events	5
Project management	5

Table 6.8: Skills still needed

SKILLS	NUMBER
Knowledge and/or experience of working with tourists	34
Knowledge and/or experience in wildlife management	34
Knowledge and/or experience of nature conservation	33
Knowledge and/or experience of conservancy management	27
Management of people/employees	24
Knowledge and/or experience of guesthouse management	24
Knowledge and/or experience of community management	22
Knowledge and/or experience in the hospitality (hotel) sector	22
Knowledge and/or experience of managing events	20
People skills	20
Knowledge and/or experience of bookkeeping/accounting	19

It is evident that skills development, especially in relation to working with tourists, nature conservation and wildlife management, are needed to allow the conservancy project to become a sustainable venture. Twenty of the respondents indicated that they possess 'people skills'. The general

observation was that people were friendly and accommodating and this is an important characteristic for employment in tourism.

6.6.5 Conservancy management

Figure 6.11 highlights the different role-players in relation to the management of the conservancy project.

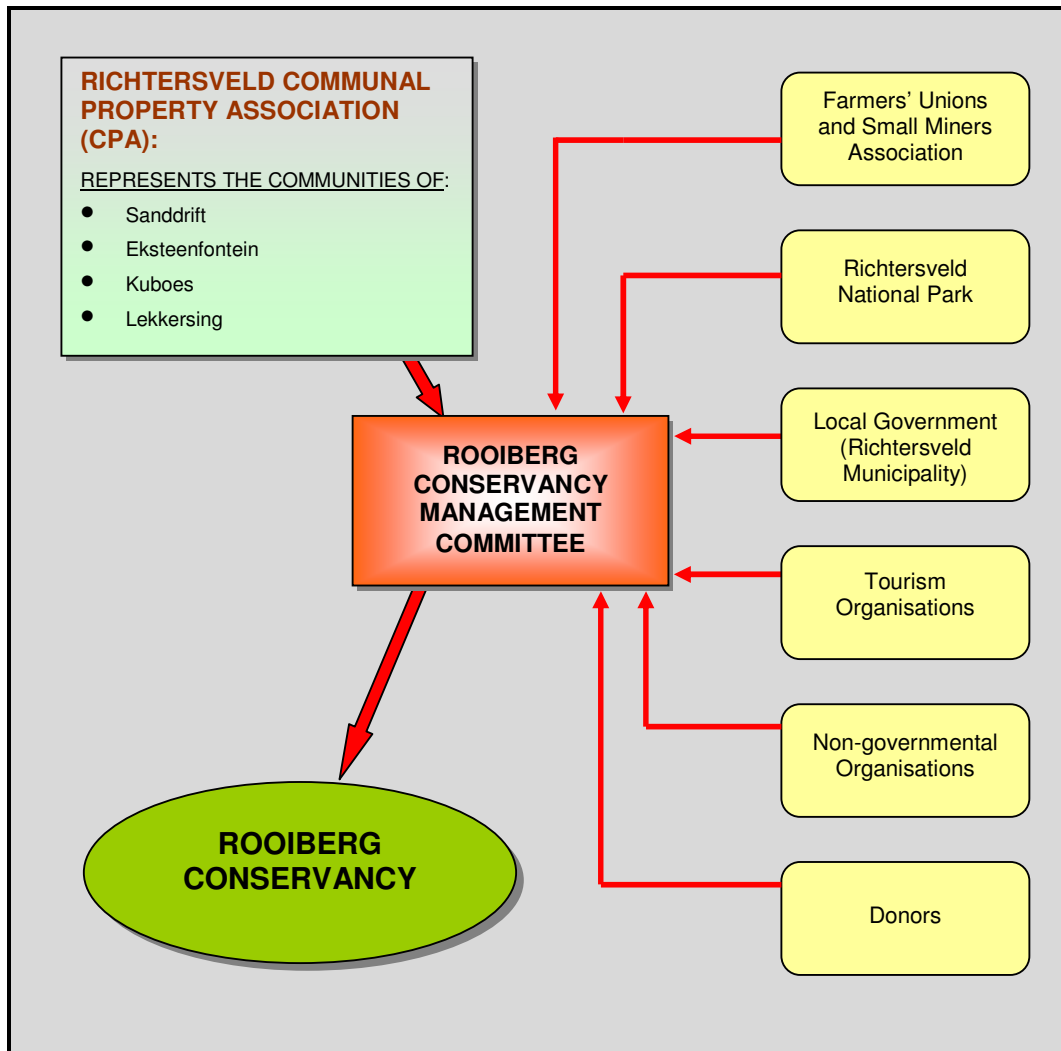


Figure 6.11: Role-player involvement in the conservancy project

The community has elected a management committee of 11 people and an operational management team of 3 people. Mr Gert Links, a former employee of the RNP, was appointed Conservation Area Manager. The management

committee have outlined 11 guidelines for themselves (Richtersveld Community Conservancy, 2004):

- planning, management and implementation of the conservation area have to be transparent;
- promotion of local empowerment and to ensure transformation;
- accessibility of the area to all people and to ensure non-discriminatory practices;
- management must liaise regularly with all role-players and respect their opinions;
- the conservation area must benefit the whole community;
- the conservation area must operate within the set legal framework;
- the conservation area must be compatible with local standards, cultures and traditions;
- the conservation area must be integrated with developments in the area;
- the planning, management and implementation of the conservation area must take place in a holistic way;
- the conservation area must create capacity-building opportunities for the youth and local people; and
- consultants, NGOs and outside assistance should only be used if absolutely necessary and in a way that positively builds local capacity.

While these guidelines are useful, the management has not developed a comprehensive strategic and operational plan to implement the guidelines. Capacity constraints and funding were cited as reasons for poor planning but it is also understood that Conservation International, the World Bank and Eco-Africa environmental consultants had been roped in to provide funding and technical expertise. It can be assumed that the technical expertise was not aligned with the implementation plans and therefore the consultants, who were employed by the agencies referred to earlier, made minimal impact in terms of the transfer of skills.

The conservation area appears compatible with local standards and culture where Nama and *Baster* cultures are interwoven into the fabric of the Eksteenfontein community but integration with the wider developments in the area has not happened. The linkage of the conservancy with the Namibia-South Africa Transfontier Conservation Area (TFCA) (RNP and the Ais-Ais Hot Springs) has not materialised because of the existing joint management problems between the Richtersveld community and SANParks. The linkage could provide added tourism benefits to the Eksteenfontein community if the Rooiberg Conservancy was used as one of the main entry points into the TFCA. It would also provide a longer, more scenic route for the adventure/nature tourists.

The guidelines refer to regular liaison with all role-players and assert that the conservation area should provide benefits to the whole community. One of the questions asked respondents how well they had been informed of the plans for the conservancy. About 20% of the respondents indicated that there had been two or three community meetings in Eksteenfontein that were poorly attended and therefore people were not fully aware of all the plans. The same 20% mentioned the following issues that had been raised during community meetings (See Box 6.1).

Box 6.1: Community concerns for the conservancy

- job opportunities for more members of the communities;
- obtaining more local buy-in as only few members attend meetings;
- more feedback from the management committee;
- advantages for the livestock farmers and the fear that they will have to move out once the conservancy is proclaimed;
- community wants to know where the money is coming from and how it is spent;
- management and control of the conservancy;
- people do not understand what is going on in meetings because the language used is too difficult for them to comprehend and simpler language should be used to get message across;
- drought issues and how this will affect the conservancy;
- consultants are interfering too much in community affairs;
- how to accelerate development in relation to tourism in the conservancy;
- access to funding to finance tertiary education of some youth members; and
- capacity building should be seen as a necessity and not a privilege.

The issues raised in Box 6.1 bear significance to the fact that only some members of the community were consulted during the planning phase of the conservancy development and merely stresses the importance of community participation raised in the previous section and in Section 3.11.1.

Figure 6.12 shows that 57% of the respondents were generally satisfied with the management committee but there was a perception that the management could do more to keep people informed, such as through community newsletters or regular meetings that explain processes in the local language.

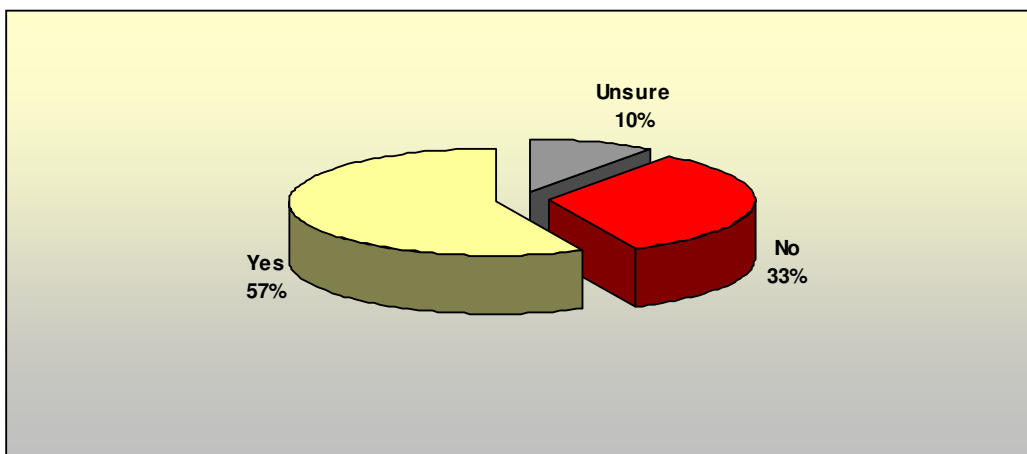


Figure 6.12: Community satisfaction with the management committee

While the community appears to be satisfied with the management of the conservancy, it has been observed that there are no patrols in the conservancy and therefore tourists are damaging the area. There was also some litter and bottles on the 4x4 route. One of the guides stated that the 4x4 tourists who do not utilise the local guides often litter the area, which is then cleaned up by community members. There are currently no restrictions in terms of the use of local guides. The management committee should have stipulated that the use of local guides was a prerequisite for tourists visiting the area. This type of prerequisite could also aid in job creation and building local capacity for more guides to be trained. At this stage, up to a maximum of 20 vehicles per day are permitted into the conservancy but the campsites and guesthouse could probably accommodate up to 50 people.

It was also noted that, although monitoring is mentioned in the management plan, there are no monitoring mechanisms in place. There are plans to 'monitor and evaluate' the area once a year through a monitoring team comprising of elected members of the Richtersveld CPA, local government and an independent organization. Monitoring is not an annual activity as noted in Section 3.11.5.2.1 and should provide ongoing information through predetermined indicators on how well the conservancy development is meeting its objectives or when planned actions are not proceeding as it should be.

Table 6.6 illustrates that no member of the community has been trained on monitoring and evaluation techniques. Monitoring and evaluation is an integral management function and some members should be given proper training in this regard. Proper monitoring would have indicated the need for patrols or other steps that require action. This project has been in existence since 2002, but evaluative studies have not been conducted to assess the conservancy's development impacts, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.

6.6.5.1 *Funding and other arrangements*

Land-use planning linked to biodiversity conservation is an area where both international agencies and the South African government are investing substantial resources that were leveraged to support the Rooiberg Conservancy tourism initiative. The main source of funding for this project (R6 million) came from DEAT's Poverty Alleviation Programme that the conservancy management channelled to environmental education and poverty alleviation projects that would contribute to biodiversity conservation in the area.

Table 6.9 outlines all the funding and services that were provided to the development of the conservancy project. It is evident from Table 6.9 that approximately R13,8 million funding and other services were utilised towards the planning and implementation of the conservancy project. Given that only 41 people had been trained (See Table 6.6) and a small percentage of the

Table 6.9: Funding and services provided

ORGANISATION	AMOUNT OF FUNDING PROVIDED	SERVICE PROVIDED
Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT)	R6 million	Funding for poverty alleviation - guesthouse development and training.
Global Environment Facility (GEF)	R3 million	Appointed a GEF coordinator.
German Technical Corporation (GTZ)	R3 million	Part of this money was used to finance legal expertise for the land claim process and some went towards technical and administrative support.
Conservation International	R1,5 million	Appointed a CBNRM coordinator. Funding to flow over 3 years from 2002.
United Nations Development Programme	R300 000	Research station for biodiversity research.
Norwegian Government	Not stipulated in CPA Management Plan	Development of the satellite McGregor Museum in Eksteenfontein. One person trained to manage museum.
Richtersveld National Park	No funding	Provision of management support.
Northern Cape Provincial Government	Not stipulated in IDP	Integrated development planning processes that involved the Richtersveld CPA.
Eco-Africa environmental and planning consultants	No funding	Promoting cultural and heritage conservation. Will be involved in upgrading the roads into the conservancy in 2005-2007.
Farmers' unions, Small Miners Association and Northern Cape Tourism Authority	No funding	Contributed to the conservancy plans.

funds were used towards the guesthouses and campsite development (approximately R1 million), it seemed as if minimal funding had been directed to other critical services such as the upgrading of the roads into the conservancy (initially in 2002) and the guesthouses. Most of the funds were used to pay consultants. The interviews with members of the conservancy management revealed that the management is now wary of utilising the

services of expensive consultants and has opted to complete the remainder of the planning themselves and outsource only when there are no skills within the community to perform such services. This is a positive step for development in this area as all planning should start and end with the community.

6.6.5.2 Marketing

The management committee is currently marketing the conservancy on the SNTR website (“Eksteenfontein”, 2004). In addition, there are brochures, a video, and a compact disc with information that are sent to various points such as hotels, tourism kiosks and embassies across the country and the world. The conservancy is advertised as part of the RNP in Getaway Magazine (in-flight magazine of South African Airways). The conservancy management acknowledges that marketing is not aggressively pursued at this stage because the conservancy does not have the capacity to deal with an influx of tourists. This should not prevent management from developing marketing objectives as part of a comprehensive plan that would include capacity building.

6.6.6 Improvement in livelihoods

It is estimated that the conservancy receives 80% of its tourists from South Africa and 20% from outside the country. On average, four tourists per day, visit during the off-season between October and March and in the peak season, between April and September, there are approximately 13 tourists per day. It is estimated that tourists spend an average of R750 per day per tourist in Eksteenfontein, supporting the two local shops, guesthouses and going into the conservancy. Each tourist stays on average three to five days. The estimated income from the conservancy development therefore amounts to R549 000 (off-season) and R1 774 500 (peak season). This excludes the rental of equipment or vehicles.

From Figure 6.13 it would appear as if the tourism venture would ensure a more sustainable future for the Eksteenfontein community in terms of

profitability than livestock farming would for the commonage users (See Table 5.4). The livestock farming income was generated from livestock sales on six Namaqualand commonages over a 12-month period.

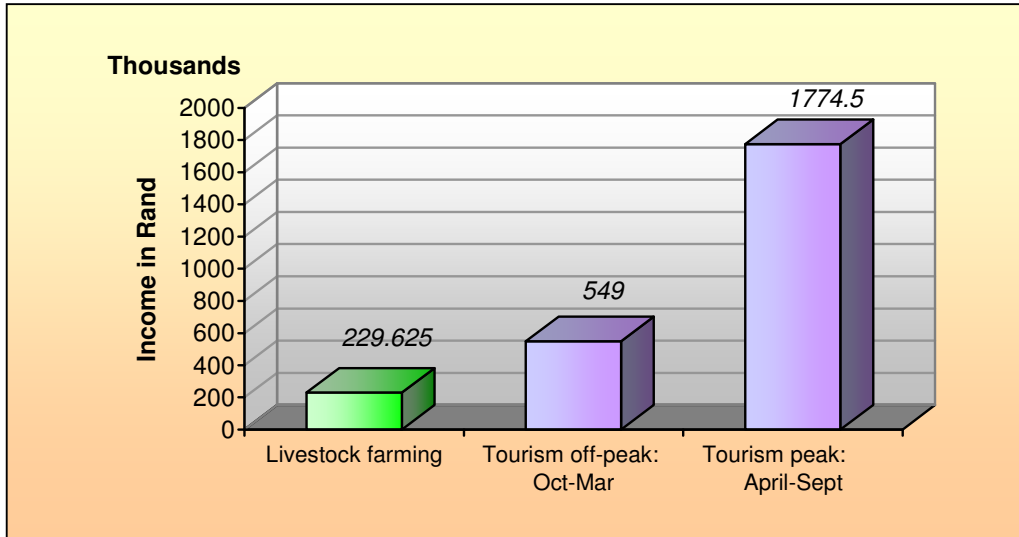


Figure 6.13: Comparison of livestock farming earnings and tourism earnings: December 2003 to November 2004

A comparison of the division of the profits (on average) per individual for commonage users ($R229\ 625 \div 34\ \text{users} = \mathbf{R6\ 753}$) and Eksteenfontein adult residents ($R2\ 323\ 500 \div 300\ \text{residents} = \mathbf{R7\ 745}$) demonstrates that the Eksteenfontein residents would receive more financial benefits per individual from the tourism venture than the commonage users would from their livestock farming enterprises. Eksteenfontein residents also preferred to pool their profits, adding interest to their collective savings through the Richtersveld CPA as opposed to the commonage users who focussed on amassing individual earnings. Collective earnings may also lead to enhancement of the Rooiberg Conservancy development and other sustainable development initiatives in the Richtersveld.

Tables 6.10 and 6.11 highlight the economic and social improvements resulting from the conservancy project. Table 6.11 reveals that the conservancy project has not positively influenced the social problem of alcoholism nor has it led to increased community participation.

Table 6.10: Economic spin-offs from the conservancy project

PROPOSED ECONOMIC SPIN-OFFS OF CONSERVANCY DEVELOPMENT	REALISATION OF SPIN-OFFS (Yes/No) AS AT NOVEMBER 2004
<p><i>Creation of the following job opportunities:</i></p> <p>Signage (Sign writers)</p> <p>Caterers</p> <p>Guesthouse managers</p> <p>Tour and cultural guides</p> <p>Cartographers</p> <p>Rangers</p>	<p>Yes and No. Some people have been trained but there are no jobs</p>
<p>Development of more campsites and upgrading of the guesthouses to accommodate more tourists (short-term contracts to people that are building the <i>matjieshuts</i> campsites and to the building and décor contractors involved in the upgrading of guesthouses - use of local materials and skills</p>	<p>Yes. Rooiberg guesthouse developed but further upgrading needed on both guesthouses in Eksteenfontein</p>
<p>More tourists and increased spending in the area not only in the conservancy but also in the local shops including tourism office that sells the textiles, arts and crafts of the locals</p>	<p>Yes. Part of the R750 per day that tourists spend in the area during the peak season is spent at the two local shops. An exact figure was not available</p>
<p>Better infrastructure</p>	<p>No but planned for 2005-2007</p>

Table 6.11: Social spin-offs from the conservancy project

SOCIAL SPIN-OFFS	REALISATION OF SPIN-OFFS (Yes/No) AS AT NOVEMBER 2004
<p>Reduced unemployment</p>	<p>Yes. About 20 of the 41 people trained are actively employed in this venture</p>
<p>Reduced alcoholism</p>	<p>No. Approximately 48% of the respondents still indicate this social ill as a problem in the area</p>
<p>Increased capacity building</p>	<p>Yes. 41 people were trained</p>
<p>More youth involvement</p>	<p>Yes. 30 of the people trained were youth</p>
<p>More community involvement</p>	<p>No. 69% of the respondents played a minimal to no role in the venture</p>

6.6.7 Sustainable tourism development in Eksteenfontein (present and future)

The majority (23) of the respondents rate tourism as very important in comparison to livestock farming and/or mining, while the others (19)

viewed tourism as a livelihood activity that is equally important to mining and livestock farming. There is a sentiment among some of the community members interviewed that tourism could do more harm than good, but this is a minority view. Some members raised the issue that with every livelihood activity (mining, livestock farming, tourism, etc.) there are advantages and disadvantages and that there should be plans in place to minimise the negative aspects; for example, if community members feel that opening up the conservancy to more tourists might destroy the fragile ecosystem then commission an environmental impact assessment to determine what the carrying capacity of the area is and set clear guidelines for tourists.

Tourism is seen as the economic 'saviour' in response to the decommissioning of the mines and livestock farming. It may be idealistic to rely on tourism alone and there is a need to look at other economic activities that can be offered to community members that may not be interested in the tourism developments in the area.

The respondents felt that the following sectors were vital to the success of tourism in Eksteenfontein:

- community-based tourism through guesthouse and conservation;
- flower viewing;
- ecotourism through conservation tours;
- hiking trails; and
- historical and cultural tourism.

Respondents were then asked to provide their responses in relation to the future plans for the conservancy in relation to tourism (See Table 6.12).

The perceptions of the majority of the respondents tie in with the management plans for the conservancy in relation to tourism namely; the development of 4x4 trails, eco-sensitive hiking-trails and conservation of the flora and fauna in the area.

Table 6.12: Ideas for future plans for the conservancy

PLAN	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
To expand the guesthouse business	28
To develop nature conservation programmes for tourists	20
To develop a 4x4 route for tourists	26
To protect the natural environment and animals for tourists	32
To develop more campsites for tourists	24
To develop nature tours	26
To develop bird-watching for tourists	15
To develop game-viewing for tourists	17
To develop game-hunting facilities for tourists	11
To developing eco-sensitive hiking trails for tourists	32

Table 6.13 highlights the respondents' perspectives on whether there will be growth or not in the following tourism sectors in Eksteenfontein:

Table 6.13: Community perceptions of tourism growth (N=42)

1 = no growth 3 = medium 5 = strong growth

SECTORS	1	2	3	4	5
Community-based tourism through guesthouse and conservation	5	0	19	10	8
Game-viewing	18	5	11	5	3
Flower viewing	4	2	6	6	24
Ecotourism through conservation tours	5	5	10	6	16
Adventure tourism (4x4)	3	6	7	10	16
Historical and cultural tourism: history of the Eksteenfontein area	5	4	8	6	19
Hunting	33	1	5	1	2
Hiking trails	9	5	12	5	11
Bird watching	15	4	13	3	7

The following reasons were stated for ratings of 3 and below:

- there is in reality no actual development or growth in the area except for the 4x4 routes;
- all the plans are still in the pipeline and implementation dates are uncertain;
- poor communication to community members who are the actual owners of the conservancy;
- the roads are in poor condition therefore some 4x4 enthusiasts may come;
- although marketing has improved, few people know about Eksteenfontein and are actually interested in the area and its culture;
- too little rain and this can destroy some fauna and flora impacting on ecotourism;
- there is a shortage of funds for development and that can hamper tourism development; and
- the place is too far from main centres and the nearest major airport is in Upington.

The reasons for ratings of 4 and 5 were as follows:

- the 4x4 tourists bring in the money;
- the flora and fauna are unique and so is the culture and spirit amongst the community;
- more people know about the Richtersveld and Eksteenfontein;
- it is going slowly but tourism will grow;
- people are curious about the natural settings and unique culture;
- the locals are friendly and keep tourists entertained; and
- tourists feel safe here because crime is almost non-existent.

The respondents noted that the following factors could hamper the community's development goals for the conservancy (See Table 6.14).

Table 6.14: Factors that could hamper the conservancy's future development

FACTOR	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
No proper training given to people to manage the conservancy	27
Poor infrastructure such as roads, electricity	26
Community want other jobs	22
Too few people involved	22
Community tensions	20
People losing sight of their culture for money	20
Community will lose interest in the conservancy	19
Financial losses	18
Too many people involved	10
Poor management	9

There are plans to improve the roads, electrify areas where there is no electricity (except within the conservancy), improve the signage on the roads to the conservancy and Eksteenfontein and upgrade the guesthouses. The issues of training and capacity building have been discussed at length elsewhere in this chapter, but it is worth noting again because training should not be done intermittently. Implementation should immediately follow all training initiatives. If project implementation has not coincided with training then it follows that the trainees should be re-orientated in terms of the basics of the training programmes they had attended. Skills development should be an ongoing exercise.

The issue of people losing sight of their culture for money is an ethical dilemma that people in this area fear. In turn, the community may feel forced to adapt their lifestyles ('staged authenticity' - discussed in Section 3.4.2) to ensure that tourists are not disappointed. However, the researcher was unable to discern any incidences of staged authenticity.

The respondents agreed that there must be a coordinated effort (involving the community, private sector, government, non-government organizations and

donors) to work together and agree on a better development and marketing plan for the conservancy to ensure that the project is sustainable for future generations. It was also agreed that fundraising should not only be a management responsibility and more people should get involved to attract funding to the area for capacity building, infrastructure development and social development projects. With increased communication and full community participation, it was felt that the project would be successful.

Respondents stated that the conservancy tourism project could generate sustainable livelihoods for the Eksteenfontein community. There are community spin-offs and in 10 years' tourism will offer full-time livelihood opportunities. The Richtersveld CPA plans to outsource all the tourism businesses to the community and this will include the guesthouses and campsites, the tourism office and museum. Community members will be asked to tender for the businesses. Community members will be encouraged to form joint ventures with non-Richtersvelders to promote investment in the area. Community members who are currently operating some of the businesses are in a state of uncertainty and feel that they would not stand a chance of winning any of the tenders.

The management committee noted that not all the members of the community could benefit from the sustainable tourism opportunities. Such realities should be communicated to the community. Respondents stated that the youth are growing up with the culture of tourism and they have the potential to develop and sustain it. There is a general perception amongst the youth that the older generation fails to understand tourism and how it could positively benefit them, because traditionally mining and livestock farming have been their livelihood sources. These livelihoods should remain options for the community and should not be discouraged.

6.7 SWOT MATRIX FOR THE CONSERVANCY PROJECT

The SWOT Model (See Step 5C in Chapter 4) is used to further interpret the results garnered from Section 6.6 (See Tables 6.15 and 6.16).

Table 6.15: SWOT matrix: strengths and weaknesses

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing tourism facilities such as two guesthouses and a traditional Nama campsite • Interest amongst the youth to enhance sustainable tourism in the conservancy • Conservancy generates an income both off-season and peak season • Existing and functioning management structures • Fauna, birdlife and flora (part of the Succulent Karoo Biome) and close ties with Richtersveld National Park • Existing marketing strategy • Funding available from some strategic partners • Municipality is a partner and five other strategic partners involved in this initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management structure not sufficiently capacitated to manage the conservancy and tourism aspects • Poor communication channels between community members and management committee • Poor to non-existent monitoring system in place • Brackish water and limited water supply • Only some community members are selected for employment opportunities. • Training does not coincide with implementation

Table 6.16: SWOT matrix: opportunities and threats

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Namaqualand is well positioned for the tourism industry • There is an existing tourism route in the form of the SNTR • Transfontier Conservation Area with Namibia with a possibility to include the conservancy in this development • Niche marketing opportunities for Namaqualand as a desert tourism destination rather than as a seasonal flower destination as it currently is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land and mining rights issues could stymie development in this area • Possible opposition to tourism from farmers' associations in the area and mines • Poor access routes to Eksteensfontein and the conservancy could restrict tourism to only the 4x4 crowd

The strengths and opportunities outlined in the SWOT analyses for commonages (See Tables 5.8 and 5.9) and for the Rooiberg Conservancy project favour sustainable tourism development. It would appear that the weaknesses and threats uncovered in the commonage projects would pose

more risks to livestock farming ventures, as would the weaknesses and threats of the sustainable tourism venture.

Both SWOT models have also revealed the following similarities in relation to the weaknesses:

- poor management capacity of the management structure;
- poor to non-existent monitoring and evaluation mechanisms;
- brackish water and limited water supply;
- improper to minimal training; and
- poor communication.

All of these issues could have been embraced within a well-constructed IDP or detailed sector plan within the IDP. The provision of adequate and safe water supply is the mandate of the municipalities (Nama Khoi and Richtersveld). This provision should have been adequately catered for in the IDP processes. It therefore leads to an assumption that the IDP planning processes involving these two municipalities were flawed and that future IDP review processes should embark on proper gap analyses to identify service gaps in these areas. It is ironic that water provision to the commonage farms is poor even though these are municipal properties. The revised 2005 IDP for the Namakwa District Council, encompassing both the Richtersveld and Nama Khoi Local Municipalities, confirms that water provision and other bulk services for these areas were not included in the implementation plan for 2005-2006 (Namakwa District Municipality, 2004).

In general, there appear to be positive economic and social spin-offs for the sustainable tourism venture. The study established that over a twelve-month period, one sustainable tourism venture benefiting 300 adult members was more successful in generating profits than 34 micro livestock farming enterprises on six commonages, benefiting 34 commonage users. Hoffman and Rohde (2000) assert that livestock farming on commonages in Namaqualand should ideally yield a net annual income of R10 per hectare but

states that this is not achievable because of the poor conditions on the commonages.

To ensure the future sustainability of the Rooiberg Conservancy project, the South African Government would need to address the land and mining rights issues as a matter of urgency so that developments in this area could be expedited. The linkage with other initiatives in the area, such as the establishment of the transfrontier conservation area with Namibia and mining, could further enhance the livelihood opportunities for the Eksteenfontein community.

6.8 CONCLUSION

The principal objective of this chapter was to describe, analyse and interpret data obtained on the Rooiberg sustainable tourism conservancy project in Eksteenfontein through interviewing some key role-players and community members who are either directly or indirectly involved with this development. The results discussed in this chapter have justified the hypothesis arrived at in Section 3.10, referring to the relevance of sustainable tourism for future commonage development in South Africa and answers the research question posed in Section 1.7: *what role can sustainable tourism play in commonage projects?*

The next chapter creates a synthesis of these results, using the IDP framework outlined in Section 3.11, and suggests planning guidelines for the development of a Commonage Sector Plan embracing future sustainable tourism initiatives on commonages.

Chapter 7

SYNTHESIS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 7 seeks to provide an overall review of the research aim and question, objectives and limitations of the study. Attention will also be given to the contribution of this study to the field of Tourism Management. The chapter synthesises the results of the literature and fieldwork studies, resulting in a set of planning guidelines for the development of sustainable tourism ventures on commonages, developed from the IDP framework discussed in Section 3.11.

7.2 REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTIONS

The primary aim of the research was to provide planning guidelines for sustainable tourism development on redistributed commonages in Namaqualand. To achieve this goal, the study was guided by a *research question* with three investigative sub-questions: **What role can sustainable tourism play in commonage projects?**

The sub-questions were:

- Can sustainable tourism and land reform be linked?
- In what way can tourism development enhance the South African government's land redistribution programme thereby creating sustainable livelihoods for people?
- What are the successes and failures of sustainable tourism initiatives in the Northern Cape, especially in the Namaqualand region?
- What are the successes and failures of agrarian driven commonage projects in Namaqualand?

The literature review (Chapters 2 and 3) and analyses phases of the research (Chapters 5 and 6) answered these research questions. From the literature on

land reform, it was established that there is no academic research linking land redistribution to tourism. Chapter 2 provided an overview of land reform initiatives in Brazil, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa and revealed that in all three countries, the land reform efforts are focussed on an agrarian-style land reform. Some of the theoretical papers on commonage and land redistribution suggest alternative livelihood options for the rural poor such as tourism, but as part of an integrated approach to rural development. The literature also revealed that sustainable tourism provides improved livelihood options for poor rural areas. However, sustainable tourism should not be seen as a panacea to the problems experienced by agriculture. A comparison of the four land reform policies in terms of the sustainable development principles posed by Murphy (1995), demonstrated that a purely agrarian focus is unsustainable (See Table 2.3).

In relation to the DLA's commonage sub-programme (See Sections 2.5.2.4 and 2.5.2.5), it was established that commonages are owned by local government and are set aside for agricultural use and other entrepreneurial business purposes. One of the criticisms levelled at the commonage policy is that it is inflexible and does not provide scope for a multiple livelihoods. The results of the case studies in Chapter 5 corroborated this criticism and supported the notion that commonage development should move beyond agriculture. The study also avoided the debate on sustainable development on private lands versus sustainable development on commonage or communally owned lands because the intention was to draw attention to the myopic nature of the current commonage policy. This was necessary to illustrate that development options such as sustainable tourism can be an option for communities operating from communal lands

The positive and negative affects of tourism were discussed in Chapter 3 to provide a more objective view of this livelihood option and to assess whether tourism is indeed a sustainable option. Some of the subsets of sustainable tourism, ecotourism and sustainable tourism through CBNRM, were also explored, as these tourism approaches are land-based forms of tourism that has relevance for land redistribution.

Tourism in peripheral areas and desert tourism were also discussed because of the geographic location and ecosystem of the case-study area, Namaqualand. Desert tourism strategies of a leading (Australia) and emerging (Algeria and Namibia) desert tourism destinations were discussed critically in Chapter 3. While there may be some negative impacts of sustainable tourism, it would appear from Chapter 3 as if tourism embraces more of the sustainability aspects than land reform.

The methods employed during this research were grounded within the critical social science framework. Neuman (2003) describes this framework as a critical process of inquiry that delves beyond surface illusions to reveal the real structures in the material world to bring about change. The case-study approach emanates from this framework (Chapter 4). In utilising the case-study approach, the study followed six steps, based on the concept of trustworthiness:

- Determined and defined the research questions;
- Selected the cases and determined data-gathering and analysis techniques;
- Prepared to collect the data;
- Collected the data;
- Analysed the data; and
- Proposed recommendations based on the results obtained from data.

International and local case studies from sustainable tourism and land reform literature formed the basis of the conceptual framework arrived at in Section 3.10. Six commonage case studies and a tourism conservancy project in Namaqualand were selected for empirical studies. The case-studies were selected through the Non-probability Purposive Sampling technique and the users were further purposively selected based on this technique (See Step 2(b) in Chapter 4 and Annexure 1).

Simple statistical methods using Microsoft Excel were used to display the statistical evidence from the case-studies in the form of graphs, tables, pie-

charts and histograms. A strategic management technique in the form of a SWOT analysis was then utilised to interpret the data to reveal the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats posed by agrarian-style land reform on commonages and the sustainable tourism venture in the Richtersveld. The SWOT analyses aided the refinement of the planning guidelines recommended below.

7.3 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PLANNING GUIDELINES FOR COMMONAGES

7.3.1 The planning process

While it is understood that any planning process would need to be undertaken through a multi-stakeholder process and that a stakeholder analysis should ideally follow the SWOT analysis, the lead player in the planning process is local government through its municipalities, assisted by sector national and provincial government departments in terms of policies, capacity building and legislation. The following elements are proposed planning guidelines that can be developed into a comprehensive sector plan. This sector plan could be included as a chapter of the IDPs of the Nama-Khoi and Richtersveld Municipalities of the Northern Cape when these are reviewed in 2008.

The primary elements of these guidelines (See Figure 7.1) are based on the IDP guidelines discussed in Section 3.11 of this study. The guidelines also embrace the ten principles behind sustainable tourism management (Box 1.1) envisaged by Bramwell *et al.* (1998).

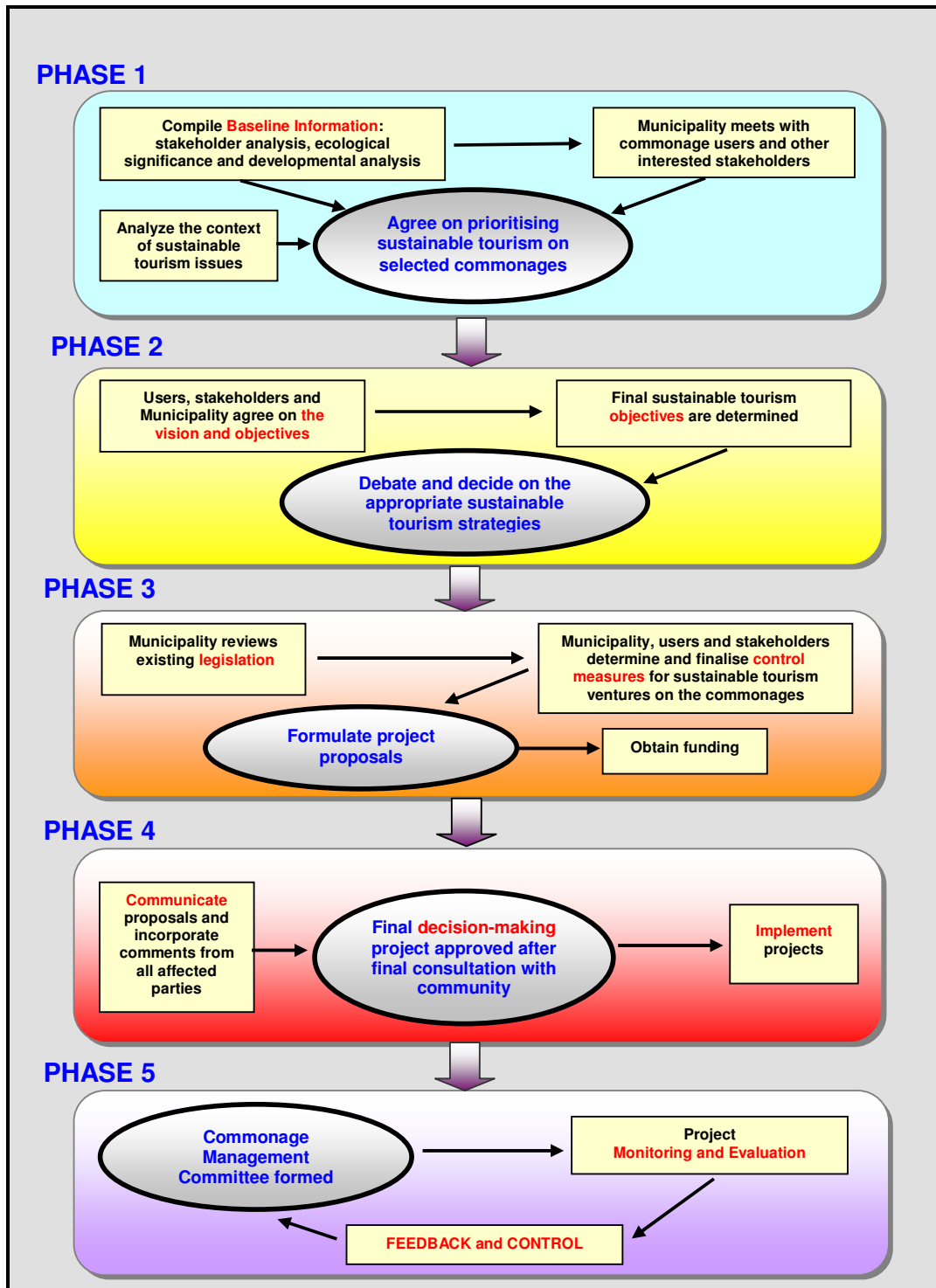


Figure 7.1: Sustainable tourism planning guidelines for a commonage sector plan

7.3.2 Baseline information

Minimum baseline information is required to make informed decisions and enable an impact assessment of any future sustainable tourism development on commonages (See Section 3.11.1). The SWOT matrixes presented earlier could be utilised as one of the sources for a baseline assessment. Maps and other visual tools could also aid this process.

Site-specific information is also needed if the municipalities decide to develop sustainable tourism ventures on either Nanasan farm (which forms part of the Port Nolloth Commonage Project) or Taaibosmond Commonage Project in Steinkopf.

7.3.2.1 Stakeholder analysis

The analysis must include communities in and around the commonages, and local, provincial and national government role-players (Departments of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Land Affairs, Water Affairs, Transport; Nama Khoi Municipality, Steinkopf Municipality, Richtersveld Municipality; Steinkopf Farmers Association, Port Nolloth Farmers Association; non-governmental organisations like Farm Africa and Surplus Peoples Project; Namakwa Tourism Association, Northern Cape Tourism Authority and South African Tourism; private sector businesses and global foundations, for example Conservation International or Global Environment Fund) (See Section 3.11.1).

7.3.2.2 Ecological significance

A detailed indication of the protected and biodiversity significance of the area must be provided; for example, it is not widely known that the region falls within the Succulent Karoo Biome and contains unique species of flora and fauna that are endemic to desert ecosystems. The National Biodiversity Institute and Eco-Africa could be approached to provide further information on

the ecological importance of plant and animal species in Namaqualand and on the targeted commonages (See Section 3.11.1).

7.3.2.3 *Developmental analysis*

A detailed analysis of the current land uses (or misuses), infrastructure on the commonages, tourism facilities and tourism services that are available in the area, also forms part of the baseline information needed. The study identified mining as one of two important economic sectors for Namaqualand (the other being agriculture) and its linkage in terms of sustainable tourism development should be factored into the development analysis (See Section 3.11.1).

7.3.3 *Vision and goals*

In terms of sustainable tourism development on commonages, the sustainable tourism vision for the commonage projects should be aligned with the strategic goals of land reform and responsible tourism as set out by the respective departments and discussed under Chapters 2 and 3 of this study. The vision will also tie in with local development imperatives and must be derived from the IDP of the Nama Khoi District Municipality (See Section 3.11.2).

While the Nama Khoi IDP refers to tourism and states that tourism would need to be integrated with other economic sectors such as mining and agriculture, this goal is still vague and would need to be further developed to incorporate the strategic intent of the Municipality in terms of tourism for that region. The goals would need to address the limitations within which sustainable tourism growth in this region must be managed and take into cognisance not only environmental factors but economic, political, social, cultural and managerial factors. The goals should be long-term and can be linked to the term of the IDP, which is five years. The main goals should be centred on maximising the positive aspects of sustainable tourism on commonage land (economic development, social upliftment and conservation) and minimising the negative

social and environmental impacts from tourism. The goals can include the following issues:

- Sustainable tourism compatible with biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of the commonage;
- Skills assessment, skills development and capacity building for targeted users;
- Fair and equitable distribution of benefits derived from the venture;
- Alignment of the sustainable tourism venture with other economic activities that can be practiced on the commonage, such as livestock farming or mining so that the dependency on tourism alone is reduced;
- Supporting participatory planning processes by including the communities at all levels in the planning and decision-making processes.

7.3.4 Objectives

7.3.4.1 General objectives

The objectives for the Nanasan and Taaibosmond commonages can be formulated around the renovation of the existing farm houses into tourist-friendly facilities (See Section 3.11.2). The Taaibosmond farm house can be retained as a farm house complete with attached storage room that can be transformed into a barnyard-type hall and leased out for social activities. Community members should be trained to manage the guesthouse and hall. On the Nanasan commonage, which is approximately 60 kilometres from Port Nolloth and about 30 to 50 kilometres from the Richtersveld National Park and Rooiberg Conservancy, the farm house could be developed into an eco-lodge or retained as a rustic farm house as a bed-and-breakfast type facility. There is a definite need to upgrade the gravel road that leads from the main road to the Nanasan commonage.

7.3.4.2 *Marketing objectives*

In terms of a marketing perspective, any sustainable tourism venture that will be established on the commonages should be (adapted from Middleton and Hawkins, 1998) (See Section 3.11.2):

- Outward-looking, to interpret trends among customer segments, competitors and the overall environment (including the physical, social and cultural environment). It is known that tourists from Germany and the United Kingdom comprise the largest segment of the international visitors to this area, followed by the Dutch and French (Tourism South Africa, 2004). The trend amongst these tourists is primarily to travel to the largest towns in the area and then venture to the closest natural attraction, for example Augrabies falls near Upington and Skilpad Nature Reserve (for the wild flowers in spring) near Springbok. Taaibosmond is located 60 kilometres from Springbok on the N14 while Nanasan is also approximately 60 kilometres from Port Nolloth on the main road between Port Nolloth and Steinkopf and there are no guesthouses or tourist attractions in that stretch of road.
- Customer-responsive, based on the detailed knowledge of current and prospective customers. It is known that international tourists visiting Namaqualand are the adventure (4x4) and ecotourists.
- Forward-looking and innovative in terms of product development and determining added value. While Namaqualand is known for its wild flowers in Spring, other aspects such as the fact that it contains a desert ecosystem in the form of the Succulent Karoo Biome should be manipulated and marketed. Converting the Nanasan farm house into an eco-lodge would also be a product-specific development while capitalising on the desert destination angle.
- Concerned to balance the long-run requirements of sustaining the asset base with short-run requirements to satisfy customers and generate profits. In travel and tourism the quality of the environment at destinations is a vital part of the asset base. Tourism imperatives on the commonage should adhere to the carrying capacity of the land and

protection of the flora and fauna but also ensuring that tourists obtain value for their money.

- Based on the perceived needs of the tourists rather than the operational convenience of service providers. By ensuring that facilities are in reasonable condition and that services such as car hire are easily available.

Once these perspectives are factored into the policy, traditional marketing techniques concentrating on the product, price, place and promotions can be safely developed.

7.3.5 Legislation and control measures

Government bodies can make tourism more sustainable through legislation and regulation (Swarbrooke, 1999) (See Section 3.11.2). There is no need for additional legislation in relation to these commonages as there are comprehensive Acts of parliament and municipal ordinances in existence. However, more appropriate measures should be developed to monitor and regulate the behaviour of tourists, especially in sensitive ecosystems.

7.3.6 Impact management and mitigation

Impact management for sustainable tourism development and activities on the identified commonages can include the adoption and effective implementation of policies and best practices that cover, among others (See Section 3.11.2):

- controlling the impacts of tourist flows into the area;
- conserving the flora, fauna and ecosystems that exist in the area;
- preserving the cultural heritage of the area;
- respecting the local culture and avoiding negative effects on the social fabric;
- utilising local skills and providing employment to local people;
- more eco-efficient approaches in developing the guesthouses, for example, as advocated earlier, an eco-lodge should be developed on the Nanasan commonage; and

- utilising the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) tool to measure environmental impact. According to Middleton and Hawkins (1998), an EIA is designed to prevent environmental degradation by giving decision-makers better information about likely consequences that development actions could have on the environment.

7.3.7 Communication and decision making

Communication is the key to any sustainable tourism venture (See Sections 3.11.1, 3.11.2, 3.11.3, and 3.11.4). SWOT analyses of both the commonage projects and the conservancy tourism project revealed that there were weak communication channels between the management structures and the community/users. Measures should be instituted to ensure the full and timely disclosure of project information concerning the tourism development proposals. Decision-making should include meaningful consultation with the commonage users and local communities affected by the project/s in order to ensure:

- Respect for the customs and traditional knowledge;
- Innovations and practices of the local communities; and
- Adequate funding and technical support for effective participation.

The analysis of the commonage projects has also revealed that the users have minimal education and no previous experience of tourism. Educating the commonage users, beginning with the basic level of understanding the hosting function which is vital function to tourism, as pointed out by Van Harsseel (1994). Education is pivotal in unlocking enhanced stakeholder participation. One final thought on achieving greater local level participation in the sustainable tourism venture is to encourage the experts and officials from the DLA and municipalities to 'let go' of 'their' projects and allow the local community to shape their outcomes.

7.3.8 Implementation including funding incentives

Implementation follows a decision to implement the plan (See Section 3.11.5.1). Action plans detailing who does what, when and with which resources then follow suit. Funding would have to be sourced for the development of the guesthouses on the identified commonages, skills development plan, marketing plan and bulk infrastructure development such as proper access routes into the commonages.

Funding from the local economic development sector of the municipality can be used in the upgrading of the facilities while the Tourism Hospitality Education Training Authority can be approached for skills development funding. The Tourism Business Council, Khula Finance Limited and the Industrial Development Council can also be approached as potential donors. International agencies such as the World Bank through its Global Environment Fund and Conservation International should also be seen as potential donors as these initiatives would fit their funding imperatives.

7.3.9 Monitoring, evaluation, feedback and control

A sustainable tourism policy should contain monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the management of tourism activities (See Section 3.11.5.2.1). The monitoring and evaluation system should be a long-term effort as opposed to a short-term approach that only lasts for the duration of the project.

The Department of Land Affairs currently utilises a computer-based system called Landbase to track project phases. However, the system still needs to build in qualitative indicators as it only tracks quantitative indicators at this stage. It does not monitor social circumstances prior to and since a beneficiary's becoming involved in a project. A monitoring tool such as a survey or report should be linked to a computer-based programme that would allow project managers to obtain reports at any stage of a project.

7.3.9.1 *The evaluation and review system*

All plans and policies are linked to a timeframe. If the idea is to link sustainable tourism on commonages to the IDP (which is a five-year plan), evaluative and review studies should be conducted within the five-year period but only after a substantial period of implementation, for example, three years (See Section 3.11.5.2.2). This may lead to the plan being refreshed or the process being repeated to include new policy and planning imperatives for the development.

The Department of Land Affairs administers a quality-of-life survey every two to three years as part of an evaluative study of land reform projects (commonage projects are also included in the sample). Some of the indicators that are utilised as part of this assessment include (Department of Land Affairs, 1999):

- improvement in the quality of life of land reform beneficiaries;
- change in income as a result of farming activities on commonages; and
- change in income because of value-adding activities on commonages.

In the implementation of the sustainable tourism venture/s on the identified commonages, existing evaluative strategies such as the quality-of-life survey should be adopted.

7.3.9.2 *Feedback and control system*

The DLA and the municipality would need to provide regular feedback to their management and political principals about the implementation of projects of this nature (See Section 3.11.5.2.3). Feedback can initially be on a quarterly basis (every three months) until all the objectives have been met and then yearly up to five years (duration of the IDP) to ensure that the project is workable and to retain some control because public funds have been spent.

7.3.10 Note on capacity-building

The commonage and conservancy case studies have shown that the national DLA and the municipalities have relatively poor monitoring and evaluation and communication skills (See Sections 5.5.5.1 and 6.6.4). Capacity-building activities to assist all stakeholders participating in the sustainable tourism development, including the commonage users should include but is not limited to:

- how to access, analyse and interpret the baseline information;
- undertake impact assessments and evaluations;
- how to manage and market the tourism destination;
- undertake impact management;
- how to make decisions and communicate; and
- how to monitor and evaluate, provide feedback and maintain control of the development.

7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH AND POSSIBLE AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study has focussed on formulating guidelines for developing sustainable tourism initiatives through land redistributed in the form of commonages in the Namaqualand area of the Northern Cape. While only DLA commonage projects were reviewed, other land development initiatives involving communities may also benefit from these guidelines.

Ideally, in the development of the guidelines, relevant stakeholders would be consulted and consensus would then be reached on the final guidelines. However, given the restrictions cited earlier, not all stakeholders could be approached and no workshops could be conducted to present the findings of the research. Testing of the guidelines was also not possible due to constraints cited earlier, but the guidelines can be adapted during implementation to form part of future comprehensive planning in the Namaqualand region.

All tourism businesses within the Namaqualand area, including guesthouses and nature reserves such as the Skilpad Nature Reserve, could also be included in the research to get a more comprehensive picture of the sustainable tourism potential in the Namaqualand region. In addition, further studies on the positioning of Namaqualand as a sustainable desert tourism destination could aid destination marketers and tourism authorities in this area.

7.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter reviewed the research aim, question and sub-questions of the study and synthesised the results of the literature and fieldwork phases. The study limitations and areas of further research were identified.

The primary intention of the study was to harness the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified in relation to the case studies to aid in the formulation of planning guidelines for sustainable tourism development on commonages. It has emerged that two of the six commonage projects can be utilised to foster sustainable tourism opportunities for communities in Namaqualand.

In the development of the planning guidelines, nine issues were identified as being crucial to the planning process based on the IDP framework (Section 3.11):

- Baseline information
- Vision and goals
- Objectives
- Legislation and control measures
- Impact management and mitigation
- Communication and decision-making
- Implementation including funding incentives
- Monitoring, evaluation
- Feedback and control.

Finally, the chapter concluded with a note on the importance of capacity building strategies that are significant to enhance the sustainability factor of any sustainable tourism development on commonages.

7.6 THE STUDY'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT

The study focussed on the discourse of sustainable tourism management within the context of land redistribution to provide a framework to further enhance and sustain rural development for communities on commonages. As a comprehensive study linking land redistribution through commonages and sustainable tourism, the study is a pioneering study in South Africa and therefore the guidelines would serve as a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge. The study offers a multi-disciplinary approach to sustainable tourism by focusing on land reform beneficiaries (social and political) who access commonages (governance, political and economics) in semi-desert peripheral areas (ecology, biodiversity).

This study could possibly aid development planners from local government (the management of commonage is a local government competency), provincial authorities (policy implementation and protection of natural resources are provincial government functions) and policy makers at national government level (land reform and tourism policy formulation are national government competencies). The research instruments developed for the study may be utilised for additional research purposes to aid this process of planning.

It is also important to note that all the literature on sustainable tourism and land reform speak to the notion of integrated development and crucial sectors such as tourism and agriculture cannot be sustainable if policies and implementation strategies do not take cognisance of local livelihoods and other potential economic development for peripheral areas.