

CHAPTER 5

SYNOPSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main purpose of Chapter 5 is to provide meaningful recommendations to round off this study logically. In order to put such recommendations in the right perspective the purpose of the study, problem statement and main conclusions are repeated here. Chapter 5 can therefore be seen as a synopsis of the study which can be read separately.

5.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

The problem statement was formulated in the form of a study goal. This study has a dual purpose. Firstly, it is aimed at determining the need for the effective management of outdoor information transfer as an important resource in the aesthetic environment. Effective management relates to both the benefits and impact of outdoor information transfer. Secondly, this study is aimed at providing user-friendly guidelines for managing outdoor information transfer effectively.

5.1.1 ROLE AND STATUS OF THE PERCEPTUAL ENVIRONMENT

Since outdoor information transfer operates mainly within the realm of the aesthetic or perceptual environment, the first sub-problem addressed by this study is to determine the role and status of the perceptual environment in contemporary society. With this in mind, a hypothesis was formulated which states that the perceptual environment plays an important role in contemporary society while also forming part of sustainable environmental management. This hypothesis furthermore assumes that the role of the perceptual environment is not adequately recognised in contemporary society.

5.1.1.1 The role of the perceptual environment

The following conclusions can be drawn with regard to the important role of the perceptual environment in contemporary society:

- ❑ **Placeness and sense of place:** The importance of the perceptual environment has to be considered against the background of placeness and sense of place, which can be seen as the essence or the sum and substance of the perceptual environment. It forms the key to the sound management of the perceptual environment.
- ❑ **Healthy and pleasant human living environments:** The perceptual environment makes an important contribution to the creation of healthier and more pleasant human living environments. It is important for aspects such as the potential of human lives, discouragement of crime and vandalism, cultural development, community identity and involvement, environmental awareness and care, mental and physical health, conflict resolution and urban decay.
- ❑ **Stimulation of economic development:** Placeness and aesthetics have a high economic value. They form the fabric on which any tourism industry is based and promote economic development in general by attracting investments. In the process of economic globalisation the local character of towns, cities and neighbourhoods can be seen as a very important variable in making economic development decisions.
- ❑ **Upliftment of disadvantaged communities:** The perceptual environment is not a luxury to be enjoyed by the higher income groups only, but also plays an important role in the uplifting of disadvantaged communities through community identity and awareness and as a catalyst for economic development.
- ❑ **Instrument for environmental management:** The perceptual environment plays a direct role in environmental management by presenting an essential instrument for this purpose. It provides a perceptual framework within which environmental awareness and environmental management become tangible and are manifested, and within which the objects of management can be visualised. It can also be said that the perceptual environment provides

a moral inspiration for responsible environmental management by stimulating and sharpening man's consciousness of the need for responsible environmental management. However, if the perceptual environment is to make a meaningful contribution in this regard, it should be supported and strengthened by an appropriate world-view on environmental management. The perceptual process also promotes environmental integrity by creating a framework for a holistic approach in the mind of the environmental manager. Aesthetics can be seen as a binding factor that cements all environmental elements together in the mind of the perceiver in order to be able to approach environmental management in a true synergistic manner. (See 2.2.1.2 & 2.2.2.)

5.1.1.2 The perceptual environment as part of sustainable environmental management

The importance of the perceptual environment is enhanced even further by the fact that it forms part of sustainable environmental management. The inclusion of the perceptual environment in the process of sustainable environmental management is based on the following arguments:

- **The expression of aesthetic sustainability:** An adequate mechanism can be provided for expressing aesthetic sustainability. The conservation, enhancement and management of placeness as a continuous process provides such a mechanism.
- **Holism:** Holism is currently seen as an important principle in environmental management. This is the most convincing argument for including the perceptual environment. If a holistic approach to environmental management is followed, perceptual resource management should be seen as part and parcel of sustainable management. If the principle of holism is applied consistently, we have no other choice but to include perceptual resource management.
- **Fulfilment of non-material needs:** The perceptual environment can make an important contribution to the sustainable utilisation of resources by providing more healthy opportunities for the fulfilment of unhealthy non-material needs, such as the craving for luxury and status items, through aesthetic enjoyment. (See 1.4.2.1, footnote 7)

- **The recognition of the perceptual environment:** Institutions such as the *Countryside Agency* in England and South Africa's *Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)* have already started to recognise the perceptual environment as an integral part of sustainable environmental management.

5.1.1.3 The status of the perceptual environment in contemporary society

Although the perceptual environment plays an important role, this is not adequately recognised in contemporary society. This conclusion is based on the following arguments:

- **Insufficient environmental ethics and moral basis:** The root cause of the perceptual environment's poor recognition can be seen as a lack of proper environmental ethics and contemporary society's consumeristic mindset which culminates in a pragmatic and egocentric approach to environmental management. This approach not only tends to neglect the environment in general, but when it is recognised, tends to focus on more tangible and pragmatic aspects, such as water and air pollution, which have a more direct influence on the physical well-being of man. Since the conservation and management of the perceptual environment is less concrete and measurable than other environmental issues, an appropriate moral basis is essential to motivate and ensure the effective management of the perceptual environment and outdoor information transfer.
- **Environmental policy and legislation:** Environmental policy and legislation and the implementation thereof was used as an important indicator of the status of the perceptual environment. The perceptual environment occupies a relatively low status in environmental policy and legislation compared to other environmental issues. Even *Agenda 21* (United Nations, Earth Summit), which is the blueprint for global sustainable development into the 21st century, does not recognise the role of the psychosphere and the perceptual environment. However, current environmental legislation and policy do contain certain key elements that provide a nucleus for the effective management of perceptual resources in future. It can almost be seen as an unrealised declaration of intent to recognise the important role of the perceptual environment.

5.1.1.4 Verification of Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1, which refers to the important role of the perceptual environment in contemporary society, its integration in sustainable environmental management and its poor recognition, has been proven correct.

5.1.2 THE FUNCTION AND IMPACT OF OUTDOOR INFORMATION TRANSFER

Determining the nature and extent of the need for the effective management of outdoor information transfer, in terms of both its impacts and its benefits, can be seen as the key problem addressed by this study since it would provide the essence for a rationale for the effective management of outdoor information transfer.

With this key problem in mind the following hypothesis was formulated: *Outdoor information transfer as an important part of the perceptual environment benefits society and the environment, but also impacts negatively on the environment. Sense of place and placeness play a crucial role with regard to the benefits and impact of outdoor information transfer. If a laissez-faire policy is followed with regard to the management of outdoor information transfer, its negative impacts will overshadow its positive contribution and will neutralise many of the benefits.*

The important role of the perceptual environment can be seen as the point of departure and *raison d'être* for the effective management of outdoor information transfer. The benefits and impact of outdoor information transfer must therefore be seen against the background of the importance of the perceptual environment. If one wants to get even closer to the root of the problem regarding the need for the effective management of outdoor information transfer, one will again have to go back to the insufficient and pragmatic environmental ethics of contemporary society. This insufficient ethical basis leads to the misuse and abuse of the perceptual environment and therefore to the misuse and abuse of outdoor information transfer, while it also leads to the poor utilisation of the aesthetic potential of outdoor information transfer. This misuse and abuse of outdoor information transfer not only have a direct impact on the environment and tend to neutralise the benefits of outdoor information transfer, but also serve as a very strong symbolism of society's pragmatic and consumeristic mindset which may condition members of society even further to abuse the environment.

5.1.2.1 The benefits of outdoor information transfer

Outdoor information transfer benefits society and the environment by

- directing and guiding the road user and pedestrian,
- informing and warning the public in order to enhance general well-being and safety,
- stimulating economic growth and promoting freedom of commercial choice,
- enhancing the visual environment, and
- providing a source of income and similar benefits.

5.1.2.2 The impacts of outdoor information transfer

Outdoor information transfer impacts on the environment and society in a myriad of ways. These impacts are often interrelated and consist of the following:

- Psychological impact consisting of
 - environmental overstimulation or information overload, and
 - other Impacts related to placelessness, which can be divided into
 - crime and vandalism,
 - poor community identity and a uniform world culture, and
 - devaluation of place and commercialisation of placeness.
- Ethical or moral impact
- Unsustainable consumption patterns
- Impact on tourism resources and unfriendly tourist and retail environments



- Impact on traffic safety and traffic flow, which involves the following issues:
 - Distracting the attention of the motorist
 - Interfering with and creating confusion regarding traffic signals, traffic signs and road markings
 - Obstructing the view of the motorist
 - Forming physical obstructions
 - Billboards and signs hitting pedestrians, cyclists and motorists
 - Impairing traffic flow

- Direct ecological impact

- Noise pollution

- Light pollution

- Devaluation of property values and urban decay

5.1.2.3 The role of placeness

Sense of place and placeness serve as an important instrument in analysing and expressing the benefits and impacts of outdoor information transfer. Underlying this statement is the pivotal role of placeness in the perceptual environment. Placeness is necessary to actualise the aesthetic and artistic potential of outdoor information transfer and to put the advertising message in the mind of the observer and to keep it there. However, outdoor information transfer has a natural tendency to impact on placeness as the essence of the perceptual environment. Through effective management, outdoor information transfer should rather enhance placeness instead of working against it.

5.1.2.4 The effects of a *laissez-faire* approach to the management of outdoor information transfer

If a *laissez-faire* approach is followed in managing outdoor information transfer the dynamics and inherent characteristics of outdoor information transfer might very easily get out of hand. This will

lead to the impacts of outdoor information transfer overshadowing its positive contribution and may even neutralise many of its benefits. Benefits and impacts have to be viewed in the context of effective management, which means optimising the benefits while minimising the impacts of outdoor information transfer. A lack of effective management may very easily lead to an inverted situation where impacts are maximised while benefits are minimised.

The above statement is based on the following arguments:

- **Lessons from history:** History has shown that outdoor information transfer, and especially commercial advertising, has a latent and inherent capacity for impacting negatively on the visual environment. It only needs favourable circumstances such as periods of economic growth, technological progress or periods of promotional frustration in other advertising media for outdoor advertising to show its hand and leave major footprints on the environment. The current economic and technological climate, together with the *globalisation* of the more extravagant and impetuous American approach to outdoor information transfer, provides an extremely favourable climate for outdoor information transfer and consequently for major impacts on the environment and society.

- **Forces enhancing the impact of outdoor information transfer:** The following three driving forces behind outdoor information transfer will lead to an ever-increasing escalation of its impact if a *laissez-faire* approach is followed.
 - **The obtrusive character and inherent dynamics of outdoor advertisements and signs:** Outdoor information transfer's *modus operandi* of forcing itself upon the public inevitably points to a *natural* tendency to increase its impact. This tendency necessitates the effective management of outdoor advertisements and signs and even stronger control than is exercised in the case of any other advertising medium. The obtrusive character of outdoor advertisements and signs is enhanced even further by its inherent dynamics, as expressed by the competition, encroachment, attachment, imperialistic, transition and disorder principles. If a *laissez-faire* policy is followed, the inherent dynamics and characteristics of outdoor information transfer will lead to an escalating impact which will overshadow all benefits.

- **The persistency and tactics of the outdoor advertising fraternity:** Since outdoor advertising is a *billion-dollar industry* this industry (especially in the United States) is very active in lobbying politicians, often using professional lobbying firms, and large sums of money are often spent to discredit campaigns for the effective management of outdoor information transfer and to undermine legislation. The industry is very persistent in its endeavours and almost every avenue and enticement is used to obtain advertising rights and concessions from controlling authorities.
- **Domination of outdoor advertising and monetary motive as driving force:** Outdoor advertising, which can be seen as the promotion of the sale of goods and services and the generation of income, form the most dominant and aggressive part of outdoor information transfer. The creation of monetary wealth therefore seems to be the most prominent motive and driving force behind the largest part of outdoor information transfer, which again points to a tendency to generate environmental impact.

5.1.2.5 Verification of Hypothesis 2

Outdoor information transfer has a variety of potential benefits and even a larger number of potential impacts which cover the social, economic and ecological spectrum. Outdoor information transfer has a huge potential to either benefit or impact on placeness and the perceptual environment, or to employ the perceptual process in generating impacts and benefits. Owing to its diversity and the extent of possible impacts and benefits, it may be concluded that outdoor information transfer forms an important component of the perceptual environment. There is a definite need for the effective and active management of outdoor information transfer, which would involve all interested and effective parties, as the only alternative to a *laissez-faire* approach or self-regulation by the outdoor advertising industry. This need is confirmed by public opinion, which reflects a definite preference for the effective management of outdoor information transfer. Effective management implies optimising the benefits and minimising the impacts of outdoor information transfer. Effective management is therefore essential to both the perceptual environment and the outdoor advertising industry.

From the above it is clear that Hypothesis 2, which refers to the benefits and impacts of outdoor information transfer, the pivotal role of placeness and the undesirability of a *laissez faire* approach to the management of outdoor information transfer, can be accepted as true.

5.1.3 USER-FRIENDLY GUIDELINES FOR THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF OUTDOOR INFORMATION TRANSFER AND THE VERIFICATION OF HYPOTHESIS 3

General principles and user-friendly guidelines are necessary to actualise the need for the effective management of outdoor information transfer and to address the issues and concerns identified in this study. As a result of this problem a third hypothesis was formulated which states that general principles and user-friendly guidelines can be developed for the effective management of outdoor information transfer. Such guidelines would make the management of outdoor information transfer less subjective and would provide a basis for controlling and legislative measures. It was also assumed that such principles and guidelines could be used as an objective measure for the sustainable management of outdoor information transfer.

Hypothesis 3 was proven true by producing guidelines covering a variety of issues in order to address the concerns raised in this study. Although these guidelines can be used as an objective framework for legislation, control measures and the sustainable management of outdoor information transfer, they still need to be applied flexibly to accommodate a variation in local conditions, lifestyles and design aspirations.

Four basic principles were used as the point of departure for the formulation of these guidelines:

- **A balanced and responsible economic approach:** In terms of outdoor information transfer this means that outdoor advertising should not be aimed at utilising and maximising every available advertising opportunity and implementing whatever is technologically achievable at the cost of the perceptual environment.
- **A natural approach:** As part of the aesthetic environment, outdoor advertising should harmonise with nature and culture rather than clash with it. Outdoor information transfer should respect the character and integrity of both the biophysical and cultural environments rather than change them.

- ❑ **A holistic approach:** No single advertisement, sign or advertising structure should ever be perceived in isolation, but should always be seen within the context of a setting or broader design.
- ❑ **Human scale:** Outdoor advertisements and signs should be kept on a human scale wherever possible.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

To actualise the need for the effective management of outdoor information transfer and to implement the guidelines provided for this purpose specific recommendations are needed.

5.2.1 A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO THE MANAGEMENT OF OUTDOOR INFORMATION TRANSFER

It was shown that the perceptual environment plays an important role in sustainable environmental management and that outdoor information transfer constitutes an important part of the perceptual environment in contemporary society. The effective management of outdoor information transfer will therefore only be achieved by starting at an appreciation for and involvement in the sustainable management of the perceptual environment. In order to achieve such a holistic approach the following should receive attention:

Recommendation 1 – Awareness raising and availability of educational material: Popular as well as more advanced material in the form of brochures, booklets and guidelines explaining the importance of the perceptual environment should be developed. The National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEA&T) should be responsible for initiating this material which should also be placed on the DEA&T's official website. Common principles and guidelines for the appreciation of environmental aesthetics and placeness should be provided, thereby making the appreciation of the perceptual environment less subjective. Such principles and guidelines should focus on the relationship between ordinary people and the ordinary landscape by including the vernacular elements of the landscape. Material should also be provided for

school curricula, while more advanced material should be aimed at the design and planning professions. An awareness-raising campaign should be launched by the National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism in co-operation with the provincial environmental departments and should be aimed at the following target groups:

- ❑ Communities, community groups and environmental groups
- ❑ The outdoor advertising industry
- ❑ The tourism industry and tourism authorities
- ❑ Environmental managers and authorities responsible for the environment
- ❑ Authorities controlling outdoor advertising
- ❑ Scholars and students
- ❑ The design and planning professions, including the engineering profession

Recommendation 2 – The perceptual environment as an instrument for creating and encouraging environmental awareness: The appreciation of the perceptual environment should be used as an instrument to promote awareness of other environmental issues as well as community involvement in sustainable environmental management. It should be used to instil higher environmental values and a love for both the biophysical and cultural environments among the South African public. This will contribute to an appropriate moral basis for environmental management. Appropriate visual and audio-visual material should be developed for this purpose and should be aimed at the various target groups.

Recommendation 3 – Introducing environmental aesthetics into school curricula as well as other forms of education: Environmental aesthetics should be introduced into school curricula in an integrative and holistic manner. This will not only serve as an instrument for creating environmental awareness, but will also contribute to solving a variety of other problems in various professions in the future by using environmental aesthetics as a perceptual framework for a

holistic approach to the environment. The Cartesian approach and functionalism in the design and planning professions may serve as a practical example of problems to be solved in this regard. According to the Cartesian design approach buildings, sites and settings are designed in isolation rather than contributing holistically to the aesthetics and character of landscapes or places. Functionalism focuses solely on the functionality of buildings, structures, sites, neighbourhoods and towns while ignoring the aesthetics. Both approaches have a negative influence on the perceptual environment and placeness. In South Africa outcomes-based education provides an ideal opportunity for integrating environmental aesthetics into school curricula in a holistic manner. However, environmental aesthetics should not be limited to school curricula, but should also form part of all forms of formal and informal environmental education as well as planning and design disciplines. Reference should be made specifically to the monetary value of aesthetics in order to counter the restrictive approach of functionalism.

Recommendation 4 - Conserving, enhancing and creating placeness: Owing to the fact that placeness is threatened on various fronts, special care should be taken to conserve, enhance and create sense of place wherever possible. This should be seen in the light of the fact that placeness forms the essence of perceptual resource management and the management of outdoor information transfer. Important features that contribute to placeness should be identified for specific locations and areas. It is not only the general public that should be made aware of the importance of placeness, but environmental managers and the design professions as well.

Recommendation 5 – Landscape Character Areas: In order to achieve Recommendation 4, *Landscape Character Areas* with distinctive identities should be identified for South Africa on a regional basis, taking both the biophysical and cultural environments into consideration. The main features contributing to or impacting on these distinctive characters should be identified. This landscape character classification will be used for managing aesthetic resources in a sustainable manner and to identify distinctive features that might be utilised for tourism development. Such a classification should be the responsibility of the National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEA&T) as part of provincial Tourism Potential Atlases (TourPats) under their Environmental Potential Atlas (ENPAT) Project, in co-operation with provincial tourism authorities. The necessary guidelines for the management of perceptual resources and outdoor information transfer should also be provided for the various landscape character areas. Landscape Character Areas and urban design/perceptual plans (Recommendation 7) should supplement each other. A

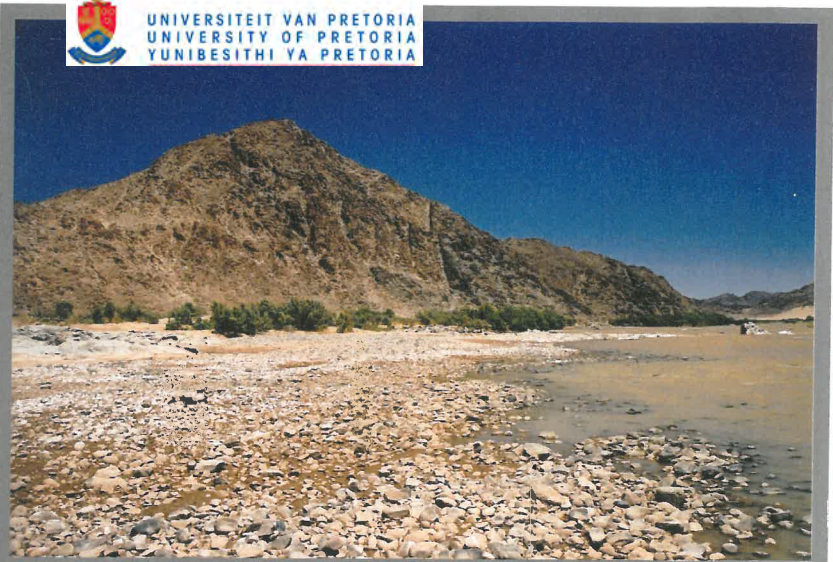


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Feb 2002

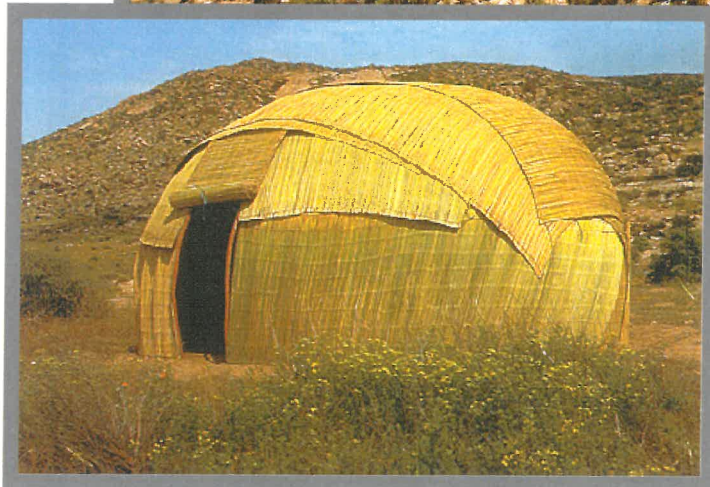


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Feb 2002

Source: The Tourism Blueprint cc, 2001, p.192

In order to approach the management of outdoor information transfer in a holistic manner one should start with the appreciation and management of the perceptual environment in its totality. For this purpose *Landscape Character Areas*, with distinctive identities, should be identified for South Africa on a regional basis, taking both the biophysical and cultural environments into consideration. The main features contributing to or impacting on these distinctive characters should be identified.

The barren landscape of the Richtersveld in the Northern Cape has a character of its own (top and centre), which is enhanced by the local Nama culture (bottom *matjeshuis* / mat house).

Figure 5.1
Landscape
character areas



The landscape of the Overberg area in the Western Cape is characterised by rolling wheat-fields with patches of Fynbos in between and prominent mountain ranges to the north (top). Fishing communities along the coast make an important contribution to local culture and tradition as indicated by the historical fishing boats at the Old Harbour in Hermanus (centre) and traditional fisherman's cottages at Hotagterklip (left rear rock) at the entrance of Struisbaai (bottom).

Figure 5.1
continued

Landscape Character Area classification should also be used as an educational instrument in order to achieve Recommendation 2.

Recommendation 6 – Eradication of invasive alien plant species: In support of Recommendation 5, South Africa's *Work for Water Programme* should be used as a mechanism to enhance and restore the character of Landscape Character Areas. Together with the eradication of invasive alien species a programme should also be developed to promote the planting of non-invasive species which can contribute to regional character. The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry should take the initiative in this regard in co-operation with the National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.

Recommendation 7 – Urban design and perceptual resource plans: Arising from Recommendation 5, local authorities should develop urban design and perceptual resource plans, which should also form part of provincial, regional and local tourism initiatives. A guideline document compiled for this purpose should be provided by the National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEA&T). This document should also be available on DEA&T's official website. Smaller local authorities that cannot afford professional fees for such a plan should be assisted by the design schools of universities and other tertiary institutions. A national initiative should be launched in this regard by the National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, with the assistance of professional institutes such as the *Institute of Landscape Architects of South Africa (ILASA)* and the *South African Institute of Architects (SAIA)*, the *South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA)* and the design schools of universities and other tertiary institutions.

Recommendation 8 – The holistic management of tourism resources and the perceptual environment: The perceptual environment should be managed holistically in its totality and not as isolated areas of high scenic value, while the local scenic diversity and local character of the everyday living environment should not be ignored but should be conserved and enhanced wherever possible. This should be achieved by taking both Landscape Character Areas and urban design and perceptual resource plans into consideration, as mentioned under Recommendations 5 and 7. Tourism authorities should become actively involved in the management of the perceptual environment. Such authorities should not concentrate on isolated eco-tourism areas only, but should also be involved in the management of a variety of landscapes

with diverse landscape characters, including both biophysical and cultural resources. Not only the impact of tourism development should receive attention, but also the impact of all other activities on the perceptual environment as an important tourism resource. The National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism should take the initiative in this regard. The awareness-raising material to be provided under Recommendation 1 should emphasise the importance of the perceptual environment as a tourism resource.

Recommendation 9 – Community involvement in perceptual resource management: In order to ensure community involvement in perceptual resource management, the provision of functional and attractive social space should be incorporated in urban planning to serve as important nodes for experiencing sense of place and sense of community. The provision of guidelines to improve communities' appreciation of environmental aesthetics will be of no use if no opportunities exist to experience place and to apply these guidelines. Appreciation for the environment should be developed during everyday life and not only during isolated periods of exposure to exceptional natural areas.

Recommendation 10 – Integration and co-ordination of the management of outdoor information transfer and relevant practices such as littering and graffiti: Since sign proliferation and other practices impacting on the aesthetic environment, such as littering and graffiti, are mutually affecting each other, the management of outdoor information transfer should be co-ordinated with anti-litter and anti-graffiti campaigns. Wherever possible the management of outdoor information transfer and relevant practices impacting on the environment should be managed by the same controlling authority.

5.2.2 PROVIDING AND DESIGNING FOR OUTDOOR INFORMATION TRANSFER

Recommendation 11 – Guidelines and awareness raising: Popular material in the form of brochures, booklets and guidelines explaining the impacts and benefits of outdoor information transfer should be developed from this study. Popular and more advanced material, containing principles and guidelines for the effective management of outdoor information transfer, should also be developed from Chapter 4 of this study. The National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEA&T) should be responsible for initiating this material, which should also

be placed on the DEA&T's official website. An awareness-raising campaign should be launched by the DEA&T and should be aimed at the following target groups:

- ❑ Communities, community groups and environmental groups
- ❑ The outdoor advertising industry
- ❑ The tourism industry and tourism authorities
- ❑ Environmental managers and authorities responsible for the environment
- ❑ Authorities controlling outdoor advertising
- ❑ The design and planning professions

Recommendation 12 – Updating of guidelines: Providing guidelines for the effective management of outdoor information transfer should be a continuous process. Guidelines should be updated and improved as circumstances change and new needs are identified.

Recommendation 13 – A sign system for directing the tourist and traveller: An effective and well-ordered sign system to direct and guide the tourist and traveller to services and attractions along important tourist routes should be established in South Africa. Apart from generic signs containing general information, as provided for in the South African road traffic sign system in the form of brown tourism signs, two additional sign levels should be provided. To provide more specific information on services and attractions a sign type similar to the American logo signs should be considered, or otherwise more specific information should be incorporated into the brown tourism signs. A system of interrelated, multi-purpose and safe information nodes should also be provided along important tourism routes. Both the additional sign levels should be aesthetically pleasing and should contribute to a South African, regional or local character wherever possible. It should furthermore be aimed at providing sufficient information to the tourist and traveller and at creating opportunities for the outdoor advertising industry in order to neutralise illegal billboards and other signs aimed at tourist attractions and services. The National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism should take the initiative in establishing such a



An effective and well-ordered sign system to direct and guide the tourist and traveller to services and attractions along important tourist routes should be established in South Africa. In order to provide the tourist and traveller with more specific information the American logo signs (above) should be considered, or otherwise such information should be incorporated into the brown tourism signs in a more sufficient manner. The logo signs have a neat appearance since they contain only the logos of the various enterprises and the freeway exit number.

Figure 5.2
Logo signs

sign system with the necessary assistance of and participation by provincial environmental and tourism departments and the private sector. The prompt removal of illegal billboards and signs will be essential to ensure the viability of logo signs and especially outdoor information nodes.

5.2.3 EMPOWERMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Recommendation 14 - Training of local artists and sign-writers: In order to create employment local artists and sign-writers should be trained in the design and upkeep of signs, sign structures and advertisements in accordance with acceptable norms and standards. Local controlling authorities and tourism bodies should also be included in such training in order to build capacity for the effective management of advertisements and sign programmes. In training local artists and sign-writers a holistic approach should be followed. The design, production and maintenance of signs, advertisements and sign structures should be combined with other perceptual components such as landscape maintenance, window displays, litter removal and the removal of graffiti in order to create viable job opportunities for the informal sector and small business.

Recommendation 15 - Outdoor advertising courses for the informal sector and small business: The necessary short and long courses, as well as correspondence courses, should be provided at technikons and universities. Such courses should include practical work and should cover components such as:

- The importance of the perceptual environment and the role of outdoor information transfer in the perceptual environment
- Graphic design of a variety of sign types
- Design of advertising structures
- Landscaping around larger signs and advertisements and the relationship between signs, sign structures and the surrounding landscape

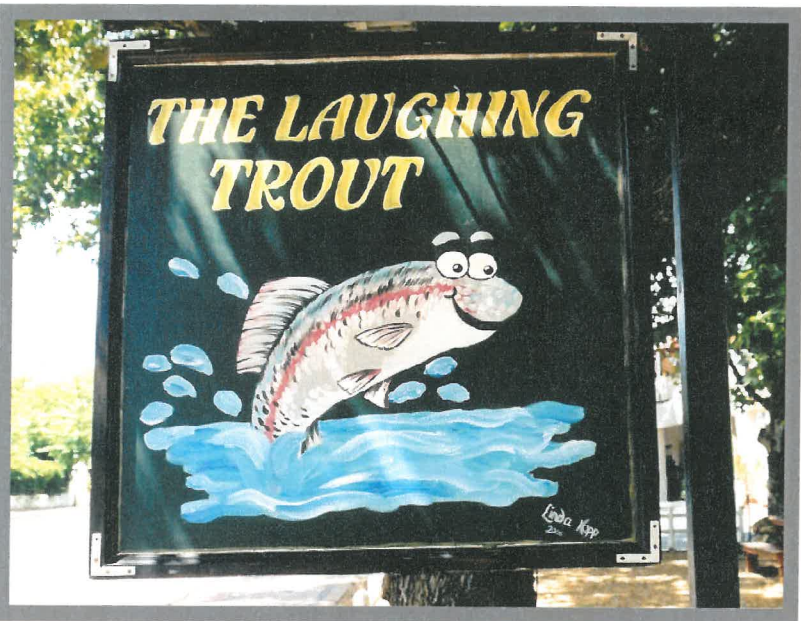


Photo date: 1996



Photo date: September 2000

Figure 5.3
Capacity building
Creating employment
opportunities for local artists

In order to create employment, local artists and sign-writers should be trained in the design and upkeep of signs, sign structures and advertisements in accordance with acceptable norms and standards. The photographs on this page illustrate the possibilities for creative expression by local artists

- ❑ The use of local and natural materials for signs and sign structures and the use of indigenous plant material for landscaping, the development of sign themes and sign systems and the enhancement of placeness
- ❑ The maintenance of advertisements, signs and sign structures including road signs and brown tourism signs
- ❑ Landscape maintenance, including the maintenance of parks and town entrances
- ❑ Small business management
- ❑ Window displays
- ❑ Removal of litter and graffiti

Recommendation 16 – Building the capacity of the formal sector: Outdoor advertising contractors and advertising agencies should be trained with regard to the following:

- ❑ The importance of the perceptual environment in contemporary society
- ❑ The contribution of outdoor information transfer to the perceptual environment and the creation of a sense of place
- ❑ A holistic approach to the design of advertisements and advertising structures, the relationship between sign content, sign structure and the surrounding landscape, basic principles of landscape and urban design

Appropriate long and short courses should be provided at tertiary institutions. The above principles should be integrated into graphic design courses relevant to the advertising industry, while these courses should be influenced by the landscape architect and urban design disciplines. Both outdoor advertising agencies and the landscape architect profession should become involved in the design of advertising structures.

Recommendation 17 – Competitions and bursaries: Competitions should be organised for designing posters, outdoor advertising structures and furniture and outdoor advertising nodes. Emphasis should be placed on local character and the enhancement of placeness. Such competitions could also be linked to student bursaries.

5.2.4 CONTROLLING AND MANAGING OUTDOOR INFORMATION TRANSFER

Recommendation 18 – Public involvement: The only effective way of controlling outdoor information transfer is by involving the public and local communities. They can be involved in the following ways:

- Contributing to the approval of applications for outdoor advertisements and signs through strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and environmental impact assessment (EIA) procedures
- Removal of smaller illegal advertisements, such as posters, at community level
- Reporting of illegal advertisements. Special helplines should be provided by larger controlling authorities for this purpose
- The establishment of pressure groups

Public involvement with regard to the management of outdoor information transfer will only be possible after the necessary awareness raising and provision of popular educational material has taken place.

Recommendation 19 – Establishing the right of public involvement: The right of the public to have a say in the management of outdoor information transfer, and especially commercial advertising, should be established as a non-negotiable right. This should be based on the principle that the perceptual environment belongs to the community, and cannot be seen as the exclusive property of landowners or the outdoor advertising industry.

Recommendation 20 – Public involvement at various levels: Public involvement in the management of outdoor information transfer should not be limited to local community level. National and regional environmental organisations should also be involved where more important rural or urban routes or landscape elements are at stake. This principle will prevent local communities from making concessions in order to benefit from outdoor advertising while such concessions might have a negative impact on the aesthetic attributes of greater urban, regional or national importance which are valued by society as a whole.

Recommendation 21 – Establishing an environmental organisation for championing the perceptual environment: A national environmental organisation with regional branches and specialising in the perceptual environment should be established in South Africa. Such an organisation should make an important contribution to the management of natural and cultural beauty, as well as outdoor information transfer, by making use of effective measures such as exposing illegal and undesirable outdoor advertisements on the Internet³¹ and by involving local communities and the local tourism industry.

Recommendation 22 - Involvement of the tourism industry: In order to ease the burden placed on controlling authorities and managers of outdoor information transfer, the tourism industry should become involved in the management of outdoor information transfer at various levels. The tourism industry, and especially local tourist organisations and communities benefiting from tourism resources, should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own signs in accordance with relevant norms, standards, principles and guidelines. The tourism industry and local communities should be made aware of the value of the perceptual environment, visually pleasant signs and a proper tourism sign system, including information nodes.

Recommendation 23 – Involvement of the outdoor advertising industry: The outdoor advertising industry should become involved in the holistic management of outdoor information transfer by taking the interaction between sign content, sign structure and the surrounding environment into consideration and by involving design professions in this regard.

³¹ In Manhattan, New York, a full-colour map with supplementary information, called *A Rough Guide to Manhattan Ad Creep*, was produced in the form of a tourist map. This map indicates high impacting billboards and outdoor advertisements in Manhattan and can be seen as a very effective awareness-raising tool (Stay Free! online (2)).

Recommendation 24 – Immediate removal of illegal advertisements: Controlling authorities must be able and willing to remove illegal advertisements and structures immediately without having to become involved in lengthy court cases. A lengthy juridical process will have unnecessary cost implications for the controlling authority while illegal advertisements will attract more illegal advertisements, which may lead to an uncontrollable situation. Delay tactics might also be followed by the owners of illegal billboards, making it possible for such billboards to remain almost indefinitely (cf. Chard, undated). It is important that both advertisement and advertising structure be removed. Although legislation in South Africa does make provision for the immediate removal of illegal advertisements, this option is not implemented in most cases, since it is currently viewed as an intolerant and political incorrect way of doing things.

Recommendation 25 – The use of buildings as advertising structures: Controlling authorities should prevent the use of buildings for the sole purpose of carrying advertisements since this may result in such buildings becoming derelict and contributing to urban decay.

Recommendation 26 – Impact assessment of outdoor advertisements and signs: Strategic environmental assessments (SEA) (see Appendix 2) and environmental impact assessments (EIA) should be used as important instruments in managing environmental information transfer. These instruments should be used to minimise the impact and maximise the benefits of outdoor information transfer. Public involvement and alternative development scenarios should be applied as important principles of EIAs and SEAs. Cost benefit analysis should also form an important tool in the effective management of outdoor information transfer and should include both monetary and non-monetary aspects, which should be interpreted in monetary terms. The negative impacts of the *Treasury Principle* should be neutralised by applying these instruments. The *Treasury Principle* refers to the persuasion of controlling authorities by the financial benefits offered up-front by outdoor advertising contractors to obtain concessions that might impact on the perceptual environment an might not be in the best interest of local communities or the public at large.

Recommendation 27 - Outdoor information strategies and plans: Strategies and outdoor information plans, which should include the contribution of outdoor information transfer to the aesthetic environment, should be developed by controlling authorities in order to optimise the benefits of outdoor information transfer and to minimise its impacts. Such strategies and plans

may include more detailed sign plans for individual streets or districts. The SEA procedure should play an important role in developing such strategies and plans. Outdoor information strategies and plans should become an integral part of urban design and perceptual resource plans. This recommendation should therefore be co-ordinated with Recommendation 7.

5.2.5 FURTHER RESEARCH AND STUDIES

Recommendation 28 - Research on landscape character areas: Research aimed at identifying factors that contribute to and impact on the character and placeness of landscape character areas, as mentioned under Recommendation 5, should be undertaken.

Recommendation 29 - Immediate removal of illegal advertisements: Research on the multiplier effect of illegal advertisements and signs should be undertaken.

Recommendation 30 - Job creation and hand-painted signs: Research should be undertaken on the role of hand-painted signs and advertisements in contemporary society and the outdoor advertising industry, as well as opportunities for and contributions by the informal sector and small business in the outdoor advertising industry. Such research should cover all outdoor advertisement and sign types and should be sponsored by the outdoor advertising industry.

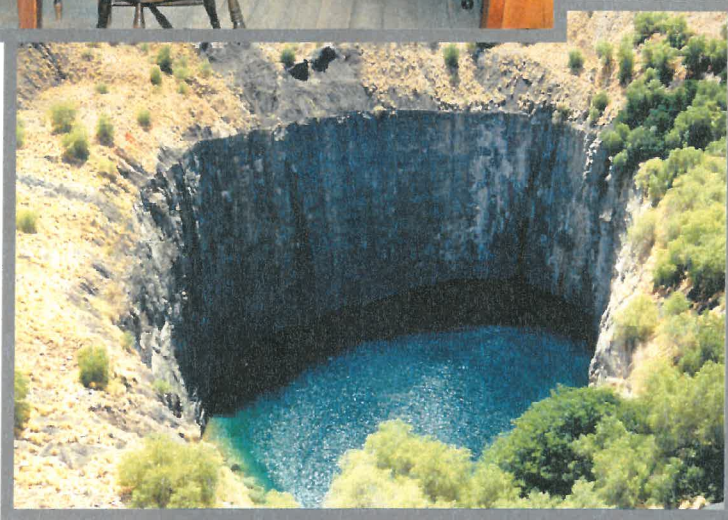
Recommendation 31 – Viewing tax: For the viewing of their billboards and advertisements the outdoor advertising industry depends heavily on public roads which belong to various roads authorities and which are constructed using tax-payers' money. The possibility of a viewing or viewability tax to be paid by the outdoor advertising industry to relevant authorities should be investigated as a possible source of income for managing outdoor information transfer and for the maintenance and beautification of urban streets. Such tax should be levied on certain categories of outdoor advertising viewable from public open space and mainly roads, whether they are located on public land or not, and can be calculated according to the surface area of advertisements and other indicators such as traffic counts. Principles and mechanisms should be established to prevent the exploitation of viewability tax by the authorities at the cost of visual resources and to ensure the sustainable management of both viewability tax and the perceptual environment.

Recommendation 32 – Historical shop signs: In order to contribute to the restoration and conservation of historical town centres research should be done on shop signs of the various regions and historical eras in South Africa, and design guidelines should be provided in this regard. Such shop signs could make an important contribution to local character and placeness and could even be used in modern shopping centres with a historical theme. Examples in this regard include a possible Dutch and French influence in the Western Cape and a British and German influence in the Eastern Cape.

Recommendation 33 – Viability of outdoor information nodes: Research should be undertaken on the viability of a functional system of outdoor information nodes in order to ensure the involvement of the outdoor advertising industry. Such a study should include the possibility of subsidising less profitable nodes by means of more profitable nodes or by means of local communities contributing to such less profitable nodes in order to market their services and attractions. The proposals made on outdoor information nodes in Appendix 1 of this study should serve as a starting point for such a viability study. All information nodes should be of a high standard, while such multi-purpose nodes should benefit the informal sector and local communities not only by providing information on local services and attractions, but also by providing a point of sale for local commodities.

Recommendation 34 – A non-pragmatic environmental world-view: A more detailed study should be undertaken on the formulation of a non-pragmatic environmental world-view relevant to the problems and challenges of contemporary society. Such a world-view should not only provide a basis for the sustainable management of the environment in general, but should also provide a basis for the sustainable management of the perceptual environment and outdoor information transfer in particular. Due to the fact that the current inefficient environmental ethics have to a large extent been influenced by improper Christian axioms or a misinterpretation of such axioms, such a study should focus on Christian society's contribution in this regard.

Recommendation 35 – Outdoor advertising and road safety: No recommendations will be made regarding research on the contentious issue of the correlation between outdoor advertising and road safety since sufficient recommendations have already been made in this regard in recent studies such as the study conducted by Farby *et al.* (2001).



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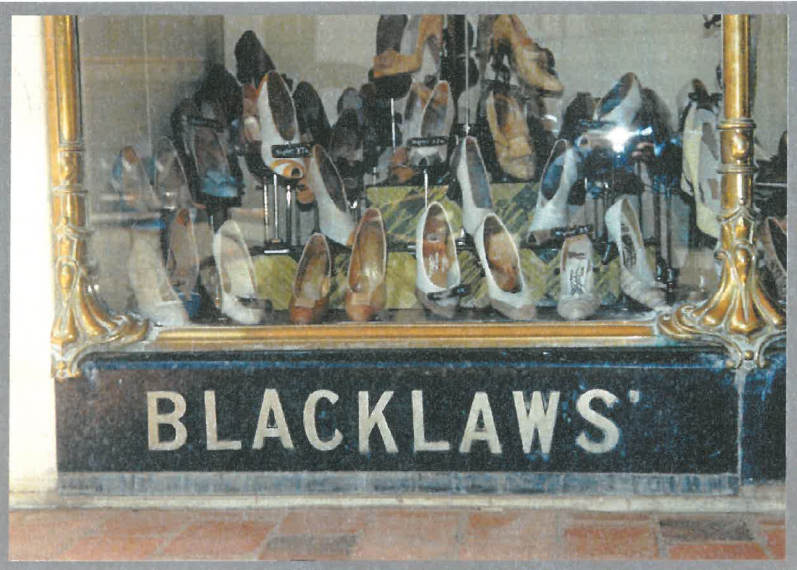
The Kimberley Mine Museum next to the Big Hole (centre) displays a variety of signs dating back to the latter half of the nineteenth century when diamond digging was in full swing.

Date of photos: December 1999

Figure 5.4
Historical signs



Figure 5.4
continued



Recommendation 36 – Other human senses and outdoor information transfer: Research should be undertaken on the role of the non-visual human senses in managing outdoor information transfer in order to provide guidelines in this regard.